

portfolio

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Guides & Manuals

Python Task Guide.....	3
Chevy Spark Repair Manual.....	17

Proposals & Reports

APSF Grant Proposal.....	23
Report on Secondhand Smoke.....	30

Technical Editing & Revision

Internship Project Documents.....	39
Editing Plan.....	40
Sample Pages.....	43
Revised Document.....	45
Tiny House Guide.....	52
Editing Plan.....	53
Markup with Notes.....	57

GUIDE

Spring 2020

This document was my final project in my technical writing certificate program. I chose to write a guide for a Python programming task that would be pertinent for technical writers or anyone who manages data in spreadsheet form.

The project was especially challenging as I knew very little about Python going into it, and spent the vast majority of my time engaged in the learning process. Thusly, this is probably the roughest cut of any of my technical writing to date, but is also the project from which I feel I gained the most insight about time management and efficient research practices.

MANAGING DATA WITH PYTHON

There are countless reasons that one might find themselves regularly interacting with data in the form of spreadsheets. Be they massive or many, spreadsheets present ample opportunities to waste precious time and effort searching for and amending nitpicky human errors. Automating such tasks through code is a powerful way to increase your efficiency, saving your energy for more productive endeavors than making copy pasta. Don't worry if this already sounds overwhelming. Much like you don't need to be fluent in Spanish to ask where the baños are, knowing a little bit of coding can provide tremendous utility.

This guide includes instructions for:

- setting up your system in the Terminal
- installing and importing Python libraries
- acquiring and setting up a code editor
- writing a Python script that finds specific data in a larger collection and write a new, more manageable spreadsheet file containing only the desired data.

You will need:

- a computer running Mac OS 10.15.4+
- Python 2.7
- Microsoft Excel, Numbers, or similar
- a web browser
- an internet connection

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If you've never coded anything before, you'll need to know a few key concepts to understand the processes this guide explains.

PYTHON

Coding, simply put, is the act of writing instructions for computers. Python coding language is generally regarded as one of the easier, more intuitive coding languages to learn and, thusly, is very broadly used.

CODE EDITOR

Code editors are programs used to compose and test code which is then saved as, in this case, a .py file. Opening (by double-clicking) the .py file will run your program which will write and save the new .xlsx file to your hard drive.

TERMINAL

The terminal where you give your computer instructions about itself. For our purposes, the terminal is the tool we'll use to set up Python and install two necessary libraries.

LIBRARIES

Think of libraries as encyclopedias in the language of Python; each library helps Python understand different subjects. This tutorial requires a library called "pandas," used for data analysis, along with a library called "XlsxWriter," used for creating .xlsx (Excel) files.

PHASE ZERO

READYING THE DATA

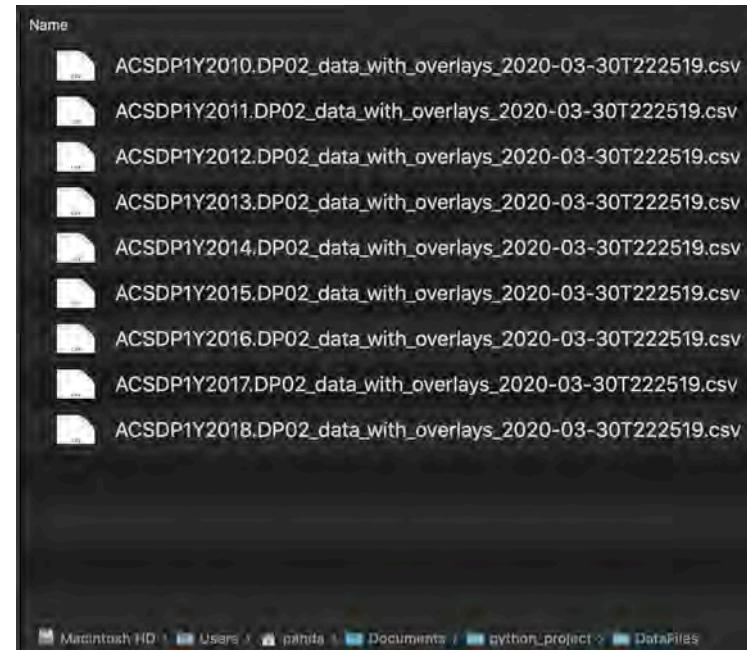
The absolute first thing you should do before getting started with this tutorial is to save some sample .csv files to your hard drive. This tutorial works with several .csv files that contain data from the annual American Community Survey downloaded from the Census Bureau at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>. In this tutorial, the script will index a part of each year's ACS data spanning from 2010 – 2018. The data has been saved into a folder /Users/panda/Documents/python_project/DataFiles.

The file format of the data you're working with dictates which Python libraries you'll need to access. Pandas is a popular Python library that can read .csv, or "comma separated values," files, so that is one of two libraries this tutorial uses. The file names on these are quite long, but don't worry much about that.

NOTE: Each of these files has the year of the survey in its name. If you choose to rename your files, you must include the year number in the new name.

The script will search these reference tables for two specific statistics:

- the percentage of Los Angeles county's population holding bachelor's degrees for each year of data,
- and the percentage of Los Angeles county's population holding graduate or professional degrees for each year of data.



LOCATING DATA AND COPYING COLUMN LABELS

1. Open the first year's file in Excel.
2. Press **control + F**
3. Type "**bachelor's degree**" into the search box.
4. Press **return**.
5. Scroll through the results until you find the desired data.
NOTE: read carefully, some columns list data for "bachelor's degree or higher" while some list data for bachelor's degrees alone.
6. Copy exactly the contents of the column label into a blank document for later use.
7. Repeat steps 2-5, but search for the term "**graduate**."

8. Copy exactly the contents of the column label into a blank document for later use.

9. Repeat both searches in each remaining data table.

NOTE: Given the time span of these data tables, it is safest not to assume they'll be uniformly labelled. Searching for the same data across 9 tables/years produces different labels used for each of our two variables.

PHASE ONE

Before any code can be written, you'll need to set up a few features in the command line terminal. Mac OS X should include Python and pip installer by default. You should check the version of Python and pip installer on your machine before proceeding.

ASSESSING PYTHON

1. In any window, press **command + space bar** to summon Spotlight Search.
 2. Type "terminal" into the search bar that appears.
 3. In the list of search results, select **Terminal**, which will either appear as the top hit or in the Applications section.
The Terminal window will appear, ready for input.
 4. Type "**python --version**."
 5. Press **return**.
The line below will display the version of Python currently running on your computer. This image shows that the computer, pandabook-pro, is running Python version 2.7.16.
- ```
[pandabook-pro:~ panda$ python --version
Python 2.7.16
pandabook-pro:~ panda$]
```

## ASSESSING PACKAGE INSTALLER (PIP)

---

Package installer for Python, or pip, is the utility with which Python libraries are installed. Like Python, your system should already have pip installer on it, but you should check the version on your computer and update to the most recent version if necessary.

1. In the terminal, type "**pip --version**".
2. Press **return**.

```
[pandabook-pro:~ panda$ pip --version
pip 20.1 from /Users/panda/Library/Python/2.7/lib/python/site-packages
/pip (python 2.7)
pandabook-pro:~ panda$]
```

The next line will display the version of pip installer on your system. pandabook-pro is running pip 20.1, the most recent version as of the writing of this guide.

**NOTE:** to update older versions of the pip installer, type “**pip install -U pip**” and press **return**.

## INSTALLING PYTHON LIBRARIES

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Once pip installer is ready, it can be used to install the libraries necessary for Python to interpret the script and perform its functions. The two libraries needed for this guide are pandas and XlsxWriter. Pandas is a very popular library used for data analysis and XlsxWriter is used to create spreadsheet files that can be read in Excel, Numbers, and Google Sheets, among others.

1. In the terminal window, type “**pip install pandas**.” press **return**.

The installer will perform its function and produce several lines of technical jargon that you don’t need to worry about. As long as the last line reads “successfully installed pandas,” you can continue on to step 2.

**NOTE:** if pandas does not successfully install, visit [packaging.python.org](https://packaging.python.org) for troubleshooting FAQs and forums.

2. Press **return**.

3. In the same window, type “**pip install xlsxwriter**.”

Like the pandas library, you will know the XlsxWriter library installation is complete when the last line reads “successfully installed xlsxwriter.”

4. Press **return**.

5. Quit the Terminal application.

---

## PHASE TWO

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The next phase of the process is to download and set up a code editor, Visual Studio Code. VSC is a free application that can be used to efficiently code in many programming languages and will automatically format Python coding which relies on accurate indentation to function.

### ACQUIRING A CODE EDITOR

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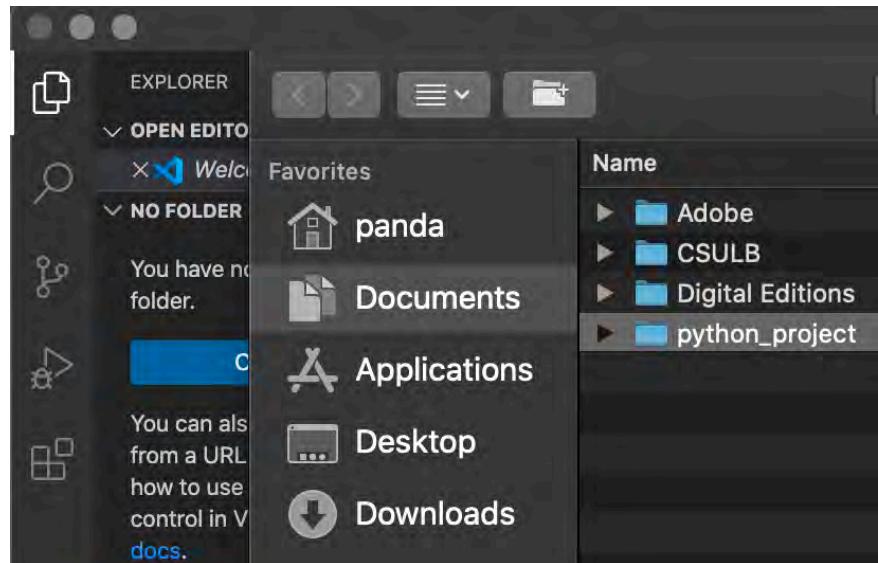
1. Launch your web browser.
2. Go to [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com)
3. Click the **link** on the launch page to download the application in a zip file.
4. Once the file is downloaded, open the folder in which you saved it.

5. Right-click the **file**.
6. Click **Open With**.
7. Click **Archive Utility**.
8. The file will unzip into the current folder.
9. Drag the unzipped application file into the **Applications** folder.

## SETTING UP VISUAL STUDIO CODE

Visual Studio Code's default settings need to be adjusted so that it knows to format your code according to the rules of Python.

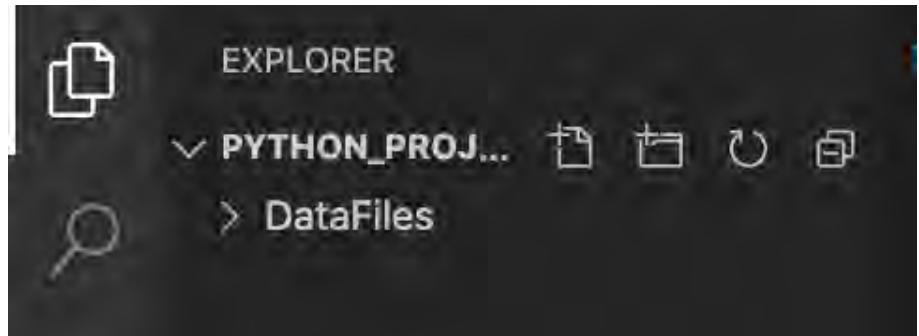
1. Double-click **Visual Studio Code** in the Applications folder to launch the program.
2. The launch screen will display several options for customizations. Find the **Tools and languages** section in the **Customize** area.
3. Click **Python** to install necessary components for coding in Python.
4. Once the installation has finished, type **Shift + Command + E** to call the explorer sidebar into view.



5. Click **Open Folder**.  
**NOTE:** Opening a folder from the Explorer sidebar tells VSC what folder to look in to find the documents it will reference while running the code you write. Choose the folder in which you saved your reference data. In this example, the data files that will be referenced by the program are saved in /panda/Documents/python\_project/DataFiles.
6. Select **python\_project**.
7. Click **Open**.
8. The explorer sidebar will show the selected folder and its contents, the data files.

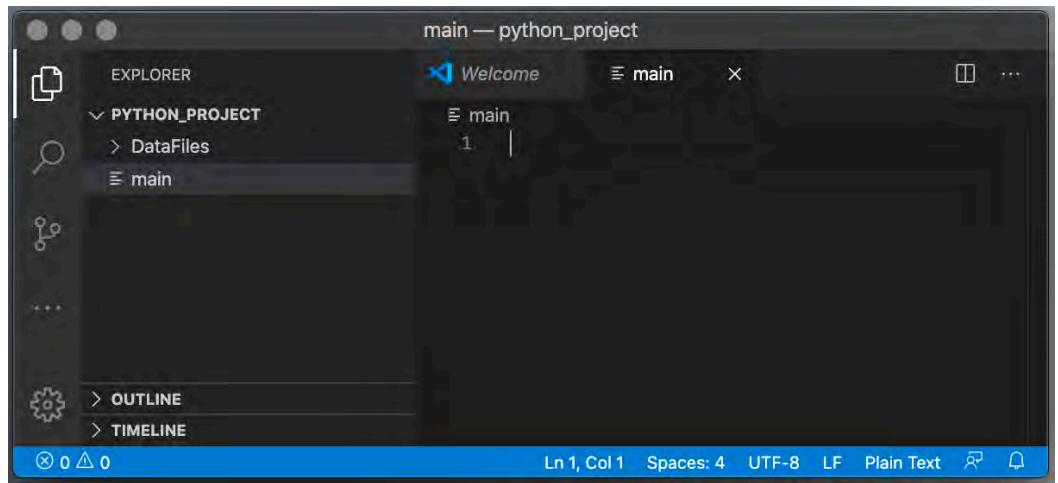
9. Open a new file in this folder by clicking the first icon to the right of the folder name.

**NOTE:** the new file is the workspace in which you will compose your code. The file will be saved as a .py program.



10. Name the new file. The example file for this tutorial is named **main**.

**NOTE:** Once the new file has been created and named, the editing view will appear in place of the welcome screen.



11. From the options in the blue bar that runs along the bottom of the application window, click **Plain Text** to reveal a search bar.

12. In the search bar that appears, type “**Python**” and press **return**.

# PHASE THREE

---

Now that your system and code editor are prepared for the task, you can begin building your script, which is composed of two main portions. The first portion is where you import the libraries, so that the program knows where to look to interpret some of the instructions it will contain; it is also where you tell it where to reference the original data files and what to name the new spreadsheet it will create and save to your hard drive. The second portion is the main body of the program which will contain the bulk of the instructions for the functions you want it to perform.

## IMPORTING LIBRARIES

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The libraries you installed earlier are available on your machine, but your program still has to be told to utilize them. This is how the script will know what libraries to reference.

1. On the first line of your file, type “**import pandas as pd**”

**NOTE:** importing the pandas library “as pd” is essentially assigning it a nickname. From here on out for the specific script you’re writing, refer to pandas as “pd.”

2. Press **return**.

**NOTE:** Pressing return in the code editor only moves the cursor to the next line.

3. On the next line, type “**import XlsxWriter**”

**NOTE:** Like all aspects of Python, XlsxWriter is case-sensitive and must be input as shown to be correctly interpreted.

4. Press **return** twice.

## READYING REFERENCES AND OUTPUT

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You’ll also need to name the file or files that the script should reference to gather the data you want to copy. Because we opened the folder in which they are saved, that doesn’t need to be specified, but the files within that folder do.

1. Type “**DATAFILENAME = “”**

2. Into the closed quotes, **copy and paste** the name of the first .csv file.

3. Delete the year number from the file name.

4. In place of the year number, type “**%d**.”

**NOTE:** This step sets up the code to be able to reference multiple files; % is a variable like X in algebra, it can stand for a number. Adding the “d” next to the variable dictates that the value will be expressed as an integer, or whole number.

5. Press **return** twice.

6. Type “**OUTPUT\_XLSX\_NAME = ‘output.xlsx’**” to set the name of the file.

7. Press **return** twice.

```
1 import pandas as pd
2 import xlsxwriter
3
4 DATAFILENAME = "ACSDP1Y%d.DP02_data_with_overlays_2020-03-30T222519.csv"
5
6 OUTPUT_XLSX_NAME = 'output.xlsx'
```

The code should appear identical to this with color coding automatically being applied to VSC-recognized elements, assuming they've been correctly input. If any of the above text in pink, orange, or blue is not pink, orange, or blue in the editor by the end of step six of this section, check for spelling, spacing, and punctuation errors.

## MAIN SCRIPT FUNCTIONS

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The script will now be able to interpret the specific instructions to follow. None of the following actions will occur until the entirety of the script's main functions have been processed. See section "Finalizing the Program" on p. 11.

### Establishing Workbook and Worksheet

Steps 3 through 6 of this section establish a workbook, or .xlsx spreadsheet file and then situate a worksheet, sometimes called a tab or page, within the file.

1. Type "def main():" to signal the end of the script set up and the actions it will take.
2. Press **return**.
3. Type "workbook = xlsxwriter.Workbook(OUTPUT\_XLSX\_NAME)."
4. Press **return**.
5. Type "worksheet = workbook.add\_worksheet()."
6. Press **return** twice.

