



Lisa Mildon

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Quirky and offbeat geek girl who loves the magic that words and stories bring.  
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## Tiny by Design Part 2

Framework or Your Tiny House's Skeleton



Taken by Lisa Mildon

As my husband and I have been researching all of the details on building or buying a tiny home, we've collected a great deal of helpful information along the way. In [part 1 of Tiny by Design](#), I discussed the first decision one needs to make on going tiny: a foundation build or tiny house on wheels (THOW). The next logical step is the kind of framework to use for your tiny home. Whether building a foundation home, park model, or THOW, the same types of framing will apply to all three. The two main types of framework are wooden and metal.

Wood is, of course, used in most residential construction and the majority of tiny builds. However, with tiny builds, the use of steel structures is gaining in popularity. Cold steel frames are rapidly becoming popular among tiny house owners. Despite a higher cost, the structures are relatively light weight but extremely sturdy. You may ask why sturdiness is so important. I know all of us desire a strong foundation to our homes. With a THOW, that sturdiness is key to having your tiny home for a lifetime that can withstand forces in comparison to both earthquakes and tornadoes. Think of how rough the roads can be on your vehicle. The bumps and rattles provide the same kind of wear

and tear that an earthquake could do. Now apply this same thought to the wind as you are driving. I know most of us have stuck our hand out the window and felt the pressure of the wind as we move along the road. Now add the occasional storm or windy day, and that will shake the very core of your THOW!

Another plus to the steel frames is the weight. A company that we discovered at the Tiny House Jamboree makes these amazing rolled cold steel frames. [Volstrukt](#) had one of these frames on display at the jam and we were both impressed with its construction. The sturdy construction and highly customizable design definitely caught my eye. Pricing is higher than a standard wooden frame, but for exact costs, you would need to get an estimate from companies like this. As for the weight, these frames are very light. This is ideal for towing, as every pound saved is vital to not only road legality, but your gas mileage.

Below is a quick comparison between both compositions:

Wood	Metal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can build the frame yourself</li><li>• Relatively inexpensive</li><li>• Highly customizable</li><li>• Heavy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May require 3<sup>rd</sup> party construction</li><li>• Can be costly</li><li>• Highly customizable</li><li>• Lightweight</li></ul>

There is one thing I do need to mention about THOW's. You'll need a sturdy trailer to place your home on. I cannot stress enough to take the extra expense in a trailer. This is\will be your home's foundation. As with typical construction, making sure you have a strong foundation will only create a durable, reliable structure. Don't skimp and try to buy used. You may encounter hidden rust or other structural issues which will only cause a domino effect on your home. One company that kept coming up over and over was [Trailer Made trailers](#). They build trailers specifically with tiny homes in mind. They know the constraints, needs, etc. for tiny building. Plus, their prices are pretty reasonable.

*As with any build, researching is your best friend. If you're still researching your own designs, I can't stress enough to research your ideas. The [Tiny House Jam](#) was instrumental in many of the decisions we have made thus far. Check them out!*

Stay tuned for more ideas in my series, Tiny by Design.

## **Part 1—Foundation**

*\*I am not receiving any compensation from the companies I have mentioned. These are businesses that my husband and I encountered either through our own research or at the Tiny House Jamboree in 2016.*

