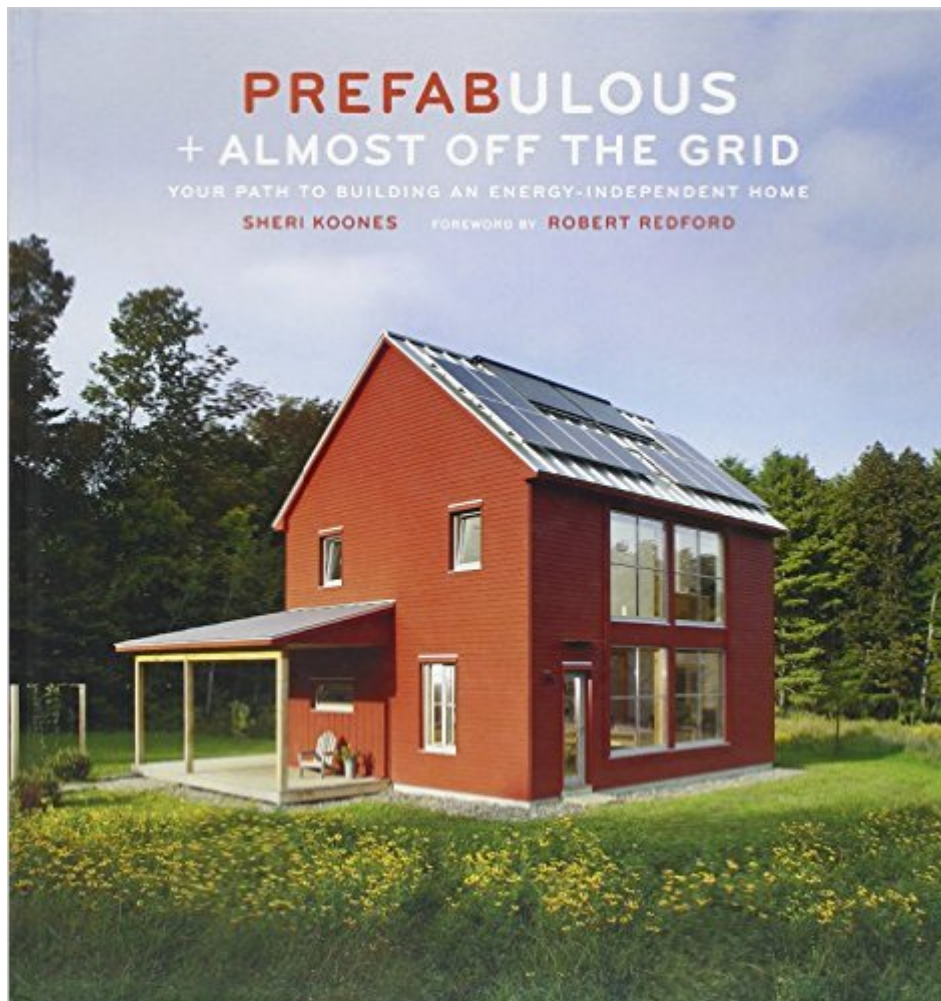


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# Prefabulous + Almost Off The Grid: Your Path To Building An Energy-Independent Home



## Synopsis

Prefabrication offers a simple path to the green home of your dreams, and in her latest book, *Prefabulous* author Sheri Koones highlights the many ways of using prefabrication to create almost-off-the-grid homes—houses that are not only environmentally friendly but often operate at nearly zero annual energy cost. Taking energy from the grid when necessary and returning any excess energy produced, almost-off-the-grid homes function on a fraction of the energy required by most houses, and additionally are more comfortable, healthier, quieter inside, and far cheaper to operate. As energy costs continue to rise, the almost-off-the-grid house proves its worth.

*Prefabulous + Almost Off the Grid* profiles more than 30 of the most energy-efficient homes in the United States, and this hardworking guide reveals how homeowners can achieve similar results with floor plans, the latest, most efficient technologies, and multiple images of the exterior and interior of each home. Praise for *Prefabulous + Almost Off the Grid*: Recipient of the 2013 Robert Bruss Gold Book Award from the National Association of Real Estate Editors (NAREE) —“You can build a high quality, environmentally friendly and efficient home at a reasonable price with a look and feel of a traditional home. Advancements like those used in our house and the other houses in this book will transform the homebuilding industry.” —Christine Todd Whitman, former governor of New Jersey and administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency —“The time has come to throw out the old stereotypes and to embrace prefab building techniques as the way of the future—and the best approach for today. For anyone wanting to create a house that’s sustainable in every sense of the word, this book is an excellent place to start.” —Sarah Susanka, architect and author of *The Not So Big House* series —“I’m passionate about prefab because I know that it can spark an incredibly positive change in the building industry and dramatically reduce costs and construction duration. *Prefabulous + Almost Off the Grid* is an enlightening guide on using prefab to create your own affordable, energy-efficient home.” —Bruce Ratner, chairman and chief executive of the Forest City Ratner Companies —“Sheri Koones highlights the many ways of using prefabrication to create almost-off-the-grid homes that are not only environmentally friendly but often operate at nearly zero annual energy cost. . . . This is an easy-on-the-eyes guide that includes floor plans and multiple images of the exterior and interior of each home. It is not a manual for green construction, but a general overview of aspects of prefab and green construction. And it does that well.” —Natural Life magazine —“If you’re ready to do something about your energy dependence, or if you enjoy stories of people who’ve bucked the trends, you owe it to yourself to give *Prefabulous + Almost Off the Grid* a look. Beautifully illustrated, it ends with a great resources list for the homes showcased.” —

