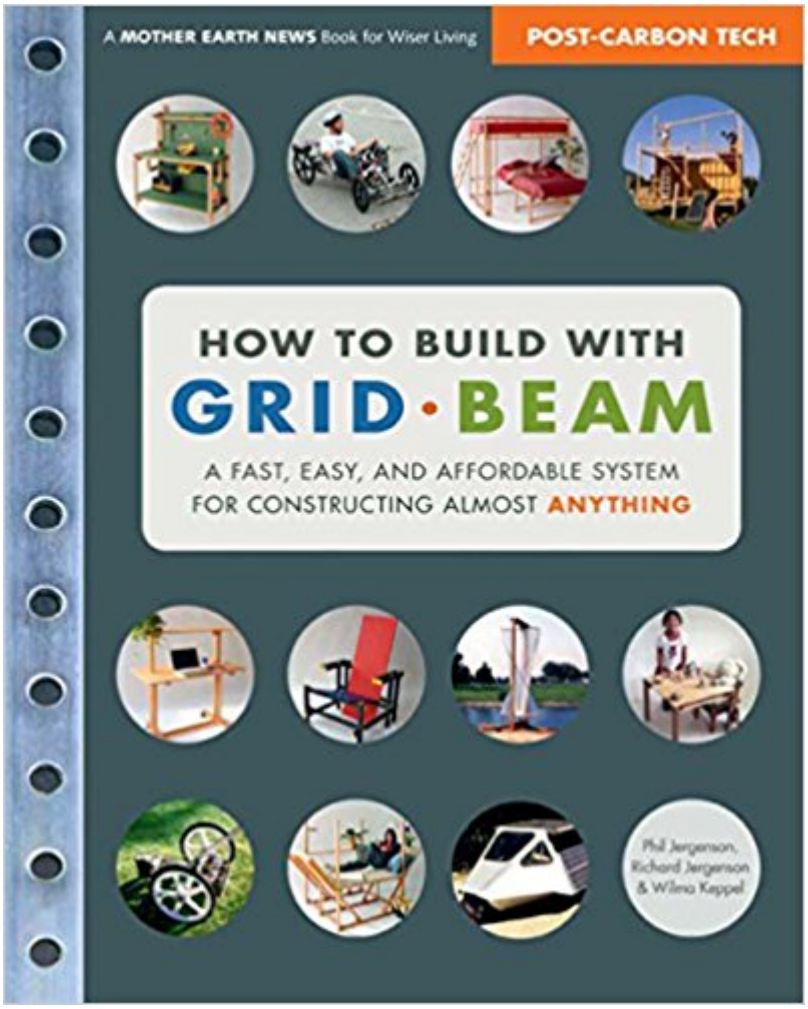
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How To Build With Grid Beam: A Fast, Easy And Affordable System For Constructing Almost Anything



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Synopsis

Grid beam is a modular, reusable building system that is fast, easy, affordable, and virtually goof-proof. Ordinary people with few skills and even fewer tools (all you need is a wrench!) can tackle projects ranging from furniture and shop benches to more ambitious projects like wind turbines, truck racks, small buildingsÃ¢â ¬â •even electric vehicles.Grid beamÃ¢â ¬â„¢s modular pieces and bolt-together construction make the system fast and straightforward to work with. It has all the advantages of an industrial building system: standard, modular sizes; uniform materials; and interchangeable parts. Projects knock flat and are easy to transport. Since the pieces can be used over and over again, grid beam is easy both on your wallet and on the environmentÃ¢â ¬â •the authors have been using some of their components for over thirty years.How to Build with Grid Beam includes hundreds of photos of real projects built over a sixty-year period, showing the many uses of grid beam, from shelves for college students to projects involving alternative energy. The versatility of grid beam is inspiring for beginners, more experienced do-it- yourselfers, and innovators who will develop their own designs. Even school-age children can use grid beam to build simple projects.Phil Jergenson is an innovator who built the first grid beam vehicle.Richard Jergenson built his first grid beam project in 1977.Wilma Keppel is a writer and editor who is also a welder, carpenter, and grid beam builder.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

null (2008-06-23)Grid beam is a modular, reusable building system that is fast, easy, affordable and virtually goof-proof. Ordinary people, with few skills and even fewer tools (all you need is a wrench!) can tackle projects ranging from furniture and shop benches to more ambitious projects like wind turbines, truck racks, small buildings--even electric vehicles.Grid beam's modular pieces and bolt-together construction make the system fast and straightforward to work with. It has all the advantages of an industrial building system: standard, modular sizes; uniform materials; and interchangeable parts. Projects knock flat and are easy to transport. Since the pieces can be used over and over again, grid beam is easy both on your wallet and on the environment-the authors have been using some of their components for over 30 years.How to Build with Grid Beam includes hundreds of photos of real projects built over a 60-year period, showing the many uses of grid beam, from shelves for college students to projects involving alternative energy. The versatility of grid beam is inspiring, for beginners, more experienced do-it-yourselfers, and innovators who will develop their own designs. Even school-age children can use grid beam to build simple projects. (2007-11-27)

Phil Jergenson is an innovator who built the first grid beam vehicle, and standardized grid beam technology into a system. Richard Jergenson built his first grid beam project in 1977, and has since organized trade show booths and solar panel installations. Wilma Keppel is a writer and editor who is also a welder, carpenter and grid beam builder.