### Defining the Header

This section establishes the column titles for the two statistics the script will snip from the original data. Columns and rows on an Excel sheet start at 0 and are read (row, column). So the header row will run horizontally across row 0, making row 0, column 0 the top-left cell on the spreadsheet, and the first of the labels to be applied. Adding 1 to the column number moves one cell to the right, to row 0, column 1, or (0, 1) .

1. Type "worksheet.write(0, 0, "Year")"
2. Press **return**.
3. Type "worksheet.write(0, 1, "Bachelor's Degree")"
4. Press **return**.
5. Type "worksheet.write(0, 2, "Graduate or Professional Degree")"

## Indexing Rows

The following section takes up much of the bulk of the code because it contains a fair portion of the action the script will execute, which is to find and copy the data listed under each of the four possible column labels in each of the original .csv files.

Essentially, the “if” and “break” combination instructs the program to search the .csv files for the first of two possible labels for a given value by saying “if the first label is found, your job is done.” However, the next few lines of code provide instructions for scenarios in which the second label by using the “elif,” or “else if,” which is how Python understands “if the first label is not found, then search for the second label, then stop when it’s located.”

1. Type “`row_num = 1.`”
2. Press **return**.
3. Type “`for i in range(2010 ,2018):`”
4. Press **return**.
5. Type “`filename = DATAFILENAME % i.`”
6. Press **return** twice.
7. Type “`df = pd.read_csv("DataFiles/" + filename, delimiter=',').`”
8. Press **return**.
9. Type “`list_of_rows = [list(row) for row in df.values].`”
10. Press **return** twice.
11. Type “`bach_idx = 0.`”
12. Press **return**.
13. Type “`for column_name in list_of_rows[0]:.`”
14. Press **return**.
15. Type “`if column_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Bachelor's degree":.`”
16. Press **return**.
17. Type “`break.`”
18. Press **return**.

19. Type "elif column\_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Population 25 years and over!!Bachelor's degree":."
20. Press **return**.
21. Type "break."
22. Press **return**.
23. Type "bach\_idx +=1."
24. Press **return**.
25. Type "grad\_idx = 0."
26. Press **return**.
27. Type "for column\_name in list\_of\_rows[0]:."
28. Press **return**.
29. Type " if column\_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Graduate or professional degree":."
30. Press **return**.
31. Type "break."
32. Press **return**.
33. Type "elif column\_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Population 25 years and over!!Graduate or professional degree":."
34. Press **return**.
35. Type "break."
36. Press **return**.
37. Type "grad\_idx +=1."
38. Press **return** twice.

### **Copying Values From the Index**

Once the values have been located, they can be copied.

1. Type "bach\_value = list\_of\_rows[1][bach\_idx]."
2. Press **return**.

3. Type “`grad_value = list_of_rows[1][grad_idx]`.”

4. Press **return** twice.

### **Pasting Values From the Index**

With the row values copied to the computer’s clipboard, they can be pasted into place on the worksheet within the workbook.

1. Type “`worksheet.write(row_num, 0, i)`.”

2. Press **return**.

3. Type “`worksheet.write(row_num, 1, bach_value + "%")`.”

4. Press **return**.

5. Type “`worksheet.write(row_num, 2 ,grad_value + "%")`.”

6. Press **return** twice.

### **Cell Management**

The following line of code is small, but crucial—it instructs the program to move from one cell to the next after pasting a value, so that each value gets its own cell on the spreadsheet.

1. Type “`row_num +=1`.”

2. Press **return** twice.

### **Closing the Workbook**

The following lines of code close and save the workbook.

1. Type “`workbook.close()`.”

2. Press **return** twice.

## **FINALIZING THE PROGRAM**

As explained in section “Main Script Functions,” none of the preceding code has actually been executed yet. Like a very conscientious test-taker, the script reads all of its instructions before beginning. The following portion of code signals that there are no more instructions to read before beginning to work.

1. Type “`if __name__ == "__main__":`”

2. Press **return**.

3. Type “`main()`.”

The entirety of the code will look like this:

```
1 import pandas as pd
2 import xlsxwriter
3
4 DATAFILENAME = "ACSDP1Y%d.DP02_data_with_overlays_2020-03-30T222519.csv"
5
6 OUTPUT_XLSX_NAME = 'output.xlsx'
7
8 def main():
9 workbook = xlsxwriter.Workbook(OUTPUT_XLSX_NAME)
10 worksheet = workbook.add_worksheet()
11
12 worksheet.write(0, 0, "Year")
13 worksheet.write(0, 1, "Bachelor's Degree")
14 worksheet.write(0, 2, "Graduate or Professional Degree")
15
16 row_num = 1
17 for i in range(2010, 2018):
18 filename = DATAFILENAME % i
19
20 df = pd.read_csv("DataFiles/" + filename, delimiter=',')
21 list_of_rows = [list(row) for row in df.values]
22
23 bach_idx = 0
24 for column_name in list_of_rows[0]:
25 if column_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Bachelor's degree":
26 break
27 elif column_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Population 25 years and over!!Bachelor's degree":
28 break
29 bach_idx += 1
30
31 grad_idx = 0
32 for column_name in list_of_rows[0]:
33 if column_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Graduate or professional degree":
34 break
35 elif column_name == "Percent!!EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT!!Population 25 years and over!!Graduate or professional degree":
36 break
37 grad_idx += 1
38
39 bach_value = list_of_rows[1][bach_idx]
40 grad_value = list_of_rows[1][grad_idx]
41
42 worksheet.write(row_num, 0, i)
43 worksheet.write(row_num, 1, bach_value + "%")
44 worksheet.write(row_num, 2, grad_value + "%")
45
46 row_num += 1
47
48 workbook.close()
49
50 if __name__ == "__main__":
51 main()
```

**NOTE:** Again, the indentation levels and color coding are all automatically formatted by Visual Studio Code. If your code doesn't look like the above image, check for errors in spacing, spelling, and punctuation.

## SAVING THE PROGRAM

Until the code in the editor is saved, there is nothing to run.

1. Press **command + S** to save your code as a .py file.

**NOTE:** The new .py file will be saved in the same folder that was opened in the explorer side bar of VSC. If the sidebar view is still enabled, the file will appear there.

## RUNNING THE PROGRAM

---

Now that the file has been saved, the .py is ready to execute its functions.

1. Press the green triangle **run button** at the upper right-hand corner of the screen.  
The editor view will split to show the Terminal view below the editing window.
2. Several lines of text will appear; this may take a few moments.
3. You'll know the program has run completely when a file named "output.xlsx" appears in the folder shown in the explorer sidebar.

## CHECKING YOUR WORK

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To make sure everything went well, open your new .xlsx file.

1. Right-click the **file name** in the explorer sidebar.

2. Click **Reveal in Finder**.

3. Double-click **main.xlsx**

It should display the header, rows, and data like this:

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with a table. The table has four columns: A, B, C, and D. Column A is labeled 'Year' and contains values from 2010 to 2017. Column B is labeled 'Bachelor's Degree' and contains percentages from 19.00% to 21.10%. Column C is labeled 'Graduate or Professional Degree' and contains percentages from 10.20% to 11.10%. The table has 11 rows, numbered 1 to 11. The top menu bar shows 'Home', 'Insert', 'Draw', 'Tell me', and other options. The formula bar shows 'E15'.

|    | A    | B                 | C                               | D      |
|----|------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------|
| 1  | Year | Bachelor's Degree | Graduate or Professional Degree |        |
| 2  | 2010 | 19.00%            |                                 | 10.20% |
| 3  | 2011 | 19.10%            |                                 | 10.10% |
| 4  | 2012 | 19.80%            |                                 | 10.30% |
| 5  | 2013 | 19.70%            |                                 | 10.40% |
| 6  | 2014 | 19.90%            |                                 | 10.40% |
| 7  | 2015 | 20.20%            |                                 | 10.70% |
| 8  | 2016 | 20.50%            |                                 | 11.00% |
| 9  | 2017 | 21.10%            |                                 | 11.10% |
| 10 |      |                   |                                 |        |
| 11 |      |                   |                                 |        |

## NAILED IT!

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Now that your computer is set up for Python and you've managed to compose your first functional bit of coding, you can ride your own coat tails on this accomplishment for as long as you find it useful. Because the basic functions of Python are standard, this script can be used as a template for future data-snipping endeavors. Simply copy and paste new reference files and rename your variables to save yourself as much time and effort possible.

When issues arise—and they will—visit [github.com](https://github.com) for a wealth of community-authored coding assistance. Search the existing resources before submitting your question—especially for relatively simple tasks like these, any related questions you might come across in this process have probably already been asked and answered.

# **GUIDE**

## **Fall 2019**

This guide was composed for a project focusing on document design. I chose this process because I needed a guide for the repair myself, but was disappointed to find it didn't exist already. I cobbled the process together from similar-model guides and YouTube video tutorials.

The illustrations in this guide are my original work.

# REPAIRING VEHICLE BODY DAMAGE

Through regular use your Chevy Spark may incur damage to various exterior components. With a few staples of a home toolbox, drivers can remove and replace many of the external components saving time and money in the process. The following guide explains how to remove and replace a commonly damaged component, the passenger side view mirror assembly.

## Replacing the Mirror Assembly – Passenger Door

The exterior mirror assembly of your Chevy Spark utilizes a plug-n-play style electrical connection that makes removing and replacing a damaged mirror assembly an accessible do-it-yourself project for even inexperienced drivers. These steps are specific to the passenger side door and its particular electrical system connection points. The driver side door has a larger electrical panel with more connections running from the frame to the panel.

**The vehicle engine must be off and the keys removed from the ignition during this process.**

There is no need to disconnect the battery for this process. Doing so may cause some saved settings to reset to their defaults.

Don't lock yourself out! Remember to unlock your car and put your keys somewhere safe.

### Tools and Materials

Gather the following items before starting. Some tools on this list are optional, but all are recommended to guard the condition of the soft plastic against damage from substitute tools.

- Phillips head screwdriver
- Plastic pry tools (one large and one small if possible)
- Socket wrench
- 10mm socket
- New mirror assembly
- Flat head screwdriver (optional alternative for small pry tool)
- Pliers (optional)

## Removing the inner door panel.

In order to replace the mirror assembly on your Chevy Spark, the door panel must be removed to expose all the mounting screws.

**The door panel is connected to the frame by two electrical wires that control the power window and lock. Keep the panel within a foot of the frame until both wires are disconnected (see Figure 2).**

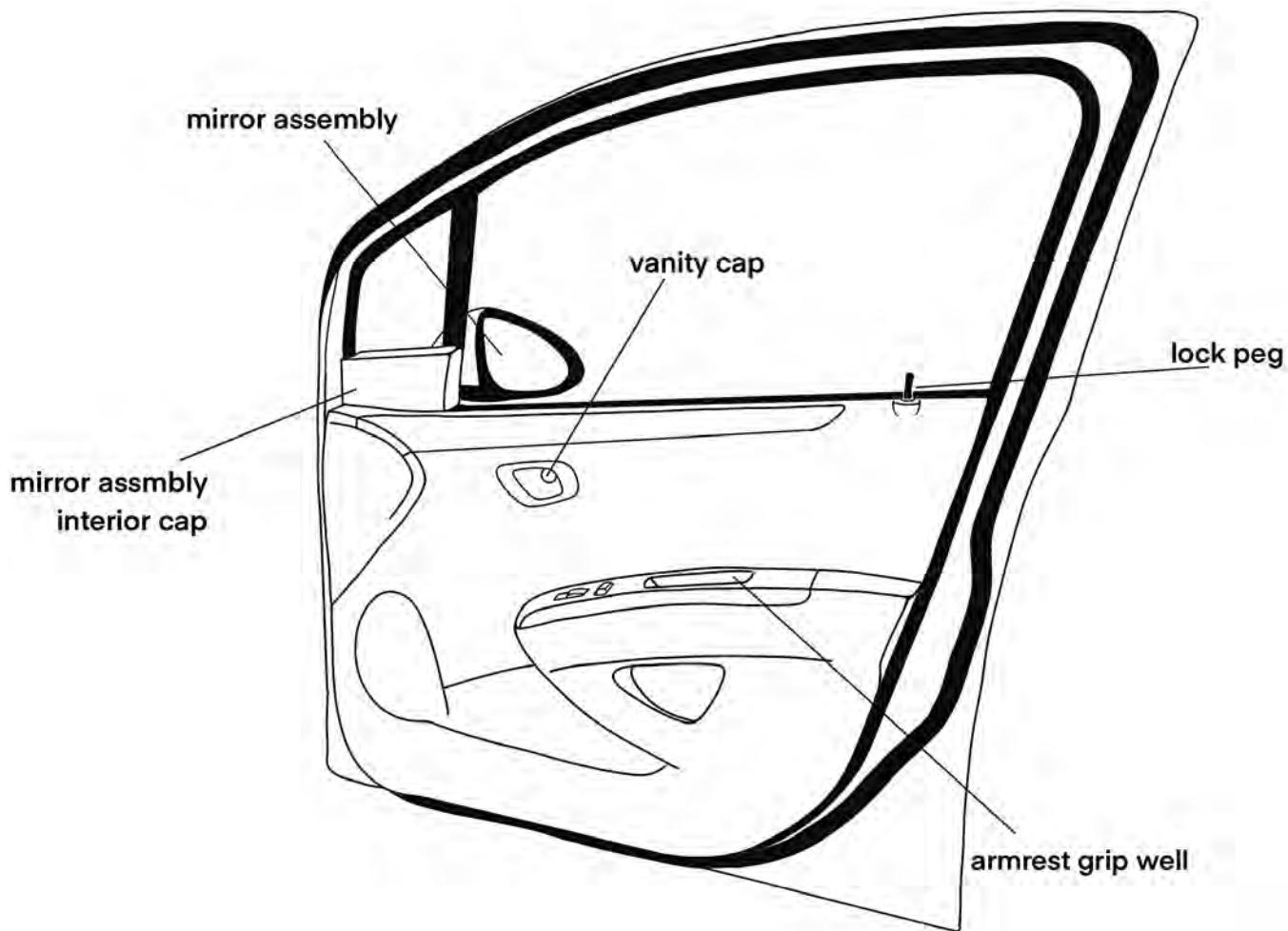


Figure 1: Passenger door interior with door panel on.

1. Wedge pry tool under a corner of mirror assembly interior cap.
2. Pull the mirror assembly interior cap away from the doorframe.  
Tip: store small pieces in the cap while you work to prevent losing them.
3. Pry off the circular vanity cap located in the recess of the door handle.  
See Figure 1 for help locating this part.

If the plastic pry tool is too large to use as a wedge, the tip of a flat head screwdriver can be used. Work carefully so as not to scratch the plastic.

4. Unscrew the hidden screw with your Phillips head screwdriver.
5. Remove the rubber insert from the armrest grip well.
6. Unscrew the screw in the armrest grip well with your Phillips head screwdriver.
7. Wedge your pry tool between the doorframe and panel.

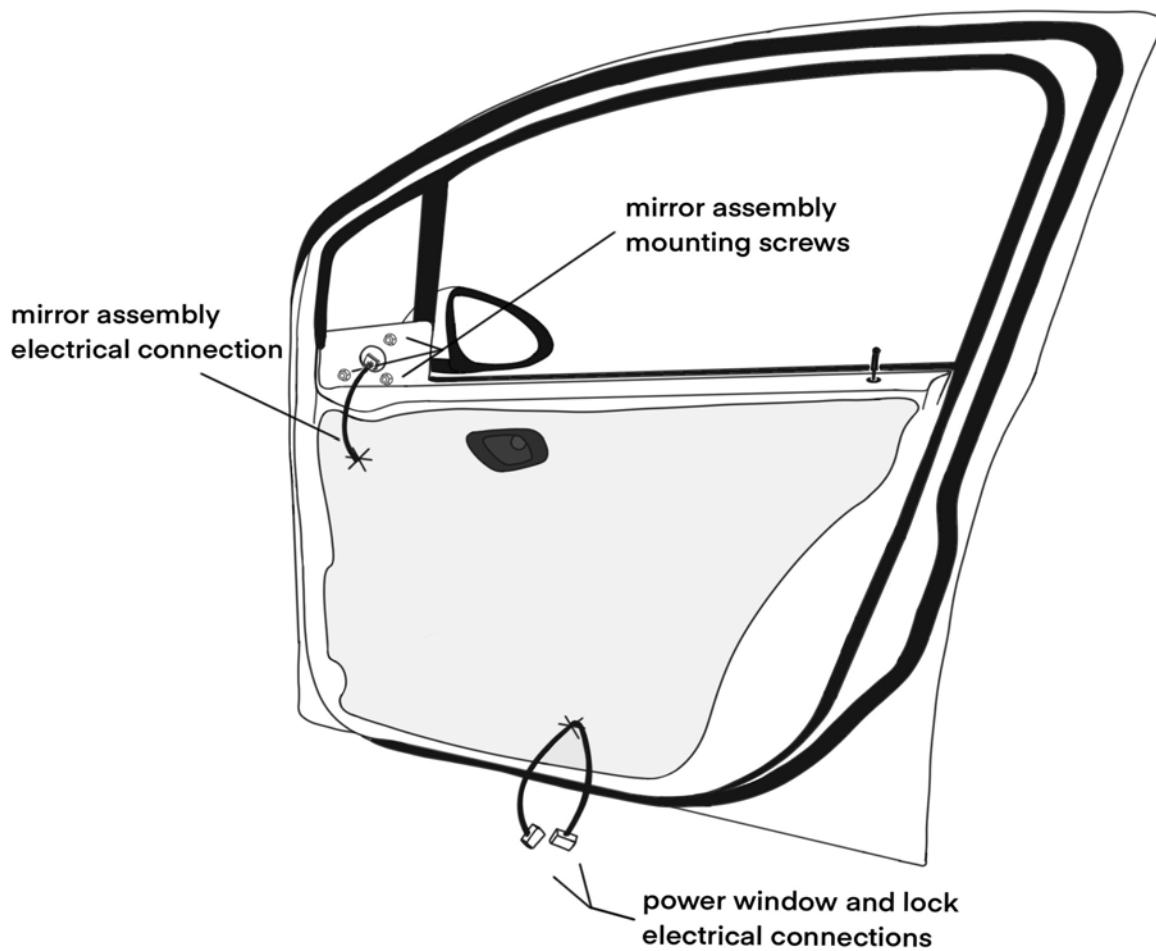


Figure 2: Passenger door interior showing door panel removed.