•Examiner.com •Indispensable guide to creating the ideal, almost-off-the-grid home. . .  
• This text is both timely and tempting to anyone interested in inhabiting a more comfortable and cost-efficient abode. •  
•Bask •This attractive coffee-table-style book, the third in Koonesâ™s Prefabulous series, features 32 prefabricated houses that, to a greater or lesser extent, boast environmentally friendly, efficient, and renewable-energy elements. •  
•Publishers Weekly Â

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm very interested in some-day building a prefab modern home so I bought this book to see some more examples and to try to get an overview of the current state of the industry. There are a lot of nice example houses in this book and there are some nice technical asides that get into detail about certain technologies and government programs that are good to know about. On the downside, nothing in this book is too in-depth, and there is an annoying tendency in the modern prefab industry to talk about their houses as being somehow affordable for most people, but I've never once seen that as a reality. As much as I'd love to believe that building one of these houses could be cost-effective, the only thing I can really find are examples of wealthy people patting themselves on the back and overpaying for energy efficiency and "non-toxic" building materials. I'd like to see more sources in this industry really get down to the nitty-gritty of the cost-efficiencies involved and rely less on what I see as empty eco-marketing .

I have read most of Sheri Koones books and they all are easy reads and informative. This book is typical of her work. If I were to build a modular house, her expertise would be Priceless. This book has many examples, lots of pictures and is very informative. The book is somewhat repetative, with many of the house examples, having the exact same certifications, energy ratings, or end results. There was nothing revealed in this book that I felt I had to have in my next house. The person who invented the first clear glass window had a revolutionary idea that was a game changer in the housing industry. The idea of modular housing ( factory built housing ) is a game changer. This book didn't reveal any game changing ideas (to me at least). I also thought some real world examples of owners making cost benifit energy decisions would be informative. For example, what is the ROI on buying X's solar panels, or installing R38 fiberglass insulation Vs a higher grade of open cell or closed cell insulation in ... Chicago, or in Florida? Is it better to buy more insulation or to buy more solar panels? Overall it is a good book.

No matter where you live, this book showcases styles and designs relevant to your region and THE LATEST green building techniques available. This is quite simply a glimpse into the future of ALL homes, and it will be in our lifetime. Nice thing is, you get real world examples of green technology explained in layman's terms, and some wonderful interior and exterior design ideas to boot. The book is a great addition to the "Prefabulous" line of books, and continues to show that green building is doable, beautiful, and a heck of a lot easier with prefab construction.

Prefabricated homes have become very trendy and, not surprisingly, widely misunderstood. What Ms. Koones does with this book (and several of her previous ones)is track the ongoing evolution of prefab home building. Not all manufacturers are the same and not every homeowner wants the same thing. So the first accomplishment of this book is the VARIETY. This is important because manufactured homes (prefabs) suffer from all sorts of stereotypes. In this collection you will see traditional homes, contemporary homes, experimental homes but in all cases energy efficient homes. Which brings us to the second accomplishment of the book; cutting edge GREEN architecture. Koones beautifully presents the growing number of green and sustainable custom homes utilizing factory strategies for better energy performance. This approach is not even debatable - Energy Star, USGBC and several other renowned national certifying organizations have unequivocally stated that prefabrication is a fundamentally green way to build. And this book provides supporting details and sources for each project. And finally, the third accomplishment of this book is the VISUAL reward one gets when holding it in their hands. Not only are the houses

beautiful and well photographed, but the book itself is nicely designed and flawlessly produced. It's a touch more expensive than some housing books on the market but it remains an incredible value nevertheless because there is so much well researched information in it. When you're finished being inspired, you can turn to the appendices and find out who to call for the next step. Anyone who even dreams about a new home or a little get-away needs to have this book.

Well, it's not a how to book... more of a coffee table book with a lot of pretty photos and some decent write up about each place they spotlight... They even chat a bit about individual packages you can buy... but it's definitely not a how to...

I'm trying to improve my own off-grid lifestyle, as documented in 'Off the Grid: Coastal British Columbia Stories,' Sheri Koonen has written an excellent book for those seeking their first taste of off-the-grid living. The book's photos are superb, and the author's discussions of ecological issues (including our carbon footprint) was enough to wake me up. My tiny cabin on a Canadian lake needs some revisions! I've recently read many of the best guides for people just starting out in off-the-grid environments, and this is near the top of my list.

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