

featured - van build tips



# 9 Cheap Van Conversion Ideas to Help You Start Van Life on a Budget

Guess what? You don't have to break the bank or sell your kidney (that's not really an option) in order to do a van build. There are plenty of ways to convert a cargo van into a camper van.

Maybe you already purchased a used van for your DIY camper conversion and realized that your dream van would cost more than you thought? Or do you have just one week and a limited budget for your van conversion? Either way, we're here to help with our cheapest van conversion ideas.

Everyone's van conversion cost will be different. Some of the cutest #vanlife vans on Instagram are budget van conversions. With a bit of creativity, you can save on almost

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

[Accept](#) [Decline](#)

[?](#) Help

If you already bought your van, then check out our cheap van conversion hacks for your van build. Here are our top cheap van conversion hacks:

## Van Conversion Hack #1: Consider Second-Hand Items

Before buying anything new for your DIY campervan conversion, check if you can find it used. You'll be surprised at how much money you can save for your campervan conversion by shopping second-hand. With a bit of luck, even camper van-specific items like a vent fan or a portable toilet can be found second-hand from other van lifers.



Photo by [Indira Tjokorda](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Where to look for second-hand stuff for a cheap van conversion:

- Classifieds Sites like Craigslist
- Local Camper Conversion Facebook Groups
- Local Buy Nothing Groups
- Facebook Marketplace.
- Local thrifts store

Habitat for Humanity ReStore (great for larger items like building supplies and

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

## Van Conversion Hack #2: Skip The Expensive Water Pump

A budget-friendly way to add running water to your camper van is to use water jugs with a battery-powered water dispenser ([Amazon](#)) or submersible water pump ([Amazon](#)) instead of an expensive and loud RV water pump system.

These submersible water pumps are an affordable alternative that is much easier to use and still works with a faucet. You can skip the whole water setup by using a battery-powered water dispenser which is ideal if you don't plan on installing solar.

## Van Conversion Hack #3: Use a Camp Stove Instead of a Full Kitchen Setup.

Who says you need a kitchen in your van build?

You can save a ton of money by opting for a camp stove ([Amazon](#)) instead of building a large kitchen with built-in appliances. An additional benefit is that a camp stove takes up less space as you can pair it with a camp table ([Amazon](#)) and store it after you're done. Van Conversion Hack #3: Repurpose 'house



By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

[Accept](#) [Decline](#)

[?](#) Help

Look for things you can repurpose from your home – or better yet, ask friends and family if they have anything they're looking to get rid of.

Repurposing is a great way to save money and declutter while building a budget campervan.

## Van Conversion Hack #4: Use an Icebox or Cooler

If you don't plan on doing any serious cooking in your van, a simple cooler ([Amazon](#)) will work just fine.

Many products that 'house lifers' keep inside their fridge can be stored outside of the fridge, so keep this in mind when planning your food storage.

Running out of food sucks, so you want to ensure you have enough food storage if you plan to take your camper van on extended trips.

Or be prepared to pop into town occasionally to restock at the supermarket.

## Van Conversion Hack #5: Use a Powerbank and Battery Powered LED Lights Instead of Solar

Solar panels are great, but they're also one of the biggest expenses for a van

Photo by [Jake Stone](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

Try using rechargeable batteries when you can, as these are much more sustainable and cheaper over time.

Best of all, you can charge your power bank or power station for free when you plug in your van while driving! Alternatively, we find that charging for free is relatively easy at the public library, in a university building, or at the gym while you're showering.

If you plan on going for extended trips off the grid, charging your power bank with a portable solar panel ([Amazon](#)) might be a great solution.

## Van Conversion Hack #6: Use Simple, Inexpensive DIY Curtains

You don't need to spend a lot of money on custom curtains or blinds for your van. Instead, use simple, inexpensive curtains that you can easily find at a local store, or make them yourself out of some old sheets.

Hang them up with cheap tension rods or bungee cords, and you're good to go. This is a quick and easy way to add privacy and style to your van – without spending a lot of money.

## Van Conversion Hack #5: Skip The Shower

Photo by [Ali Kazal](#) on [Unsplash](#)

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

[Accept](#) [Decline](#)

[?](#) Help

And if you really want to save money, you can skip the gym membership entirely and only use public showers. Most campgrounds will have outdoor showers without extra cost.

## Van Conversion Hack #7: Sleep On a Camping Mat

There are many different bed options for camper conversions. From a convertible bed to a bench seat to a fixed bed, there are many [different bed ideas for a converted van](#). Still, you don't need to start with a fancy custom bed frame.

To get started, a camping mat ([Amazon](#)), a thick yoga mat ([Amazon](#)), or any old air mattress will do the trick – and save you a lot of money. Lay it down on the floor of your van, pair it with a sleeping bag, and you're good to go.

If you prefer a double bed or full-size mattress, you can consider a thick mattress topper ([Amazon](#)) instead. A mattress topper will make sleeping in your van even more comfortable – and it's still relatively cheap.

Just make sure you're comfortable enough to get a good night's sleep!

## Van Conversion Hack #8 Use vanspace 3D to Plan Your Camper Conversion

A DIY campervan conversion is a serious

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

A solid plan can prevent costly mistakes, like quitting vanlife early or tearing out your newly built furniture to rebuild it because you need extra storage.

Get creative and create different layouts to compare living space and storage space – you might be surprised at how much stuff you can fit into a small space!

## Van Conversion Hack #9: Don't Buy Everything At Once

It's tempting to want to buy everything at once when it comes to outfitting your camper van for full-time van life. But trust us, that's not necessary – or even advisable. Start with the essentials and then purchase additional items over time.

This will help you spread out your budget and will probably save you money in the long term.

You might not cook as often as you initially thought, so you don't need the fully equipped kitchen. You might skip the hot water heater if you find that you prefer showering at the gym.

## Van Conversion Hack #10: Get Creative With Storage Solutions

You can save money during your van conversion by getting creative with your storage solutions. There are many expensive pre-made storage options for camper vans, but if you're willing to get a little bit creative, you can save yourself a lot of money.

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

If you're short on cash, you can always use plastic bags, it might not be as pretty, but it sure works.

Whatever storage solution you choose, make sure to measure your van and plan out your storage carefully before you start building or shopping for materials.

## Happy Building!

There you have it – nine cheap van conversion ideas that will help you save money. So get out there and start building and share the end results with [@vanspace3d](#) or [#vanspace3d](#).

We hope these tips help you save money on your van camper van conversion.

Remember, with a bit of creativity; you can have all the comforts of a luxury conversion van while keeping it more budget-friendly.

cheap van conversion - cheap van build - cheap van life - budget van conversion - cheapest van conversion ideas - cheap van life build - cheapest camper van conversion - cheap diy camper - budget camper van - cheap camper conversion - van conversions on a budget - van conversion budget - cheapest camper van



**How to Make Money For Van Life: The Best Ways to Earn Cash With Your**



**12 Things to Check Before Buying a Used Van: How to Avoid Major**

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

[Accept](#) [Decline](#)

[?](#) Help





[Login](#) [Contact](#) [Partner](#) [Blog](#)



[Facebook Messenger](#)

Haag

KVK 84759372

The Netherlands

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) |  
[Refund Policy](#)

© 2022 vanspace B.V.

By using this website, you agree to our use of cookies. We use cookies to provide you with a great experience and to help our website run effectively.

[Accept](#) [Decline](#)

[? Help](#)