8. Firmly pull the panel away from the doorframe.  
In addition to the screws, the panel is attached to the frame with several plastic snap-in clips that may remain seated in the frame as you pull the panel away. If this occurs, remove the clip using your pliers and snap it into its spot on the panel.
9. Lift the panel clear of the door lock peg.
10. Rest the door panel on the ground next to the door without pulling at the wires that are still tethering the panel to the doorframe.

11. Disconnect the first electrical connection.
12. Disconnect the second.
13. Set the panel aside.

## Removing the damaged mirror assembly.

With the door panel removed, the three mounting screws that anchor the mirror assembly to the frame are accessible.

1. Unplug the mirror from the electrical system.
2. Loosen the mounting screws with your socket wrench.
3. Twist the mounting screws out by hand once they are loosened.
4. Pull the mirror assembly away from the exterior of the body.

## Installing the new mirror assembly.

Replacement parts are often sold in standard black. Products can be purchased to color match your vehicle's existing shade. See your chosen product's details for instructions.

1. Guide new mirror assembly into place.
2. Twist each of the mounting screws into their threads by hand.
3. Tighten completely with your socket wrench.
4. Plug the wire into the electrical connection port on the new mirror.

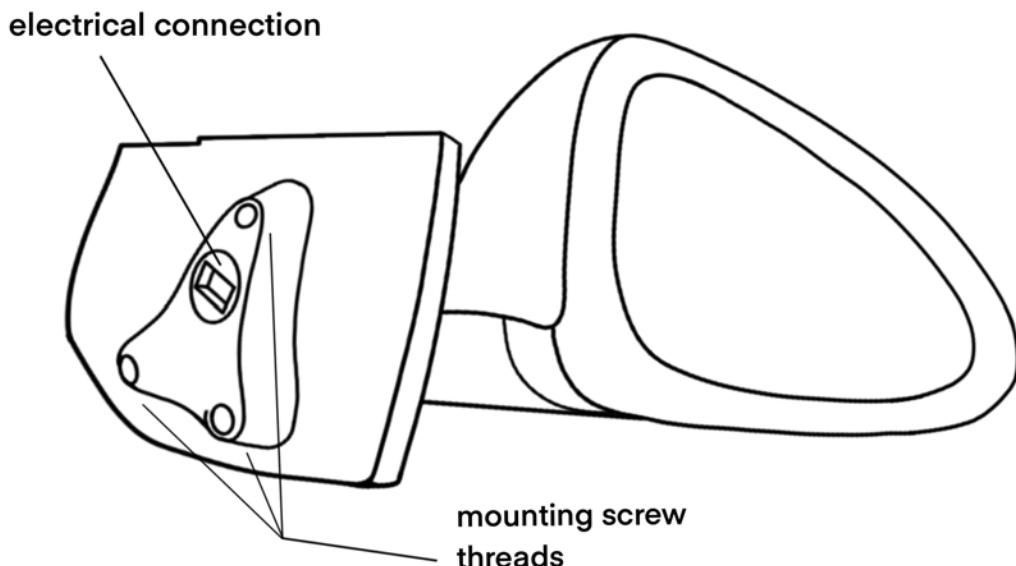


Figure 3: Side view mirror assembly.

## Replacing the inner door panel.

1. Rest the door panel on the ground near the frame.
2. Reconnect first electrical plug.
3. Reconnect the second.
4. Lift the panel above the lock peg aligning it parallel to the base of the window glass.
5. Lower the frame so the lock peg is threaded through its hole in the panel.

With the lock peg and window base alignment properly executed, the clips will be in the correct position for reconnection.

6. Tap firmly over approximate locations of the clips to ensure they're snapped back into their settings.
7. Replace the screw to the door handle recess.
8. Replace the screw to the armrest grip well.
9. Clip the vanity cap back into place in the recess of the door handle.
10. Replace the rubber insert in the armrest grip well.
11. Press the mirror assembly interior cap back into place.

# **EXTERNAL PROPOSAL**

## **Spring 2019**

This document is a hypothetical response to a real-world RFP posted annually by the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation. In order to design the study detailed in the document, I had to research the foundation, its values, and goals and tailor the document to its anticipated audience. Further, I also conducted a fair amount of research about anesthesia practices, outcomes, problems, historic and present studies and developments in the field. My proposed study aimed to provide solutions to multiple real-world problems which could be repeated in other institutions while also providing useful and transparent data to help further the long term mission of the APSF.

May 1, 2019

APSF Scientific Evaluation Committee  
Charlton 1-145, Mayo Clinic  
200 1st St SW  
Rochester MN 55905

Members of the APSF Scientific Evaluation Committee:

The research team at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine is excited to propose our idea to be considered for receipt of your IIR Grant program. We have designed this project for what we believe is its significant potential to reduce the rate of intubation errors, which remain the largest contributing factor to anesthesia-related errors and patient deaths.

We are a group of researchers passionate about utilizing and advancing technology to improve patient safety in all aspects of medicine. With access to a 9,000 square foot, world-class simulation center, we are poised to research, analyze, and broadcast desperately needed data. Our study will commence with design of simulation-training and review modules for use intubation skill acquisition, which will be proctored to anesthesiology residents and nursing students from UCLA. In addition to data on the efficacy of simulated intubation skill training, we also hope to identify possible sources of interdisciplinary errors in communication.

This proposal provides an overview of the state of anesthesiology practice and research, which has illuminated the necessity of our project. The goals of our research have been broken down into phases and are explained in detail. An estimated budget is included, followed by an explanation of the expected results of the study, including new data and potential real world impacts.

We enthusiastically await the opportunity to join the the APSF in working toward a future in which no patient is harmed by anesthesia by expanding knowledge, cultivating solutions, and saving lives.

Regards,

Simulation Research and Development Team,  
David Geffen School of Medicine

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| <u>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</u>  | <b>3</b> |
| <u>INTRODUCTION</u>       | <b>3</b> |
| <u>CURRENT SITUATION</u>  | <b>4</b> |
| <u>PROJECT PLAN</u>       | <b>4</b> |
| <u>QUALIFICATIONS</u>     | <b>5</b> |
| <u>COSTS AND BENEFITS</u> | <b>6</b> |
| <u>CONCLUSION</u>         | <b>7</b> |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposal presents a research project designed to study the use of virtual reality simulation to train medical professionals for intubation during anesthesia. The study will alleviate the lack of information available about anesthesia procedures which the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation has long striven to mitigate. The APSF's vision of a future in which no patient is harmed by anesthesia is shared by our team. As a community of passionate medical researchers and practitioners with access to a world class simulation center, we are ideally positioned to investigate, analyze, and facilitate progress.

Despite the growing popularity of simulation training in medicine, empirical data supporting the method is still lacking. Emerging trends do suggest that simulation training is more effective for certain skills and certain types of students. In addition to intubation errors, recent studies point to interdisciplinary errors of communication as another significant complication of anesthesia procedures. Our study has been designed to explore these concerns by:

- studying psychomotor skill acquisition
- focusing on inexperienced learners
- comparing training efficacy in two disciplines

Our approach is broad intentionally, as we hope that it will be broadly applicable and beneficial. Over the 24-month time frame stipulated by the IIR Grant terms, our project will be completed as follows:

Phase 1: Curriculum Design

Phase 2: Programming and Media Synthesis

Phase 3: Training and Evaluation

Phase 4: Review and Re-evaluation

Phase 5: Data analysis and Authoring Report

## INTRODUCTION

This proposal is submitted in response to a request for proposals issued by the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation. The foundation's mission to promote research, education, and innovation to improve anesthesia patient safety is one already shared by the David Geffen School of medicine.

As the current body of research shows, there are several major challenges to overcome in pursuit of a future in which no patient is harmed by anesthesia. Foremost among them, a simple lack of relevant and trustworthy information is available as a result of rapid technological advances in medicine as well as incongruence across state mandates for reporting data and incidents. Even the growing acceptance of simulation training for medical procedures is under-supported due to insufficient numbers of trials and data.

Our study will produce crucial data about the efficacy of training medical professionals to perform intubation through virtual reality simulation. This skill has been chosen as our focus because there is still a pressing need for improvement in training techniques for that skill. It has long been known that intubation is the largest contributing factor to anesthesia-related patient deaths as well as malpractice litigation. Given our team's access to an outstanding community of medical professionals and educators as well as world-class simulation equipment and facilities, we are ideally poised to conduct this study. The potential impact we predict will be affected through this research can spread across a multitude of medical disciplines. The data that we hope to collect will be published for the benefit of the global medical community, and the

programs which will be produced can be disseminated to medical educators and professionals wherever technological resources allow.

## CURRENT SITUATION

Anesthesiology safety has vastly improved in stride with decades of immense technological innovation. Among other road blocks, the rapid-fire cycle of progress does not lend itself to thorough scientific inquiry. What data there is to survey suggests areas of promise or concern:

- Assumptions: while centers like our own at UCLA have wholeheartedly embraced simulation training as the golden standard, adequate analysis of the practice is still required. Emerging data has begun to suggest that not all skills are acquired the same. Drexel College of Medicine reports psychomotor skills, like intubation, as standout candidates for the method.
- Experience: new data suggests that simulation training is not as effective for medical professionals already in practice. The World Journal of Medicine suggests junior-level learners have significantly more to gain than their senior counterparts. Drexel College of Medicine supports the logic, suggesting anesthesiology residents as ideal candidates for simulation, as the low-risk experience can instill confidence in everyday skills as well as less common—but still crucial—procedures.
- Communication: a growing body of evidence suggests the educational incongruities that exist across the members of a patient's care team can lead to fatal errors of communication.
- Prevalence: It has long been known that endotracheal intubation most commonly results in complications that lead to patient injury and death.

## PROJECT PLAN

We have designed our research study in pursuit of data that will facilitate progress toward endotracheal intubation safety and, at the same time, be applicable across a broad range of medical disciplines to the most benefit possible.

### Objectives:

- Assess the efficacy of simulation training for the acquisition of a psychomotor skill.
  - Assess the efficacy of simulation training for junior-level learners.
  - Identify, where they may exist, deficiencies in communication between nurses and anesthesiologists.
1. Curriculum design (3 months).
  2. Program synthesis and video production (7 months).
  3. Initial training and evaluation (6 months).
  4. Review and reevaluation (6 months).
  5. Data analysis and authoring report (6 months).

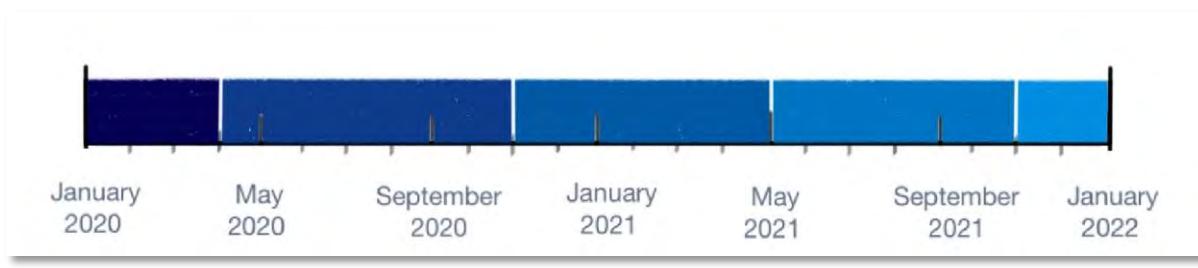


Figure 1 Project Timeline

## **Phase 1: Scope Assessment and Curriculum Design.**

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- Assess scope of the skill: What does intubation do? What is the standard procedure?
- Design curriculum based on scope assessment.
- Establish system for assessing performance of the skill.
- Choose most appropriate simulation type.

## **Phase 2: Simulation Programming and Media Production.**

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- Program initial and review simulation experiences.
- Film initial and review video components.
- Establish procedures for proctoring training.

## **Phase 3: Initial Round of Training.**

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- Complete initial training.
- Evaluate participants.
- Observe participants' performance for (an amount of time).
- Re-evaluate participants at the end of (phase 3).

## **Phase 4: Second Training, Course Review.**

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- Complete review materials.
- Evaluate participants.
- Observe participants' performance for (an amount of time).
- Re-evaluate participants at the end of (phase 4).

## **Phase 5: Data Analysis**

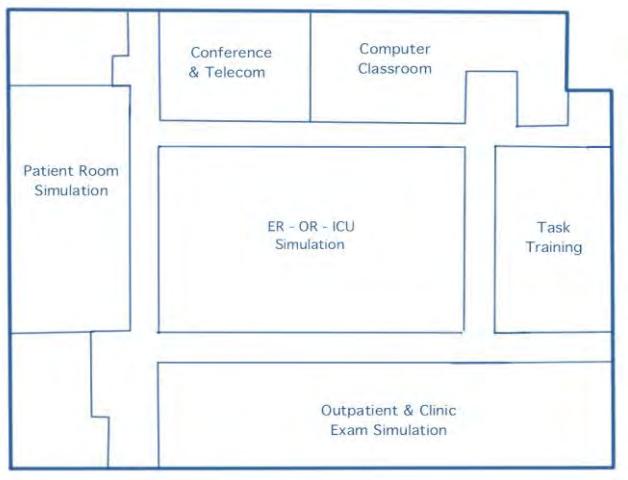
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- Analyze total data collected.
- Compose full report.

# **QUALIFICATIONS**

The David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles was born just after World War II to fill a growing need for medicine in Southern California. The school was established and progress toward their mission has advanced tirelessly in the decades that followed. Just a decade after the school was established, the UCLA Medical Center was opened and just two decades later their student body multiplied from fewer than thirty to more than four hundred. In the 70's the school partnered with Venice Family Clinic, the nation's largest free clinic while also embracing the onset of computerization in medicine. As the school continued striving for advances through research and community outreach and support, its graduates were leaving their mark on the world, more than proving the quality of the school and the virtue of its mission.

The David Geffen School of Medicine tasked itself with a mission to improve health and health care through well-intended, forward-focused discovery and innovation. This has led to the addition of numerous research centers and labs, including its state of the art Simulation Center, which opened in 1996 and was among the first of its kind in medical training facilities.



**Figure 2 UCLA Simulation Center**

In recent years, the school has published research findings on learning style impact on simulation skill training, integration of simulation into medical curricula, and simulation-based re-training of established physicians.

### **Eran Halperin, PhD – Research and Innovation Manager**

Dr. Halperin is a Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine and Computer Science. He has researched neurocognitive processes in psychomotor skills acquisition and ethical decision making as it relates to reporting intervention outcomes. He has worked with the Commonwealth Fund to lobby for protection and expansion of a national incident-reporting database of medical errors and malpractice.

### **Williamina Sugar, PhD – Principal Investigator**

Dr. Sugar has investigated the use of simulation training in low income regions and peripheral nations, decision fatigue, and diminished vigilance of doctors during overtime clock hours. She currently advocates for ethical and responsible scheduling of medical professionals in California.

### **Amanda Hamilton, BS – Student Researcher**

Amanda Hamilton is a student of David Geffen School of Medicine pursuing her doctor after having earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology from University of California, Irvine. She has volunteered her skills at Planned Parenthood as well as UCLA's long-time partner, Venice Family Clinic.

## **COSTS AND BENEFITS**

The following budget provides a breakdown of how grant funding will be apportioned. The major costs, programming and media production, will produce innovative new simulation experiences which will benefit medical educators in and beyond UCLA's medical school. Additionally, the supplemental review curriculum will be made available to currently practicing medical professionals in hopes of amending knowledge gaps that cause communication errors in anesthesia patient care.

UCLA's Simulation Center was built in 1996 and has since become one of the world's forefront sources of training technique advances. Students from all medical disciplines come here to build their confidence acquiring skills in simulated emergency rooms and intensive care units. Combining state of the art technology with the quality instruction of some of medicine's most accomplished physicians molds students into the outstanding innovators the school has become known for.

As a multi-fold return on investments, funds allotted to equipment and facility rentals will ultimately support maintenance of and technological innovation within UCLA's simulation center. By supporting an organization that has proven itself a powerhouse of meaningful research returns, the beneficial influence of APSF's funding will prove impactful beyond this project. Below we have provided a rough breakdown of our vision to utilize IIR Grant funding to facilitate patient safety improvements.

| <b>Services and Facilities</b>            |          |
|-------------------------------------------|----------|
| Equipment Rental                          | \$18,000 |
| Lab Rental                                | \$30,000 |
| Insurance                                 | \$12,000 |
| <b>Programming and Production</b>         |          |
| Filming                                   | \$10,500 |
| Video Post-production                     | \$10,500 |
| Program Development                       | \$31,500 |
| <b>Stipend Allotment</b>                  |          |
| Student Researcher                        | \$15,000 |
| <b>Materials and Equipment</b>            |          |
| Medical Mannequins                        | \$7,800  |
| Intubation Kits                           | \$5,850  |
| Endoscopic Imaging Equip.                 | \$5850   |
| <b>Communications &amp; Dissemination</b> |          |
| Printing                                  | \$750    |
| Publishing                                | \$750    |
| <b>Patient Safety Measures</b>            |          |
| Board Evaluation                          | \$300    |

Figure 3 – Budget

## CONCLUSION

In sum, we hope that your team recognizes in ours the same passion for helping people that the APSF has championed for decades now. Of course we know that we are not the only team chomping at the bit to do our part—there is no shortage of smart and selfless folks in our field. But, we are uniquely advantaged to work among the brilliant medical minds of the David Geffen School of Medicine utilizing facilities and technology that will be the template after which medicine's safer future is modeled.