How to Build with Grid Beam is the gentle manifesto of a group of Whole Earth Catalog/Maker/Burning Man/Buckminster Fuller afficiannados who share a vision of a new way of building things. As a poke in the ribs to our ordinary ideas of construction, Grid Beam deserves more attention. The construction principles are simple to understand, and this book presents them in a way that *does* encourage you to go off and build on your own. Making is something more people should do.Alas, Grid Beam has some problems, ones that are shared with and come from its counter-culture heritage.The main problem is that Grid Beam-compatible components are *very* hard to find. The book lists some suppliers, but they are all either "true believers" hidden in a small town in California, or big industrial firms spread out over the country. In other words, you can't find grid beam posts/tubes/beams in your local Home Depot. Without them, you're stuck. You have to make your own wooden grid beam posts, or figure out a way to get steel or aluminum ones shipped to you.Doing your own wood posts is time-consuming, and it's a big challenge for those who are afraid of power tools. And yet Grid Beam was supposed to *overcome* that fear!Buying steel or

aluminum posts is going to be a big hassle. Steel is not pricey, but aluminum is, and neither are going to be cheap to get shipped to you. Even Oakland, CA, a hotbed of alternative building, doesn't seem to have a supplier.This book shows that the authors have failed to grasp a lesson that dome-builders learned in the 1970s. Fuller devotees published "Domebook" and "Domebook 2" in the late 70s before revising their ideas and coming out with a new standard, "Shelter". They belatedly concluded that domes will never work, because nobody makes the tools, hardware, or materials for building shelters that don't have right angles (and windows in domes invariably leak). Similarly, the Grid Beam writers have failed to grasp that Grid Beam will never be more than a curiosity until we can easily find parts.Still, I grant you, anyone who *can* work with power tools can easily build with Grid Beam. You may be stuck with indoor projects, but with a press adapter for your power drill, you can easily make wooden beams. The panels and accessories are easy to find, and so is the hardware. Get over the hurdle of making the beams, and everything else is easy. These days, Home Depot, Lowe's, and most other hardware stores will cut plywood and stock to your specs, so all you need to do is drill holes.The best part of the book is the showcase of projects, especially beds and desks. They're much better thought-out than the typical overkill of 2x4s, they look much nicer, and they offer nearly limitless opportunities for changing things around. If you have high ceilings in your bedroom, you owe it to yourself to build a loft bed!In summary, "Grid Beam" promises a *lot* more than it can deliver, but it is still a valuable idea and this book is worth looking at.Pros: Well-organized, easy to read, specific, plenty of ideas, encourages people to make their own ideas happenCons: The idea is hard to implement because of a lack of suppliers, grid beam building is not for the faint of heart, most of the photographs are black and white from the 1970s, in general the book is cheaply made despite its price.[...]

A good book on a method of prototyping. Be a lot of extra work for one off projects but for the the person trying to develop an idea Grid Beam seems to me to be a very good system. I have used the sticks I made for several different projects that quickly allowed me to see where improvements could be made. For me the" fast and easy" came after making a lot of holes!! Using a good quality centering jig helps rather than measuring and marking for the holes I think.

I really enjoyed the book but be prepared to be extremely frustrated if you decide to build a grid beam project. Finding the grid beams is very difficult. The book gives a few suppliers but is almost impossible to purchase grid beams on the Internet and finding local suppliers is like looking for a needle in a haystack.But if you can find find the parts this is a great system for prototyping or

building projects without a lot of supporting tools.

Highly recommended for the mechanically inclined and especially for the non-mechanic, non-builders, non-handy inclined.I really wanted to understand how this system works and what the possibilities might be.The book gives me exactly the information I wanted: a bit of history of grid beam, ideas, sample projects, safety considerations, resources, and how-to. It is clear and concise and encourages you to develop your own ideas.

In just a week I build a closet for my parents and a workbench for me with scrap 2x4, a drill, a saw horse and some bolts and nuts. Very easy, strong and light weight system. My next project is a hybrid electric vehicle (human and electric powered), I'm just looking for local aluminum supplier, but the book include sources for internet and mail order.

Excellent buying experience.

It's great best way to build with limited hand tools. You do need a hacksaw and some way to drill, but that's about all

The ideas have been out there for a while, but they make SO much sense. I'm terrified of tools as such... but with the grid beam system... all I need are allen wrenches! Like they say in the book:" My Own Personal Industrial Revolution!" WOW!

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