Our project has been tailored to utilize funding in the most efficient way possible, producing data relevant to various aspects of anesthesia safety while focusing on clearing the most significant danger our work poses to our patients. The funding then essentially doubles its influence, as a significant portion of it has been allotted to use of the Simulation Center, which, by degrees, supports every other project and training that takes place in its well-maintained, ever-modernizing facilities.

Thank you for considering our project. We are eager to hear from you and get to task. If we can answer questions or address concerns, please reach out to us and [GeffenSimSquad@ucla.edu](mailto:GeffenSimSquad@ucla.edu).

# **INFORMAL REPORT**

## **Spring 2019**

This report was composed as an exercise in research and reporting. I composed this with the HOA of my former condo community in mind relative to an ongoing issue with several neighboring tenants' cigarette smoke invading my unit. The content includes health and property risks of secondhand and third hand smoke, some pertinent legal history and current progress in the smoke-free movement, and discussion of California's ever-changing clean air laws, paying special attention to the surprisingly broad authority of homeowner's associations.

# MEMO

---

**To:** Concord Place Homeowners' Association and Board of Directors  
**From:** Amanda Hamilton  
**Date:** 12/17/19  
**Re:** Secondhand smoke in multiunit communities.

## INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for the Homeowners' Association and Board of Directors of Concord Place concerning the persistent issue of drifting secondhand smoke in the community. The information provided here includes the current state of California law relative to housing and intrusive secondhand smoke, a discussion of the properties and effects of secondhand and third hand smoke, and legal expectations and constraints of tenants and property management. The report concludes with a recommendation that the Board of Directors and HOA adopt changes to the community rules and regulations in order to safeguard the health and safety of tenants by implementing a smoking ban in all areas of the community, including private residences.

## CURRENT SITUATION

### Concord Place

The Rules and Regulations of Concord Place do not currently address potential complaints about tobacco smoke and other noxious fumes, nor how residents should file complaints beyond concerns of parking, pool use, pets, and expectations of aesthetic maintenance of structures and landscaping. In terms of duty to owners and renters of Concord Place, the rules and regulations do state that their purpose is to "ensure the health and safety of residents and their guests." However, by virtue of its location in the state of California, all common areas including halls, stairways, recreation rooms and laundry facilities are designated as non-smoking areas by California Labor Code Section 6404.5 (CA Dept. of Public Health). The aforementioned common areas comprise a portion of the majority of California that has been legislated into smoke-free air space in the interest of protecting public health. Though the HOA of Concord Place has not embraced the opportunity, California Civil Code 1947.5, as of 2011, ensures the authority of multiunit housing property management entities to ban smoking throughout entire communities, including within privately owned units.

## Smoke-free Air: Legislation and Trends

Empowering landlords to banish harmful smoke from the properties is just one of the routes taken by the state to mitigate the public health menace of tobacco products. California is the nation's trendsetter in terms of smoke-free air laws, setting that trend in motion in 1995 when the state became the first to ban smoking in all restaurants with bars added to the list in 1998. At present, smoking has been banned in all work places, public transportation, foster homes, children's sporting events, public beaches, farmer's markets, correctional facilities, government buildings, day car centers, public parks, beaches, and in vehicles when minors are present (CDC).

California, like all states, must also enforce the Fair Housing Act which, as of 1998, obligates property management to accommodate tenants with recognized disabilities (Whitman). Disabilities requiring accommodations concerning exposure to a neighbor's cigarette smoke include asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diagnosed hypersensitivity to tobacco smoke and, in some cases, multiple chemical sensitivity and environmental illness. An estimated 3.3 million adults in Californian, nearly 8% of the state's population, are afflicted with chronic lung diseases; that number increases when considering children's lung diseases too.

The federal and state-level fervency to curtail smoking in public places has developed over the past several decades as the devastating health outcomes of secondhand smoke exposure have been repeatedly studied and confirmed. The first mention of secondhand smoke in the Surgeon General's periodic report appeared in 1972 .The Surgeon General continues to decry consumption of tobacco products as a primary user or second or third hand exposure. As of 2010, the official stance of the Surgeon General is that "there is no risk-free level of exposure to tobacco smoke (CDC).

## Health Impacts of Secondhand Smoke

Unfortunately, simple adjacency to a smoker yields results very similar to actively smoking. The following list is a small sampling of the ill effects secondhand smoke can render:

- Regular exposure to secondhand smoke increases risk of stroke by 50% (ANSRF)
- Regular exposure to secondhand smoke increases the risk of lung cancer by 20 – 30% (Unity Point Health).
- Children exposed to their parents' smoking experience more asthma attacks, pneumonia, bronchitis, difficulty breathing and ear infections (American Cancer Society).

In nonsmokers, secondhand smoke causes



Fig. 1 .TOBACCO SETTLEMENT ENDOWMENT TRUST

- Infants of women exposed to secondhand smoke during their pregnancies are at higher risk of low birth weight, respiratory infections, chronic respiratory illnesses and SIDS (CDPH).
- 20 – 30 minutes of secondhand smoke exposure causes increased blood clotting and fat deposit build up (Cleveland Clinic).
- Pregnant women exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to experience miscarriages and stillbirths (Unity Point Health).
- Secondhand smoke exposure of pets can double or even triple their chances of developing cancer (truth).

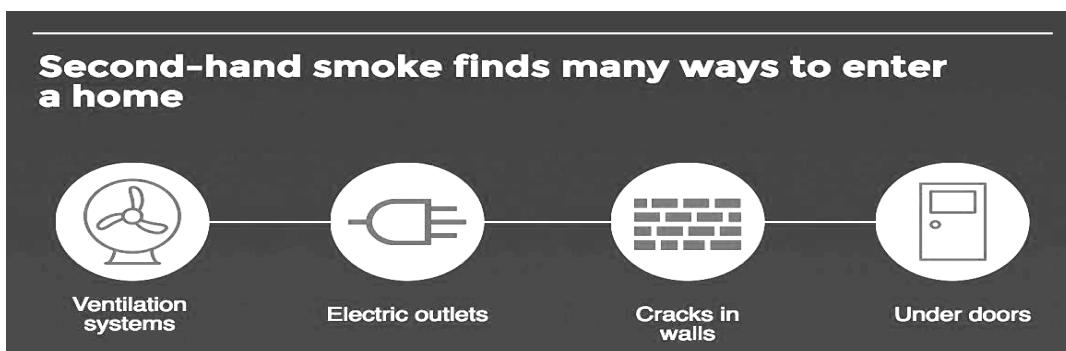


FIG. 2 NEW BRUNSWICK ANTI-TOBACCO COALITION

## Emerging Concern: Thirdhand Smoke

As the effects of tobacco products have been studied over several decades, another, more insidious after-effect of tobacco consumption known as thirdhand smoke has made itself evident to researchers. Even after the smell of a cigarette has gone from the room or the area, the toxic particles are still present—and they can linger in the air for up to 4 hours. Indoors, those particles will cling to walls and settle into carpets or other fabric where they can linger for up to 6 months. Over time, the lingering particles of the already-toxic byproduct of tobacco combustion will break down further into new chemical compositions more toxic than their parent molecules which diffuse back into the air to be inhaled and ingested—sometimes by a unit's new tenants well after the initial smoker has moved out.

Thirdhand smoke particles have been shown capable of damaging DNA, catalyzing the processes that lead to cancer. Furthermore, chemical reactions caused by contact of thirdhand smoke particles and common household cleaners creates still more toxic byproducts. This is especially problematic in a multiunit housing context where common walls, ceilings, floors, and air flow combine multiple families and multiple brand loyalties to increase the probability of these chemical reactions occurring and poisoning multiple homes with virtually undetectable and unpreventable carcinogenic clouds.



FIG 3 ASTHMA AND ALLERGY FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

## Legal Recourse

As the tremendous gravity of the effects of second and third hand smoke exposure come into focus through research, attempts at legal remedies have increased. Historically, the courts have been hesitant to overstep their bounds and dictate individual behavior in private residences. That said, there is no such thing as a “right to smoke” at the federal, state, city, or even community level—and it turns out that one person smoking in a building that shares walls or ceilings equates to every person in that building also smoking. This constitutes an emergency for people with medical conditions that leave them more vulnerable to the harmful effects of a neighbor’s toxic habit. Because federal and state laws about smoking apply to public air space, several broad categories of complaint have been loosely applied to offensive smoke complaints in order to seek damage or secure legal injunctions against it. The following approaches have succeeded in certain cases with the number of wins slowly but steadily increasing as nonsmoker demand for the safeguarding of their health is heard and honored.

**THE RIGHT TO QUIET ENJOYMENT:** Typically this covenant is included in lease agreements to provide parameters for noise complaints between neighbors regarding barking dogs, loud parties, percussion enthusiasts, and the like. Essentially, if one tenant’s activities outside another tenant’s unit interferes with the second tenant’s ability to live and enjoy the inside of their unit, the offending tenant has violated this right. This is difficult to quantify and prove, but has seen growing success in litigation attempts. The right to quiet enjoyment may not be mentioned in the community guidelines, but is often part of the city’s codes.

**TRESPASS:** Much the same logic as the quiet enjoyment argument, this argument is founded on the notion of a tenant’s behavior outside affects the inside of another unit, with an emphasis on the physical matter of smoke passing into a private space where it is not wanted, rather than on the tenant’s more-difficult-to-quantify feelings about the trespass. Whether or not this argument can be employed depends on the community rules and the language of the applicable civil codes.

**NUISANCE:** This complaint is similar to trespass, but in addition to a prohibited behavior like entering a unit without permission, a nuisance is defined by the damage it causes which must be provable to make a successful argument. Nuisance arguments are effective in cases of **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION** that can be proven through medical history if the smoke provokes an asthma attack or other situation that requires medical attention or hospitalization. Nuisance complaints would be levied against the offending tenant; disability discrimination would be levied against the property management entity relative to the Fair Housing Act which obligates them to accommodate tenants with disabilities, typically by working to correct the offending tenant’s behavior or having either tenant move units. An Orange County family was awarded \$17,000 for moving costs and emotional distress after their HOA failed to remedy a secondhand smoke complaint that exacerbated their son’s asthma (OC Register).

**INTENTIONAL INFILCTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:** This argument is employed in tenant-tenant disputes wherein mediation was attempted and the offending tenant refused to alter their behavior to relieve their neighbor from the ill effects of drifting smoke. Tenant-tenant disputes are often taken up in small claims court with the complainant seeking monetary compensation. These cases are most successful when the complainant can show receipts for expenses related to the defendant's smoking such as dry cleaning bills, purchase of air filters, or installation of seals around doors and windows.

**IMPLIED WARRANTY OF HABITABILITY:** This is similar to the disability discrimination approach, but without the weight of a federally mandated protection to back it. Simply put, a tenant must be able to prove that their unit is uninhabitable by human standards. Successful arguments in this vein result in rent refunds or a tenant being relieved of their lease obligation so they can move from the unit without penalty—sometimes both. A woman who lived in an apartment above a bar used this argument to secure reimbursement for rent paid on an apartment that was constantly filled with smoke wafting into her space from downstairs (Sweda, 163).

**NEGLIGENCE:** Complaints of negligence are brought against property management entities that fail to act on tenant complaints of secondhand smoke intrusions. This constitutes a breach of the duty of landlords, managers, or homeowners associations to safeguard the health and safety of their tenants and their guests.

## CONCLUSION

Even without a thorough report of facts and figures quantifying in explicit detail the types and severity of damage that cigarette smoke can inflict on smokers and those around them, it has been common knowledge for decades that smoking kills. That the rules and regulations of Concord Place do not already address the issue of secondhand smoke intrusions in the neighborhood seems like a grievous oversight. If it is assumed that the choice not to address the issue was made in an attempt to respect the agency of individuals and their right to behave as they please in their homes, that is somewhat understandable.

On the other hand, with a deeper understanding of the insidious nature of second and third hand smoke—that the dangers they pose persist well beyond the unpleasant experience of being bombarded with unwanted smoke clouds—it would be morally and ethically indefensible to maintain the current course of blind-eye inaction and allow the problem to continue.

The Homeowners Association and Board of Directors should begin the process of amending the community's rules and regulations to include an all-area smoking ban as soon as possible. If California's current trend is to be bet upon, the state will continue pushing for more comprehensive smoking bans. The current health scare surrounding the mysterious lung disease afflicting e-cigarette users has only added fuel to the regulatory fire and strengthened the growing general public attitude of condemnation of all things tobacco and nicotine.

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# **TECHNICAL EDITING & REVISION**

## **Spring 2020**

The following pages are related to a technical editing and revision project that I completed in my final semester of my degree for Brookhurst Jr High in Anaheim, California.

The first two pages are a sample of a section of their student agenda planner which I redesigned to appeal more to its intended audience of junior high students and revised to match the markedly more positive tone of the rest of the messaging constructed by the school as a part of their culture of enthusiastic engagement.

The following pages contain a memo detailing my plan for editing and revision of the document which was approved and executed. The following pages are the fully revised document (formatted for printing) which was quite well received by the school's principal.

# MEMO

**To:** Mrs. H. Vazquez and Ms. V. Hamilton  
**From:** Amanda Hamilton  
**Date:** April 29, 2020  
**Re:** Student handbook: evaluation and proposed editing plan.

## ANALYSIS

*Initial interpretation of the text's intended audience and function.*

The student planner is printed, bound, and provided to each student of Brookhurst Junior high and is intended to be used daily for planning homework and activities. Additionally, it serves as a student reference for school policies, behavioral expectations, and such. My proposed editing plan omits the planner template pages as they require no major revision.

## EVALUATION

*A broad summary of major issues within the text that likely detract from its readers' ability to use it as intended.*

There are several significant issues that can be revised to help improve the functionality of this document. The initial pages of the planner are intended as informational resource, but lacking organizational structure and visual hierarchy makes finding information more difficult than necessary. The random order of entries intended for students and those addressed to parents and guardians probably works against the sense of responsibility and intentional academic engagement that seems at the heart of the planner's design and prescribed usage. There are opportunities throughout to clarify ambiguous statements, condense entries that repeat information, and improve continuity of language.

The most pressing issue, with respect, is the tone of the writing throughout the pages of the planner. Brookhurst Junior High's culture promotes positive, pro-social values and behaviors including kindness, compassion, respect, and collaboration. The attitude communicated in much of the language in the planner starkly contrasts the tone of the rest of the text and may detract from the positive impact the rest of the text seems designed to achieve.

## EDITING PLAN

*This section provides more detailed discussion of specific problems in the text and proposed edits.*

### CONTENT

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#### LOGIC

Some sections include introductory summaries or justifications. Not every section needs one or both, but some entries would benefit from additional clarity or context. For example: sections that refer to but don't explain AUHSD policies should state where they can be accessed elsewhere. Similarly, disciplinary measures are almost all named but not defined; such context could clarify the information and provide an opportunity to increase a sense of collaboration or encourage engagement with the readers.

#### ACCURACY

"Bicycles and Skateboards" section inaccurately states that California state law regarding bike helmets specifically references "students" rather than "minors," and should be amended for accuracy.

#### COMPREHENSIVENESS

Most notably, the initial page titled "Brookhurst Pride Matrix" repeatedly uses adverbs such as "appropriately" which are too ambiguous to function in their context. There are also several sections in the policies pages that reference abbreviations without first introducing them. One section refers to PBIS which doesn't seem to be intended for student use at all. Abbreviations will be explained on first occurrence. PBIS section will be removed.

## ORGANIZATION

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### SECTIONS

The sections of the pages covering Brookhurst policies are unintuitively organized by alphabet—a choice that would be more effective if heading titles were more carefully worded and accompanied by an index. Because the page count of this section is relatively low, it would be better to reorder the sections by intended reader—students and one for parents, at least). A tentative plan for section organization is included at the end of this memo.

### HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS

The current scheme of headings and subheadings is inconsistently applied and also suffers from the aforementioned organizational confusion. In the regrouping and reordering of sections, new heading and subheading levels will be defined and designed to improve intuitive scanning and reading of the text.

### PAGE NUMBERS

The current text has no page numbers. Though they are not necessary for the planner template pages which make up the bulk of the planner itself, they will be added to the surrounding pages to aid in potential cross references to be made between sections of the Policies Pages.

## STYLE

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### TONE

There is a notable rift in tone between the Brookhurst Pride Matrix and the pages that detail campus policies and the pages dedicated to “The 5 Cs,” conflict navigation, and discussion facilitators that follow. The latter pages are clearly inviting, encouraging, and engaging while the policies page and the Brookhurst Pride Matrix are vaguely negative and often somewhat menacing. While staying true to the concrete information conveyed in the Pride Matrix and the policies pages, they will be edited to linguistically mirror the spirit of the following pages. Relative to my earlier notes on the text’s Logic (see “Content” section of this memo), the Progressive Discipline Policy sections most urgently require additional context, the addition of which will provide an opportunity to shift the focus from punishing bad behavior to setting expectations of positive behavior and how disciplinary actions are intended to be constructive, matching the otherwise positive tone.

### PUNCTUATION

The punctuation is, for the most part, technically correct and free of errors. A few stray marks or sentence fragments will be cleaned up. Some sections include two adjacent statements punctuated by colons when, in their context, the initial colon-punctuated sentence should be followed by a list. These will be corrected as necessary.

### MECHANICS

Major issues of mechanics include use of abbreviations without introducing their meaning and inconsistent numerals (“three” or “3”), terminology (“students” or “pupils,” “violation” or “infraction,”). Perspective occasionally shifts from third person into second person; second person perspective will be switched to third.

### BIAS

In text that students will be exposed to daily (ideally), it seems very careless to include imperative statements such as “follow adult directions” knowing that not all adults should be able to exercise authority over the students of Brookhurst. Even relative to the collection of adults who should and do exercise authority on campus and at related events—it is troubling to see the autonomy of students completely written out of the text; it certainly does not exemplify the values of (mutual) respect and collaboration that Brookhurst has woven into the tenets of its culture. Where it can be amended, language that agrees with Brookhurst Junior High values will be substituted.

### CONNOTATION

Most notably, in sections that relate to Progressive Discipline Policy and rule infractions, often consequences are named but not explained and read as vaguely threatening. Use of the term “repeat offenders,” in the school policy section regarding gum will be removed as its common usage refers to people who have been legally convicted of actual crimes and not a descriptor one should ascribe to a young person over something so trivial as gum chewing.

### LISTS

Some list entries use numbers where no hierarchy should be intended. These will be formatted with bullets instead.

### FONT

The current font is functional but probably unappealing to the intended reader. The font will be changed to something slightly more casual and inviting for a young audience.

## PROPOSED ORGANIZATION: POLICY PAGES

I propose rearranging the contents of the policies pages into the following logical groups. A few of the topics appear twice in the original text—either in obvious error or by some other oversight. Where information has been repeated I suggest the more comprehensive instance be kept and, if necessary, can be listed as a cross reference in the updated version.

### 1. Spartan School-Wide Rules and Expectations

- lunch
- field trips
- dances
- intramural sports
- student agenda planner

### 2. Academic Attire and Dress Code

- free dress days
- items not allowed
- ID cards (since they are required to be carried daily)
- dress code violations

### 3. Attendance Policies

- absences
  - excused/unexcused
  - homework requests
- parent obligation to call day of
- tardiness
- truancy

### 4. Discipline Policies \*add discussion/introduction\*

- Progressive Discipline Policy
  - o After School Detention
  - o Off Campus Suspension
- Harassment, Bullying, Cyber-Bullying (combine both sections from original text into single)
  - o disciplinary consequences
- Academic Honesty Policy
  - o cheating
  - o plagiarism
- Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco Policy
- Weapons, Chemicals, Dangerous Objects
- Selling Items at School
- Graffiti
- Gum
- Transportation (bikes/skateboards to, not on, campus)

### 5. General Campus Information

- lockers
- lost and found
- bicycles and skateboards (rules about helmets and locks/bike racks)
- closed campus policy
- forgotten materials
- library and hours
- injury and illness
- dance "contract" (should this be changed to "compact" or "rules"?)
- electronic devices
- personal property

### 6. Information for Parents

- traffic on campus
- parent involvement
  - o organizations
  - o communication
  - o class visitation
- medication
- student pickup and contact during school hours
  - o cross-reference "forgotten items"
  - o cross-reference "personal property"/"transportation" policies (as parents/guardians are expected to pick up confiscated items).
  - o cross-reference "dance contract" (obligation of timely student pick up after dances)
- birthdays and holidays
- accessing assistance for students
- student pickup

## **Brookhurst Junior High School Policy Pages**

### **ACADEMIC ATTIRE AND DRESS CODE**

#### **POLICIES:**

**The following rules apply:**

**Brookhurst Junior High promotes school pride and college going culture. Students can wear Brookhurst school polos, Brookhurst club/spirit shirts or college/university attire. For your convenience, the school sells polo shirts, spirit wear and outerwear.**

- Students must wear a **SOLID** green, black, or grey unaltered **polo** shirt OR Brookhurst Spirit/Club/Organization shirts. Former Brookhurst polo shirts, including white polos will be honored.
- All bottom wear: pants, shorts and skirts must be **SOLID** in color. NO print, patterns, stripes, or logos.
- All outerwear must be Brookhurst approved apparel.
- Students may wear an appropriate **college** themed shirt any day.
- Students may wear a **Brookhurst spirit shirt** any day..
- Students may not tie up their shirt by any means. Clothing must cover the midsection.
- No sagging – pants must fit at the waist and crotch.
- Shorts and skirts must be **SOLID** in color and reach below the fingertips in length when arms are by the student's side.
- Shorts must be **SOLID** in color and may be no longer than just below the knee.
- Athletic/sweat shorts/pants are NOT to be worn during the school day except for PE.
- **No ripped, torn or frayed clothing of any kind.**
- No plaid, checkered, camouflage or flannel patterned clothing of any kind.
- Pajamas are not permitted.
- All shoes must have an enclosed toe and cover going all the way around the heel. Moccasins and slippers are not allowed.

**Free Dress Days:** Students will be invited to participate in ASB spirit weeks or free dress days. Patterns, stripes and appropriate logos are acceptable during this time frame, but the following dress code policies still apply:

- No straps can be exposed at all – Front or Back.
- No cleavage can be exposed.
- **No ripped, torn or frayed clothing of any kind.**

In addition, the following items are **not** permitted on campus or at any school-sponsored event:

#### **Dress, grooming or accessories which:**

- Are unsafe, dangerous, or a health hazard
- Display offensive or obscene symbols, signs, slogans or words, degrading any cultural, religious or ethnic values.
- Contain language or symbols oriented toward sex, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence or weapons.
- Displays or contains, gang, tagger, crew and/or clique symbols, colors, slogans, and/or signs.
- Sunglasses may not be worn in class.
- Hats, beanies, caps, hoods, and bandanas may not be worn at anytime during the school day.

#### **Dress Code Violations:**

- Dress code violations will be documented.
- A student with 4-7 dress code violations will receive a referral, and a 30-minute detention.
- A student with 8 or more dress code violations will receive a 60-minute detention.
- In addition, excessive violations will result in a mandatory student/parent/ administrator conference.

### **ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL**

Regular attendance is vital to a student's success in school. A student who is absent misses direct instruction that cannot be made up even though written work may be completed.

The only excused absences are those resulting from: illness, medical/dental appointments with a doctor's note, or death in the immediate family. ALL other absences are considered unexcused. Teachers are not required to provide homework, extend deadlines, or allow make-up work for students with unexcused absences.

#### **When a student is absent, parents are required to call the attendance office at 714 999-3612 on the day of the absence before 9:30 AM.**

If the absence is not verified by telephone, the student is to bring a note, signed by a parent, which includes the date(s) of the absence, reason for the absence, student's name, and grade. Absences will be considered unexcused if they have not been cleared within 24 hours. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary actions.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICIES:** **TARDY POLICY**

Students are expected to be on time to school and to each class. Tardiness will be excused only in the event of illness, medical/dental appointments with a doctor's note. Excused tardies must be verified by the parent in person, or with a note. Oversleeping, missing the bus, etc., are not excused tardies. Students who arrive to school after 7:55 AM must check in at the attendance office to receive their readmittance slip.

Administration will manage all 1<sup>st</sup> period tardies, after the third infraction a student will be assigned detention. In addition, excessive violations will result in a mandatory student/parent/ administrator conference. and therefore will receive a referral to conference with administration.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND CHEATING POLICY**

At Brookhurst Junior High School, we value academic integrity and honesty; therefore, we enforce a strict academic honesty and cheating policy.

**The following rules apply per district school board policy:**

- **Cheating** by copying from others, providing work for others, allowing others to copy, tampering with teacher materials, having or using notes, formulas, or other information in a programmable calculator or other programmable electronic device is not permitted. Students who violate this rule will receive a failing grade on the assignment, a "U" in citizenship, a referral to administration and after school intervention. Second offenses will result in the above discipline and may include suspension and a lowered grade for the course.
- **Plagiarism** by copying or using another person's work and submitting it as your own or acting as a provider of a paper or papers for others is not allowed. Students who violate this rule will receive a failing grade on the assignment, a "U" in citizenship, a referral to administration and after school intervention. Second offenses will result in the above discipline and may include suspension and a lowered grade for the course.

## **ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS**

Brookhurst Junior High Staff prides itself on working together collaboratively to support your child in all areas. If you have any concerns and/ or questions about your child's progress, please take into consideration the following suggested options to request support and/or ask questions:

1. Contact your child's teacher via phone or email to discuss concerns and/or ask questions
2. Contact your child's teacher or school counselor to schedule a meeting to discuss concerns and/or ask questions.
3. Contact school administration.
4. If your child continues to need additional support in the general education setting, contact your child's school counselor or administrator to fill out a "request for assistance" form. The request for assistance will be sent to and reviewed by our Education Monitoring Team (EMT).

**STUDENT PICK UP:** *To minimize classroom disruptions, parents must contact the attendance office at least one hour ahead of time, before picking up a child during the school day.* Any parent that wants to call their child out of class, must pre-plan by communicating with the attendance office. Please call the attendance office 714-999-3612 to pre-plan a student pick up.

## **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:** Refer to PBIS Behavior Matrix Sections.

The following expectations of behavior are designed to provide Brookhurst Junior High School students with a safe, secure, and orderly educational environment. All guidelines apply during the time students are on campus, walking to and from school, and during any extra-curricular activity including, but not limited to: sports, field trips, night performances, and dances.

## **BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS**

Students are welcome to ride a bicycle to and from school if the following expectations are followed:

- According to the law, all students are expected to wear bicycle helmets to and from school.
- Bicycles and skateboards must not be ridden on school grounds.
- Bicycles and skateboards must be put inside the bicycle racks and locked up individually. Sharing a lock is not permitted.
- Skateboards must be locked in the skateboard rack.

# SCHOOL-WIDE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

- Know and follow all school and classroom rules.
- Abstain from distracting teachers from teaching and fellow students from learning.
- Do not touch others with hands, feet, or objects.
- Do not write on arms, legs, or any body part.
- Do not bring hair or body spray, perfume, cologne, or any flammable material on campus.
- Be seated and prepared by the tardy bell.
- Permanent markers and other graffiti supplies are not allowed.
- Horseplay, pushing, shoving, tackle games, play fighting, and other such behavior is not allowed.
- Respect the people around you.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Brookhurst Junior High values academic integrity and honesty and, as such, strictly enforces AUHSD school board's academic honesty policy which states the following:

**Cheating** by copying from others, providing work for others, allowing others to copy, tampering with instructor materials, storing or accessing notes, formulas, or other information on a programmable calculator or other electronic device is not permitted.

Violating this rule will result in a failing grade on the assignment, an Unsatisfactory rating in citizenship, referral to administration, and after school detention.

**Plagiarism** by copying or using another person's work as your own or providing a paper or papers for others to submit as their own work is not permitted. Violating this rule will result in a failing grade on the assignment, an Unsatisfactory rating in citizenship, referral to administration, and after school detention.

Two or more instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in the consequences listed above and may also include off campus suspension and a grade deduction for the entire course.

## STUDENT AGENDA PLANNER

Each student is provided an agenda planner on the first day of school which is to be brought and used daily. If the planner is lost or damaged, replacements may be purchased in the main office for \$5.00.

## STUDENT ID CARDS

Students are issued an identification card each year during registration. If a student's ID card is not available during registration it is their responsibility to follow up and collect their ID as soon as possible after registration. **Students must carry their ID card with them at all times on campus.**

## LUNCH

To maintain your privilege of socializing during lunch periods, adhere to the following expectations:

- Remain in the designated lunch area.
- Place trash in designated containers before leaving.
- A pass is required to visit teacher during lunch.
- Food may be consumed in the lunch area only.
- Sort and dispose of recyclable items in the recycling containers.

## FIELD TRIP POLICY

A student with a D or F in any course or unsatisfactory citizenship may be barred from participating in elective field trips. Elective field trips are any not required for a class or graded assignment.

## INTRAMURAL SPORTS

|                  |                                                          |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Quarter 1</b> | girls volleyball, boys tennis, flag football             |
| <b>Quarter 2</b> | boys basketball, girls tennis, girls soccer              |
| <b>Quarter 3</b> | boys/ girls cross country, boys soccer, girls basketball |
| <b>Quarter 4</b> | boys and girls track, boys volleyball, girls softball    |

All students are encouraged to participate in sports and other extracurricular groups. A minimum 2.0 GPA is required to qualify for participation in all extracurricular activities.

# ACADEMIC ATTIRE AND DRESS CODE

Brookhurst Junior High promotes school pride and college-going culture. Students may wear Brookhurst school polo, club or spirit shirts, or college and university attire. Dress code approved polos, club or spirit attire, and outerwear are available for purchase through the school.

- Polo shirts must be solid green, black, or grey and remain unaltered. Previously approved shirts, including solid white polos, will be honored.
  - All bottom wear (skirts, shorts, pants) must be a solid color; no prints, patterns, stripes, or logos.
  - All outerwear (jackets, sweaters, coats) must adhere to same Brookhurst standards.
  - Brookhurst spirit shirts may be worn any day
- Dress, grooming, style, or accessories explicitly barred from wear or use at Brookhurst Junior High and all school-sponsored events include:
- hats, beanies, caps, hoods, and bandanas are not permitted at any time during the school day or for the duration of school sponsored events.
  - any with language or symbols oriented toward sex, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or violence.
  - any that are dangerous or pose a health hazard
  - any that display symbols, signs, images, slogans, or words that degrade any cultural, ethnic, or religious values.
  - any that display or reference gangs, tagging, crews or cliques, or related colors, slogans, or signs.

## FREE DRESS DAYS

During ASB spirit weeks and free dress days, patterns, stripes, and appropriate logos may be worn, but the following rules still apply:

- no straps (front or back) may be exposed
- ripped, torn, or frayed clothing may not be worn
- no cleavage may be exposed

## DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Dress code violations are tracked and subject to the school's Progressive Discipline Policy.

- 4-7 dress code violations will result in a referral and a 30 minute detention.
- Excessive dress code violations will result in a student/parent/administrator conference.
- 8 or more dress code violations will result in assignment of 60 minute detentions.

# ATTENDANCE POLICIES

## ABSENCES

Regular attendance is vital to every student's academic success. Though missed homework and classwork may be completed, every student must prioritize engagement and direct instruction.

Excused absences include:

- illness
- medical/dental appointment with doctor's note
- death in the immediate family
- Absences for any other reason are considered unexcused and will trigger disciplinary interventions.

If a student is absent from school, their parent or guardian is required to call the attendance office at (714) 999-3612 **before 9am** the day of the absence.

If telephone verification is not possible, the parent is to send a signed note within 24 hours that states:

- date(s) of the absence
- reason for the absence
- student's name
- student's grade

**Any absence not cleared within 24 hours of occurrence is considered unexcused.**

## TARDINESS

- Punctuality is expected in arriving on campus and to each class period.
- Arriving on campus after 7:55am is considered a tardy and students must check in with the attendance office to receive a readmittance slip before proceeding to their first period class.
- Students will receive detention for 4+ tardies.
- Tardiness is excusable only in the event of illness or medical (including dental) appointments with a doctor's note.
- Excused tardiness must be verified by a parent or guardian in person or in writing.
- Excessive tardiness will result in a mandatory student/parent/administrator conference.

## TRUANCY

According to the Education Code of the State of California, a student who is absent from school without a valid excuse or more than 30 minutes tardy more than 3 times in 1 year is considered truant and will be referred to administration and assigned after-school intervention.

The following are also considered truancy and subject to the same corrective interventions:

- absence without parent/guardian knowledge
- skipping one or more class periods
- leaving class without permission
- leaving campus early without permission

## HOMEWORK REQUESTS

Students may request work missed during excused absences. Work can be made up for full credit according to instructor-adjusted due dates. For absences of 3 or fewer days, the student is expected to ask their classmates or check in on their Aeries portal page for notes and work they've missed. In the cases of absences longer than 5 days, a parent or guardian should contact the main office by phone at (714) 999-3612 or by emailing the teacher(s) directly before 9:30am on the fifth day.

## DISCIPLINE POLICES

The progressive discipline policy of Brookhurst Junior High has been developed to develop a campus culture that promotes and facilitates the learning of all students. The goal of discipline is to encourage academic conduct and to prevent or correct disruptive and unsafe behavior. The following are possible interventions for behavior conflicting Brookhurst Junior High's behavioral guidelines and expectations:

- restorative dialogues
- conflict mediation
- community service
- verbal or written warnings
- administrative conferences
- parent/ guardian contact or conferences
- referral to administration
- administrative behavior monitoring sheet
- teacher period suspension
- lunch or after school detention
- AUHSD discipline contract
- off campus suspension
- transfer or expulsion

## AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

Students who have been assigned detention will be expected to:

- be on time; late students will not be admitted.
- bring study materials including pen or pencil.
- work on homework for the full hour
- read if they have no homework assigned.

**Students who do not satisfy these expectations will be dismissed from detention and referred to administration and be assigned further discipline per the progressive discipline policy.**

## OFF CAMPUS SUSPENSION

If a student is suspended from campus, they:

- are not permitted on campus during suspension.
- are not permitted at school-sponsored events.
- must have their parent or guardian contact the attendance office to request homework.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFER**

If a student is administratively transferred to another campus, they are not permitted on Brookhurst's campus unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. If a student who has been administratively transferred from Brookhurst returns to the campus they may be issued a trespassing notification which can result in fines and/or arrest.

## **HARASSMENT, BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING**

Brookhurst Junior High expects students to treat each other with respect so every Spartan feels welcome and safe on campus. Harassment that interferes with any student's academic performance or disrupts learning through intimidating, hostile, or offensive behavior will not be tolerated.

### **Harassment includes:**

- verbal or physical bullying
- comments of a sexual nature
- name calling or insults
- unwanted physical contact

### **Cyber-bullying**

Any form of harassment enacted using technology (through phone calls, text messages, on social networking platforms, or similar) is considered equally intolerable. Any student who chooses to engage in such behavior will be referred to administration for disciplinary intervention.

If a student feels uncomfortable as the result of another student's harassment or bullying, they can report the issue to a teacher, administrator, or parent who can help resolve the situation so that they can continue feeling safe, comfortable, and ready to learn.

## **SELLING ITEMS AT SCHOOL**

The sale of candy, food, any item, and/or property by students or groups without prior authorization by school administration is prohibited on campus and at all school-sponsored events.

## **GRAFFITI**

Students may not bring any type of permanent marker to campus. Students may not bring backpacks, clothing, binders, folders, etc. decorated with graffiti. Items marked with graffiti will be confiscated and given to the Anaheim Police Department which may result in charges, fines, and/or school suspension.

## **GUM**

Gum is not allowed on campus. Disciplinary interventions will be assigned to students who repeatedly chews to break this rule and may include scraping gum off desks.

## **DRUGS, TOBACCO, ALCOHOL POLICY**

Brookhurst Junior High honors AUHSD policy authored by the Board of Trustees and enforces all rules and laws regarding prohibition of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco including electronic cigarettes and vaping devices from campus and school-sponsored events. The following rules apply:

- Bringing illegal substances to school or holding them for someone else is forbidden and may result in a 5 day suspension, transfer to another school, and arrest.
- Giving or selling illegal substances, in any amount, to someone else may result in expulsion from the school, expulsion from the district, and arrest.
- Being under the influence of an illegal substance while at school or at a school-sponsored event may result in a 5 day suspension, transfer to another school, and arrest.

### **Substances include:**

- |             |                               |                                  |
|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • alcohol   | • amphetamines                | • any other controlled substance |
| • tobacco   | • prescription medication     | • any drug paraphernalia         |
| • marijuana | • over the counter medication |                                  |

Students under the care of a doctor who require prescription medication throughout the day must bring the medication and doctor's note to the school's Health Technician to be secured and dispensed.

## **WEAPONS, CHEMICALS, DANGEROUS OBJECTS**

Brookhurst Junior High enforces Anaheim Unified High School District Board of Trustees' rules and all state and federal laws that prohibit bringing weapons and other dangerous items at school. Bringing to or possessing weapons (real or lookalike) or dangerous objects at school may result in a 5 day suspension, administrative transfer, expulsion from the district, and/or arrest.

**Chemicals** are flammable materials or items and potential allergens such as:

- nail polish or polish remover
- body spray, perfume, or cologne

**Weapons** include:

- real or fake knives of any design
- real or fake guns of any design
- lasers
- poppers
- fireworks
- stink bombs

## **CAMPUS GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to students for use during physical education periods.

Students are responsible for securing their clothes and personal items in their lockers.

- Lockers are assigned for use in P.E. periods.
- Students should not leave items unsecured/in a backpack during the period.
- The school is not responsible for loss or theft.
- Students are responsible for securing their belongings in their lockers.
- If a student loses their lock, a replacement can be purchased in the main office.

### **SKATEBOARDS AND BICYCLES**

Students who ride to and from school on bicycles or skateboards are expected to:

- wear a helmet, per California law
- individually secured on their respective racks
- dismount while on school grounds
- lock sharing is not permitted

### **INJURY AND ILLNESS**

If an injury occurs on campus, the student is to report to their teacher and then to the health office.

Keep parent and guardian cell and work numbers updated with school in case of emergency.

### **FORGOTTEN MATERIALS**

Students are responsible for remembering to bring their homework, class materials, books, lunches, and P.E. clothing to school each day. **In an emergency only** a student may arrange to have an item dropped off for them in the main office. These items may only be retrieved from the office during a passing period or during lunch. **Instructional time will not be interrupted for deliveries.**

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Each year a large number of items are turned into the office. If the item is marked with a name, it will be returned to the student. Unidentified items are placed in the lost and found container. Students or a family may visit the main office to inquire about and collect their lost items. Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each quarter.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

In addition to electronics, students are discouraged from bringing any fragile, expensive, or potentially distracting personal property to school that is not required for school-related lessons or activities. The school will not issue reimbursement for personal property that is lost, stolen, or damaged on campus.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Electronics are among the most frequently lost, broken, and stolen items on campus and students are advised to leave them at home. The school does and will not investigate lost, broken, or stolen electronics. AUHSD does not and will not reimburse costs of lost, broken, or stolen electronics.

All electronic devices, including, cell phones, iPods, cameras, and earbuds, must be turned off and out of sight during school hours unless directed by a teacher or administrator.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS POLICY**

Brookhurst Junior High is a closed campus. Once a student has arrived on campus they may not leave until school hours are over—even if the school day has not begun yet. If a student has to leave campus before the end of the school day, they must be signed out by a parent or guardian. All visitors to the campus must check in with the main office.

## **LIBRARY**

**Hours: Monday - Friday, 7:30am to 3:30pm.**

Students may check out 2 books for a period of up to 2 weeks after which the student may return the book or extend the borrowing period another 2 weeks. A late fee of \$0.10 per book per day will be charged for books kept without renewal beyond 2 weeks. Students are expected to treat all books or technology with care. If a student loses a book, they are responsible for its replacement.

## **DANCE ATTENDANCE**

To attend a school dance, students are required to present:

- dance pass purchased the week of the
- signed permission slip
- school I.D. (required to purchase dance pass as well as enter dance)

The following rules apply to dance attendance:

- Only students of Brookhurst Junior High are permitted to attend.
- Refrain from physical contact including kissing, hugging, or holding hands.
- Students are expected to be picked up directly after the dance ends. Plan accordingly as the main office phones will not be available.
- School uniform policy/dress code applies.

- Moshing, slam dancing, freak dancing, and dance battles are not permitted.
- No rough housing is permitted, including throwing or breaking objects.
- If you plan to leave a dance early, you must submit a note from your parent/guardian.
- Backpacks are not permitted and may not be picked up until after the dance.

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

## STUDENT PICKUP AND DROPOFF

When picking up and dropping off students remember:

The inside or right-hand lane is for students entering and exiting vehicles. The outside or left-hand lane is a pass-through lane. Students should never be picked up or dropped off in the pass-through lane or on major streets. Students are required by law to utilize crosswalks while walking to and from school.

## PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

### Organizations

The effectiveness of our school is positively impacted when parents and guardians actively and frequently get involved with us. Parents and guardians in search of ways to support their students and the school have many opportunities available to offer volunteer effort, financial support, and personal input, including PTA, Coffee with the Principal, EL Advisory Committee, School Site Council, and Band Boosters. Meetings are announced regularly on the school's website and through the school's auto dialer system.

### Communication

Teachers communicate with parents and guardians about student progress in a variety of ways including phone calls, notes, emails, and progress reports. In addition, parents and guardians are encouraged to inform the school about significant changes in the home environment that may affect their student's performance.

### Class Visitations

Class visitation is a courtesy offered to parents and guardians that can be arranged on request. Visitations must be arranged with the Assistant Principal at least one day in advance so that the least amount of disruption to classroom instruction can be arranged. All visitors must check in with the main office before proceeding to their scheduled visit.

## BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS

Birthday and holiday items or gifts are not allowed to be brought or delivered to campus; this includes flowers, balloons, and food. To prevent disruptions, these items will be held in the office if brought or delivered to campus and can be picked up at the end of the day.

## ACCESSING ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS

The educators and administrators of Brookhurst Junior High take great pride in our collaborative efforts to support each of our students. The following are ways for parents and guardians to inquire about their student's progress or request support:

- Contact your student's teacher by phone or email with questions.
- Contact your student's teacher or school counselor to schedule an in-person meeting.
- Contact Brookhurst administration.
- If continued support is required, contact your student's school counselor to obtain and submit a "request for assistance" form.
- Requests for assistance will be reviewed by our Educational Monitoring Team to assess how best to proceed.

# **TECHNICAL EDITING**

## **Spring 2019**

For this technical editing project, I had to comprehensively edit ~25 pages of any document. I chose to work with a self-published guide book that, as I learned, was much less a true guide than advertised. Since the text was a physical copy of a bound book, I scanned the pages I wanted to work with and compiled them into a PDF document which I marked up directly on my iPad. My editing comments were directed to the author of the guide, since it is self-published. The most challenging and rewarding aspect of this endeavor was finding a tactful but firm way to explain that nearly every aspect of the guide—including its purpose, content, organization, continuity, design, and sentence-level mechanics—needed to be completely overhauled.

To: Dan Louche  
 From: Amanda Hamilton  
 Date: May 13, 2019  
 Re: Editing Plan for "Tiny Home Design and Construction Guide"



## ANALYSIS

### Purpose

The text is meant to guide readers through the process of designing and constructing a tiny house.

### Audience

The text is written for people interested in building a tiny home.

### Use

The text is available in print and PDF.

## EVALUATION

In order for this text to achieve its purpose, its purpose must first be clarified. The lack of an end goal muddies the organization of the text and the scope of the information included. While sections are arranged in floor-up construction order, the instructions consist of unnumbered steps interspersed with advice, anecdotes, notes, and various other divergences--none of which turn to the topic of environmental sustainability nodded to in the subtitle. Finally, many sections conclude with instructions to "search the internet" for more details, which is unnecessary to state and ethically questionable to construe as guidance.

In the same vein, the intended reader is unclear. Assumptions about readers' familiarity with construction vary significantly between sections. For example, "Framing and Building Techniques," on p. 12 discusses build plans for the frame using terms like *stud*, *load bearing wall*, *header*, and *top plate* without defining them. Meanwhile, *hammer* and *pencil* are explained on p. 22.

In addition to foundational ambiguity, writing style throughout is unclear and difficult to follow. The discussion points vary from section to section, as does the amount and specificity of information. Paragraph structure is inverted, discussing a point before naming it, much like solving an equation. Tracking logic in the text is further complicated by a general lack of transitions between paragraphs.. Clarity is also an issue in sentence constructions, which are crowded with redundancies, unnecessary articles, subjective modifiers, and lengthy prepositions.

Finally, visual content is problematic. Justified text detracts from visual hierarchy. Section titles appear at the bottom of each section's preceding, mostly blank page. Images throughout lack uniformity and many are badly composed, unnecessary, or unexplained; all are poorly labelled. Format is prioritized over content, which creates readability issues. The format of the book also contradicts one of the main tiny living tenets it touts, efficient use of space. Of the text's 143 pages, 24 (17% of pages) are dedicated to a section heading and an average of one sentence.

# EDITING PLAN

## Content

### Comprehensiveness:

- Clarify the purpose of the text and determine the reader this should be tailored to in order to determine what the scope of the contents should be. Sentence-level edits cannot proceed until these global revisions have been made.
- Paragraph and section contents vary widely even between subtopics sharing a section. Edit the content of sections for consistency.
  - Ex: Under the topic of Design & Plans, each section has, of course, a variation of the information that can be presented in it—but the Existing Design section reads like a biased argument in favor of this option, mainly presenting the benefits of the approach.
- In addition to revision and clarification, the text is missing information that readers might think to search this general guide for.
  - Ex: Environmentally conscious building techniques should be added to the discussion, especially as the text's subtitle describes tiny homes as *environmentally sustainable*.
  - Ex: Popular tiny home building concerns, including downsizing belongings to fit, storage solutions, designing for families, compost toilets, the true mobility of a tiny house trailer, reclaimed materials, and so forth should be more present in the text.
  - Ex: The tools list should include more safety equipment, especially hearing protection as it relates to power tools such as air compressors

## Organization

### Sections:

- The introductory section of the book includes some too-technical information that would be better left to an appropriate, more in-depth section of the same topic later in the book.
  - “Framing and Design” discussion in design and plans section (studs, etc.) (p. 12)
- While the text seems to be intended for inexperienced readers, some of the sections assume too much prior knowledge or deprioritize the novice. If the true beginner is to be this text’s intended reader, revisions should be made to accommodate their greater need for facilitation.
  - Ex: “Framing and Building Techniques” is a discussion that will likely be entirely inaccessible to novice builders without clarification of terms like *framing* and *stud* and concepts crucial to safety like structural stability. (p. 12)

### Headings and Subheadings:

- Subheadings are centered between paragraphs and are a very similar color to the body of the text making it hard to recognize where sections start and end.
  - Ex: “Capturing and Documenting Your Design,” disappears into the body of the text, making it unclear where the text switches from introduction to discussion. (p. 11)

## Style

### Point of View:

- Personal opinions, anecdotes, and advice are present in the text in first person perspective and Tiny Home Builders are framed authoritatively but the reader will find it difficult to trust the advice without more substantial support. Provide context for readers to gauge credibility of such content.
  - Ex: “Below is a list of the tools that I use...and how I use them.” (p. 21)
  - Ex: “The program that we recommend and use...” (p. 11)
  - Ex: “Tiny Home Builders...uses just one of these layouts...” (p. 14)

### Sentence Structure:

- Simplify sentence structure by removing unnecessary articles, prepositions, modifiers and redundancies. These create a challenge for readers to interpret even simple points.
  - Ex: “The difficult part of designing your own house from scratch is that it requires a lot of knowledge that you may not already possess and that may take a lot of time to acquire. You’ll need to know how to use the technology that can capture and document your design, proper framing and building techniques, and how to best take advantage of small spaces.” (p. 11)

### Concreteness of Words:

- There are several word pairings that seem indistinct from each other. Introduce jargon before discussing them to clarify related-but-discrete objects and concepts.
  - Ex: It is unclear what *capture* of a design is, or how *capture* and *document* differ. (p. 11)
  - Ex: Similarly, what distinguishes a *design* from a *plan*? (p. 11)
  - Ex: Also, explain the difference between *framing* and *building*. (p. 12)
- Use of negative constructions buries the true meaning of several statements in wordy, backwards logic. Revise these as positive constructions.
  - Ex: “Pliers aren’t used that often except when installing electrical lines.” (p. 25)
  - Ex: “A flat bar isn’t used that often but...” (p. 27)
  - Ex: “There are not nearly as many design combinations...” (p. 17)
  - Ex: “Not having a place for everything will make your house feel smaller...” (p. 14)

## Graphics

### Textual Integration:

- Graphic integration is poorly executed detracting from readability and creating disharmony against the rigid formatting of the surrounding text.
  - Ex: The pro/con list in the House Layout section is interrupted by two full pages of floor plan examples that could easily have taken up half the space they’re allotted.
- Captions throughout are poorly constructed, creating confusion about the contents of the image, or which image has been referenced in the body of the text.
  - Ex: The images included in the Tools section present multiple tools together in one photo that has one long caption which would force the reader to work harder than necessary to identify an unknown tool.
  - Ex: In-text references fall short of effective, generally stating, “see diagram,” without including the page number or diagram title. (p. 12)

**Type:**

- Consistency in the types of images included seems to have been attempted and abandoned making the text seem sloppy and unprofessional at times. Swapping these unmatched photos for line art images would probably be a better choice.
  - Ex: Many of the photographs included were taken against white backgrounds and look uniform while others include outdoor or in-use backgrounds. (p. 24)

It is extremely important that while performing any steps in this guide that you use the safest methods possible.

All:  
move onto the page with its content.

**BE SAFE!**

All:  
what does "omissions  
of a project" mean?

Below are a few reminders while working on any project

All:  
tone of term "reminders"  
is maybe too casual  
for the section's overall  
tone and content. Revise for  
formality and  
directness.

- Always use caution, good judgment, and common sense when following the procedures described in this guide or elsewhere.
- Read and follow any instructions or warning labels on both products and tools as they take precedence over any instructions in this guide.
- Special care should be taken when working with power tools. Only drill or cut small pieces of wood with a power tool if they are properly clamped in place. Keep your hands as far away from any blades as possible and do not wear loose fitting clothing.
- Always wear eye protection, especially when working with power tools or when using a striking tool like a framing hammer or sledge hammer.

The information contained in this book is intended to provide general guidance. Because tools, products, materials, techniques, building codes and local regulations are continually changing, Tiny Home Builders assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information contained herein and disclaims any liability for the omissions, errors or the outcome<sup>s</sup> of any project. It is your responsibility to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules, codes and regulations for a project. You must always take proper safety precautions and exercise caution when taking on any project. If there is any question or doubt in regards<sup>regarding</sup> to any element of a project, please consult with a licensed professional.<sup>1</sup>

All: a licensed  
professional — what?

All: not necessary to  
frame it as a  
request.



Building your own tiny house is an  
achievable dream!

MOVE to  
next page

# INTRODUCTION

establish audibility:  
include Tiny Home Builders  
history & success along  
with personal

Multiple tenses throughout.  
Especially pay attention to  
use of "now" in otherwise  
past tense constructions

In August 2009, I received an unsettling call from my mother. The poorly constructed trailer home ~~she was living in~~ was beginning to deteriorate around her. Water lines had been leaking for some time, and now mold was growing rampant. Living under ~~those~~ conditions was causing her health to deteriorate, but neither ~~she~~ nor I had the money to purchase a conventional house or even a new trailer. So I started researching our options. I had always been interested in smaller homes, but up until this point, I had no idea there was an entire movement around tiny living. Once I discovered it, I was hooked. I began building my mother a tiny house ~~of her own~~ in September 2009.

All: who are  
the "others"?  
Friends of  
Mom? Clarify.

After the house was complete and my mother had moved in, I was amazed by the level of joy that it brought her. Her excitement was contagious as others who had previously been skeptical of tiny living ~~were now~~ genuinely considering the possibility of living in a tiny house ~~themselves~~. When I saw this reaction I knew that I wanted to help others experience a similar level of happiness and independence, and so I founded Tiny Home Builders.

Re: "not having a  
mortgage" - avoid negative  
constructions.

All: this makes  
it seem like tiny  
home mobility is  
equal to trailers/RVs  
which is wrong.  
Rewire for clarity.

I imagine since you are reading this book you, too, are excited about the possibilities that a tiny house can bring, the financial freedom of not having a mortgage, the freedom to move as you desire and to take your house with you, and finally the freedom of a simpler life. I hope you find answers and inspiration in these pages and realize that building your own tiny house is an achievable dream.

redundant:  
financial freedom  
"not having mortgage"

CRUCIAL: precisely what  
or what type of answers should  
readers expect to find  
in these pages?



My Mom's House

~~Before any construction can begin on your tiny house, you'll need to determine a design~~

AU:  
what will this section include about "designs and plans"? How will readers be able to scan for that information?

AV:  
are both needed?  
used interchangeably throughout section.

Ad:  
move into its section

# DESIGN & PLANS

"either" should be followed only by two options.

The design that you select for your house can either be your own design, an existing design, or a combination of the two.

## CUSTOM DESIGN

Coming up with your own custom design allows you to create a house to your exact specification. The size restrictions imposed on tiny houses on wheels, generally a maximum of 8.5 feet wide and 13.5 feet tall, can be restrictive but can also actually make them easier to design. If someone were to give you a blank page and tell you to design your perfect house, that might be pretty intimidating. However, if instead you were given a specifically sized box and told to fit in it and arrange everything you need to live and be happy, that probably seems a lot less daunting. Sometimes having too many choices can be crippling.

only one difficult part?

The difficult part of designing your own house from scratch is that it requires a lot of knowledge that you may not already possess and that may take a lot of time to acquire. You'll need to know how to use the technology that can capture and document your design, proper framing and building techniques, and how to best take advantage of small spaces.

## CAPTURING AND DOCUMENTING YOUR DESIGN

All: how are framing and building different?

There are several different options to capture and document your design. These range in price from free to thousands of dollars. Since the free tools that are available are more than adequate for this job, I'll focus on them.

The most obvious of these options is a pencil and paper. When starting from scratch I highly recommend starting with a sketch. A sketch is great for quickly capturing your ideas and is very easy to make changes to unlike a more complicated model in a design program. The sketch can be nothing more than a floor plan that can be used to determine where the door(s), windows, bathroom, and kitchen should be. This information can then be used to help determine the external appearance.

While the entire design can be captured and built from hand drawings, there are significant advantages to using a design and modeling computer program to convert your sketches into plans. The program that we recommend and use ourselves at Tiny Home Builders is Trimble SketchUp (previously named Google SketchUp). This program has several different versions, and at the time this book was published, the basic version was free.

SketchUp is a 3D modeling program that is incredibly easy to learn. However, as with paper, if you open up the program and start with a blank canvas it can be intimidating. We recommend that you search for and download a sample model of a tiny house to get a feel for how the model should be constructed.

TinyHouseDesign.com has several tiny house models you can download for free. By using a program that models your house in 3D, you get a unique perspective and get to see how all the different components fit together. More importantly, you are able to instantly determine any measurement of any component in the house during construction.

## FRAMING AND BUILDING TECHNIQUES

While understanding how to capture your design is important, you will also need to understand the proper way to frame a house so that what you design is structurally sound. While this can be extremely complicated in larger structures, it is much less difficult for a tiny house.

The first step is understanding the various components of a houses framing (see diagram).

specify diagram  
p. number/ title

Studs in a house are generally placed either 16 or 24 inches apart. Since the wood that studs are made of is not a good insulator, it is desirable to have the minimum number of them in your wall as possible while still providing sufficient support. For a smaller structure like a tiny house, 24 inches apart is usually adequate.

If possible, to reduce the number of studs and thus the amount of wood in the walls, windows should be positioned such that one side of them is against an existing stud. In load bearing walls (generally all four walls in a tiny house), if any windows or doors are large enough that they intersect a stud, a header will need to be placed above it to support the load from the cut stud. See the chapter on wall framing for more information on headers.

Older framing methods may suggest using two top plates in a house as well, but by lining up the rafter so that they make contact with the top plate at the same location that the studs make contact, the weight of the roof is transferred directly to the studs, and only a single top plate is required.

For additional information on proper building and framing standards, consult the International Building Code (IBC). For additional information on the most energy efficient framing techniques, search the internet for "advanced framing methods".

Second to last pt: if you're going to dismiss a tried-and-true method to inexperienced builders, it's going to need more thorough explanation.

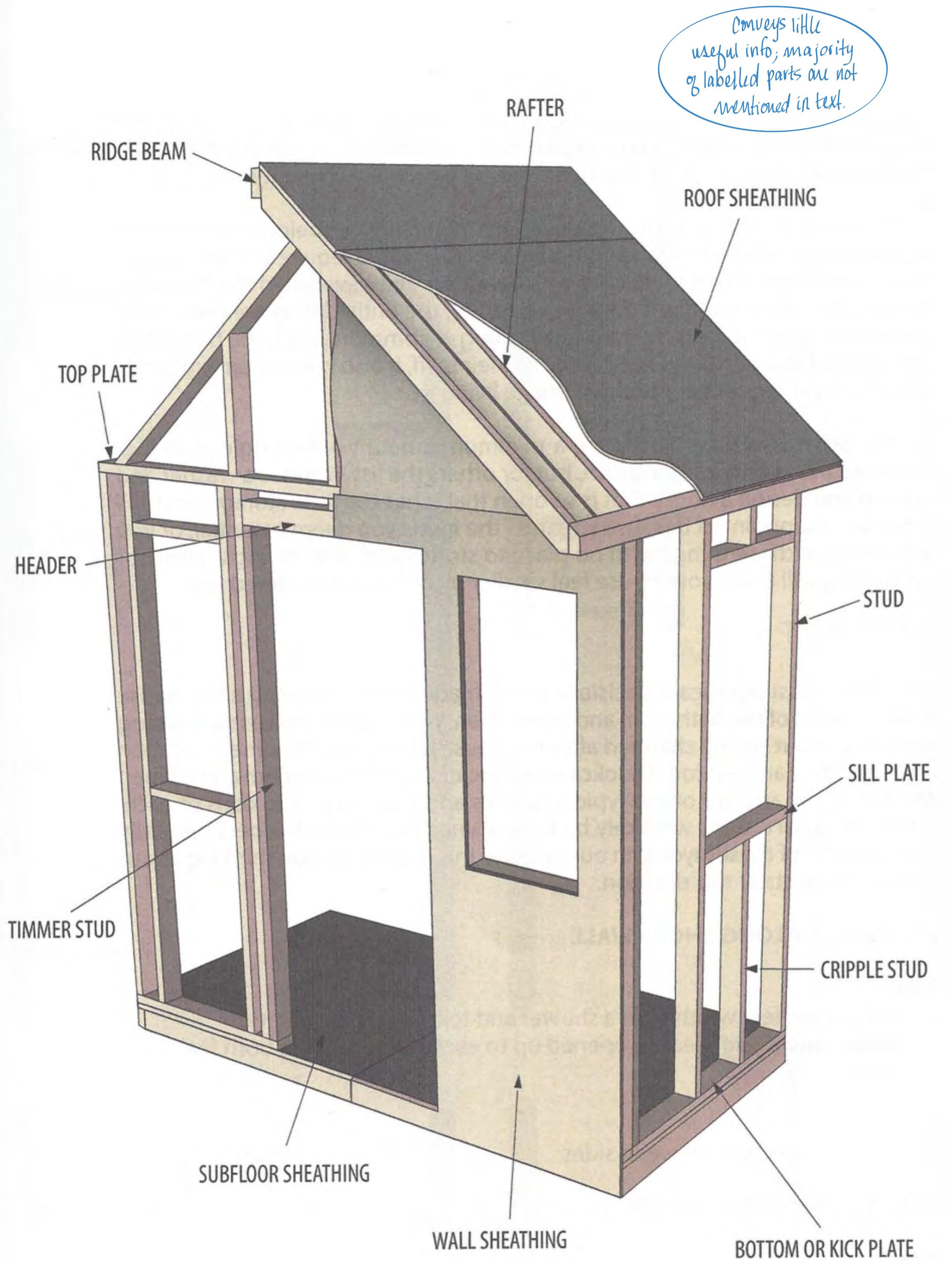
Expand section;  
"various components"  
of framing are introduced,  
but following paragraphs focus  
on too-vague info about  
stud placement

All:  
Specify  
the "first step"  
of what  
process

All:  
will your  
readers know  
all these  
terms?

State command  
first in imperative  
sentences.

This section seems shockingly short for such a crucial part of the build process.  
What's missing here?



Elements of the Frame  
Anatomy of a House

## DESIGNING FOR SMALL SPACES

This section gives one step of an unspecified process and a collection of considerations. Decide purpose of this section and revise accordingly.

The key to a successful interior design in a tiny house is having the room for all your belongings, while also having an open, roomy feel. Achieving those two conflicting goals in such a small space can be extremely challenging.

The first step, as I am sure you are aware, is to minimize your belongings. This will reduce the amount of storage and cabinets that will be required in the design. I have seen houses that were built by individuals that have failed this first step. In one case, when the front door was opened, the entire living area was filled with wall to wall cabinets. There was no sitting or common area to be had. While this allowed this person to keep more of their stuff, it also created an extremely unwelcoming space that I couldn't imagine living in.

On the other hand, we all require a minimum amount of belongings to live. For some this is only a toothbrush, but for others the list includes a washer and dryer. If you design a house that is so open that it has too little storage, you will either be disappointed because you miss the items you deem essential, or you will still have those things with no place to store them. Not having a place for everything will make your house feel smaller by giving it a cluttered feel.

All:  
"on the other hand" is not a logical transition from "the first step"

## HOUSE LAYOUT

One of the most significant decisions that is made when designing a tiny house is the location of the bathroom and the kitchen. While some choices concerning a house's layout can be changed after the house is built, like a cabinet's location or the need for an additional bookcase, the location of the bathroom and kitchen cannot. Below are two of the typical choices and a few pros and cons of each. While my observations will likely be biased since Tiny Home Builders primarily uses just one of these layouts in our designs, this should get you thinking about different aspects of this decision.

### BATHROOM ALONG SHORT WALL

#### Pros

- House is perfect width to fit a shower and toilet in this orientation
- Kitchen and living area are opened up to each other, making both feel larger

#### Cons

- Countertop is split between sides

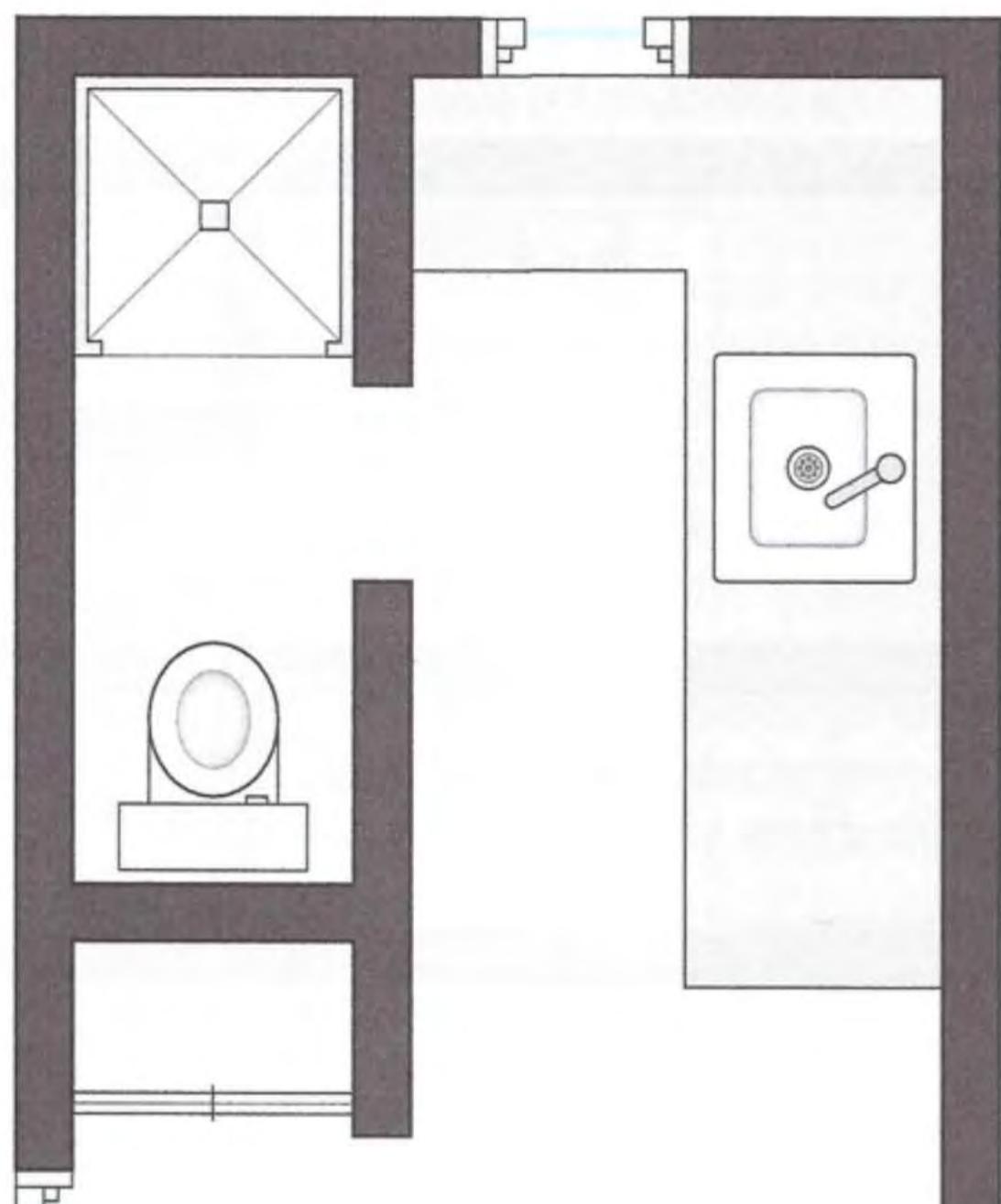
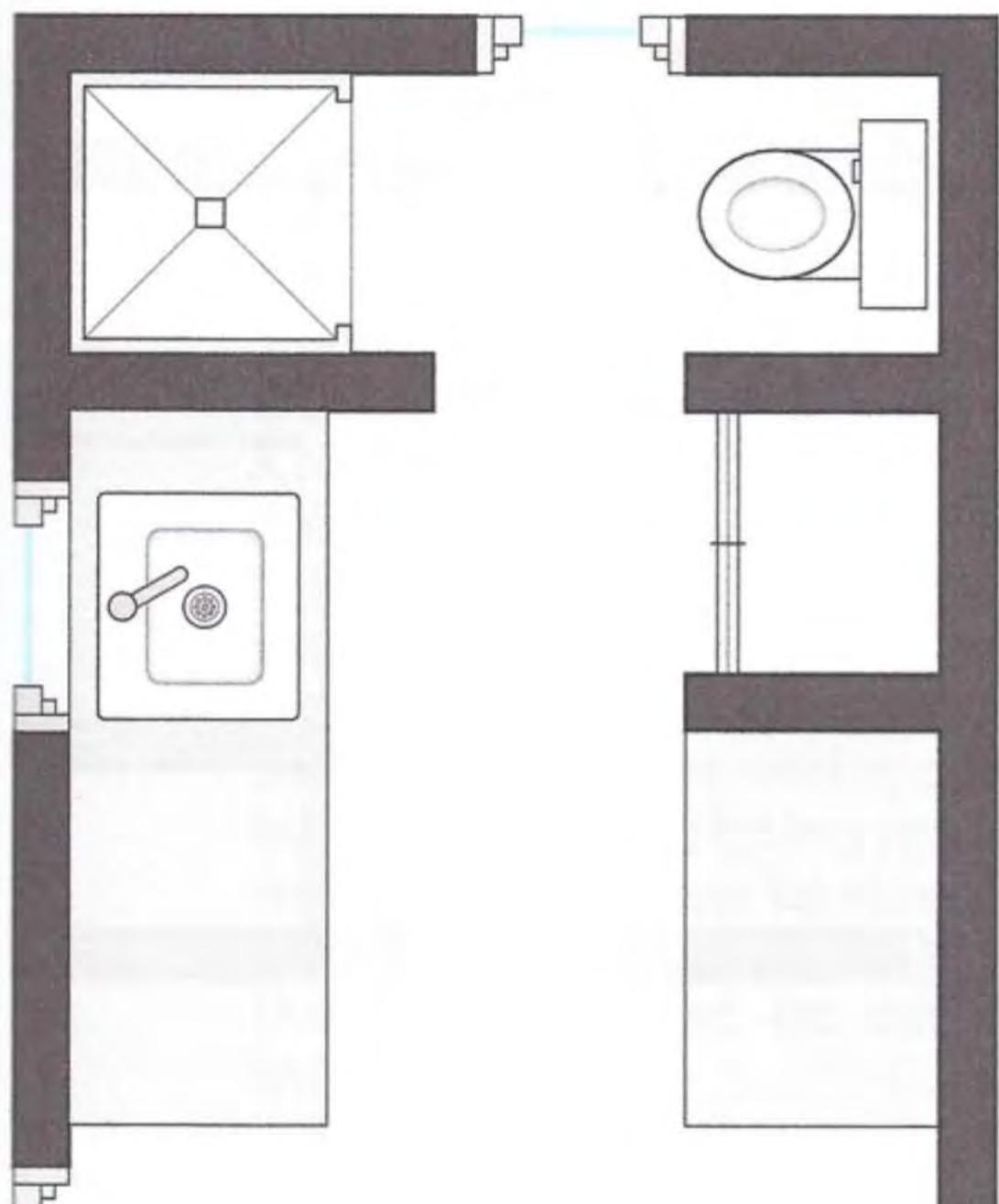
### BATHROOM ALONG LONG WALL

#### Pros

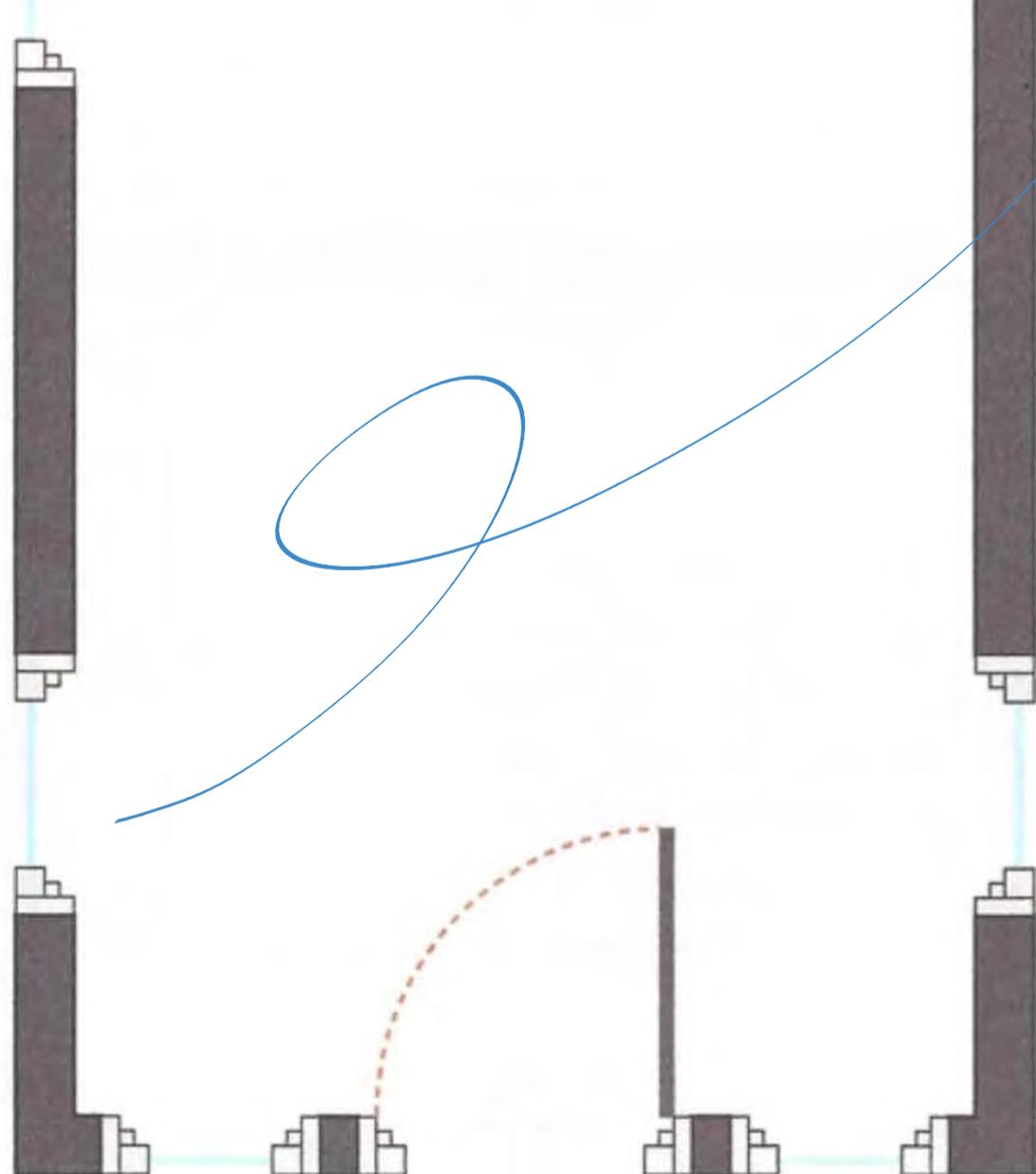
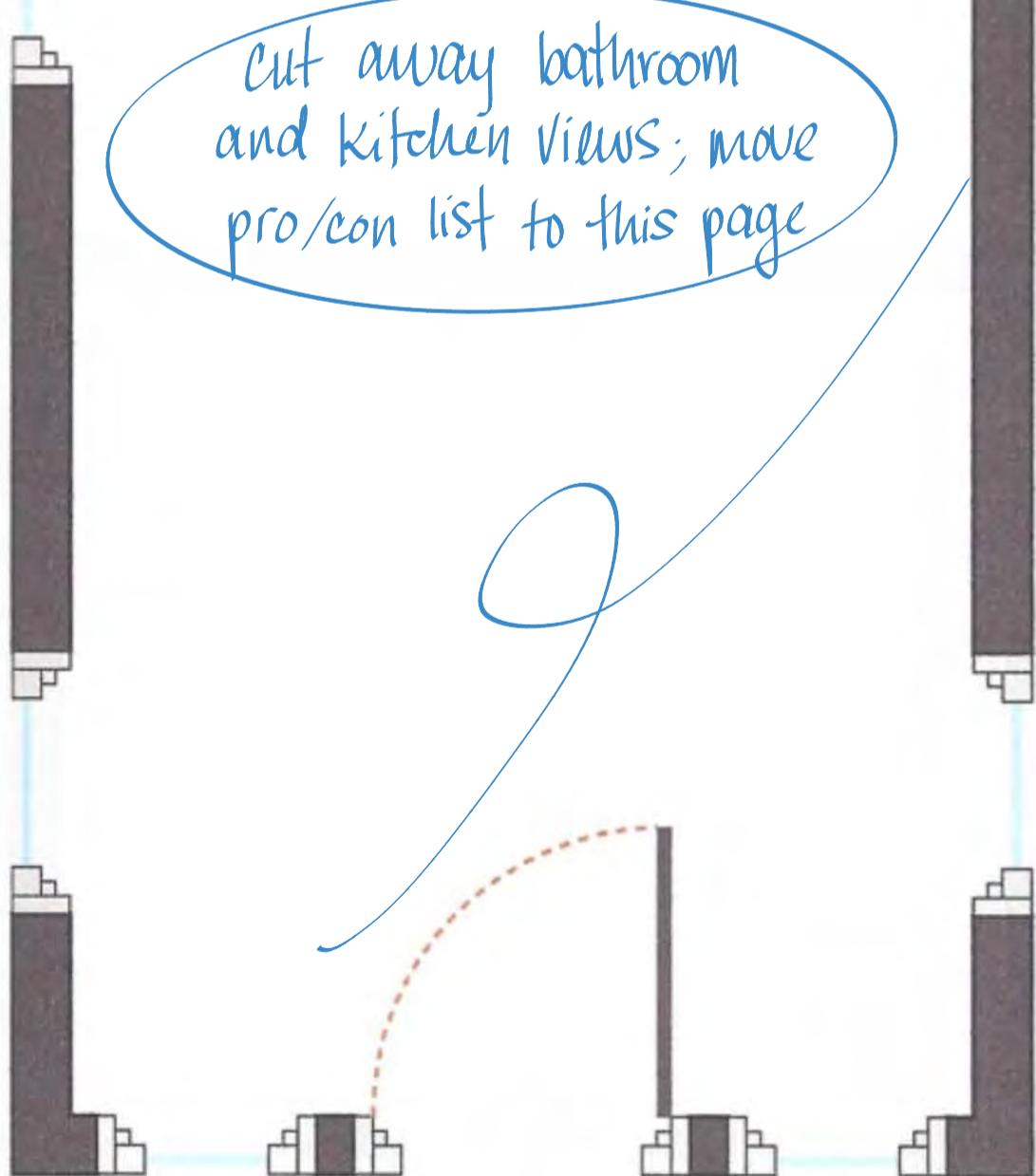
- Long, continuous countertop

feels incomplete. Needs more on lofts, built in storage, built in furniture, stairs (as storage!), porch options, variability of options based on length of trailer. Yeah, this section is missing too much.

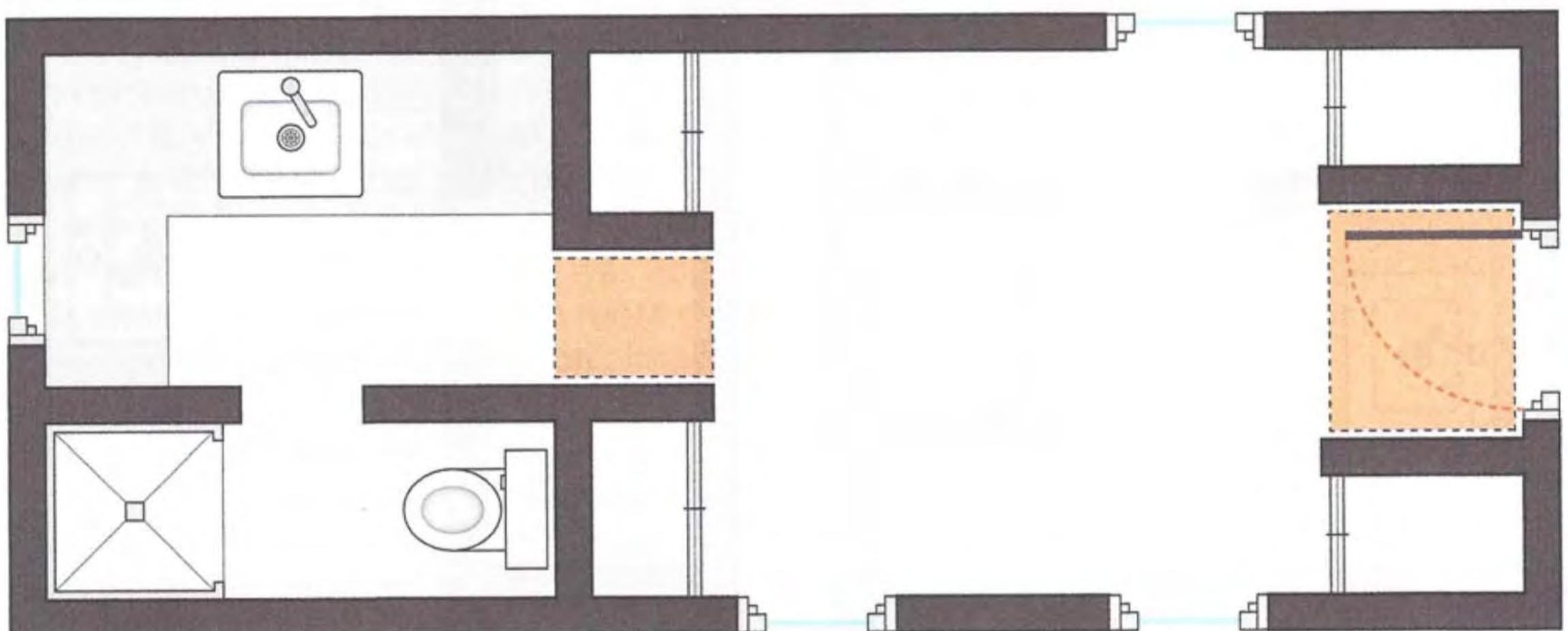
more  
pro/con list  
to next page to avoid  
two page delay on  
remaining parts



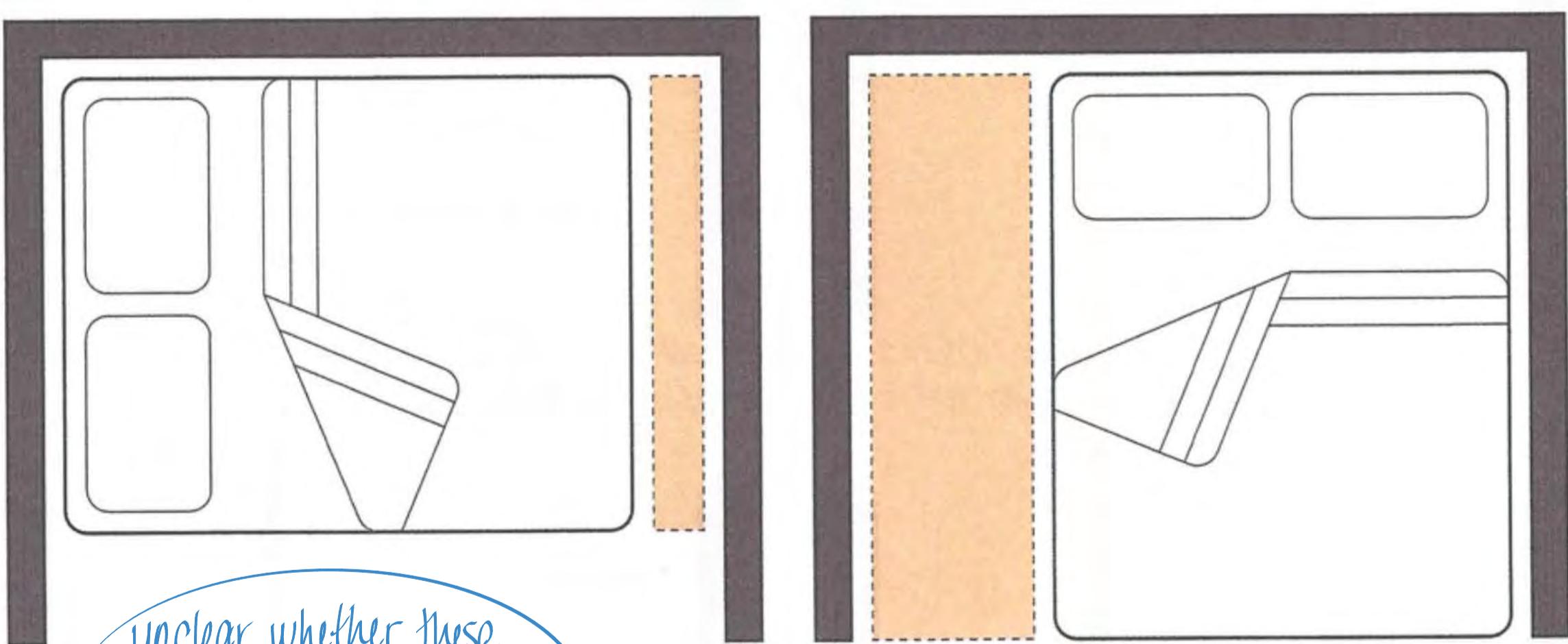
cut away bathroom  
and kitchen views; move  
pro/con list to this page



Bathroom/Kitchen Layout 



Micro Hallways in House Design



Efficient and Inefficient Furniture Placement

## Cons

- Kitchen may have a tighter feel since it is between two solid walls
- Depending on the size of the trailer, the bathroom may overlap the wheel well, which may present some design challenges
- If the bathroom is to be under a loft, there may be a size mismatch (i.e. desired bathroom size is bigger than desired loft size)

Also, try to avoid creating micro hallways in your design. It is very easy to identify a hallway in a traditional house. It's an interior passage whose purpose is simply to provide a means of getting from one room of a house to another. A micro hallway is a little more difficult to spot. A micro hallway is any area of a house that would likely only ever be used to get from one part of a tiny house to another. It's essentially a hallway without the enclosure. You might be asking yourself, "who would put a hallway in a tiny house?", but they're a little more common than you might think. In some cases they are built into the design and structure of a house, and in other cases they are created by the placement of furniture. When designing your tiny house try to minimize any floor space that would likely only ever be stood in for a few moments.

The areas indicated on the diagrams to the left are examples of micro hallways.

## EXISTING DESIGN

Because of the size constraints of a tiny house, the options for a tiny house's layout are limited. For instance, the front door can really only be placed on either the back of the trailer or on one of the sides. If it is placed on the side of the house it will most likely be off-center because of the wheel wells. If it's placed on the back of the house it will either be centered or along one of the edges. Because of these limitations, there are not nearly as many design combinations as can be found with traditional houses. So there is a good chance that a set of plans already exist for the design that you have in mind.

If you are able to settle on an existing design, even if there are a few items that you would like to change, this can be the easiest, least time consuming, and least expensive option. With existing plans there is no need to learn how to use a new design program or to be concerned if the house is properly framed (for example to support the load of the roof). All of that has already been done for you. Depending on how you value your time and the cost of the plans, this option can be significantly cheaper than designing a house yourself.

Another advantage to using an existing design, particularly if at least one house has been built from the design, is that many of the kinks have likely been worked out. Often a design may look good on paper, but once it is built, it may be discovered that it's not as practical or as functional as initially believed. For instance, the first house that was built by Tiny Home Builders included a storage

\* numbers/#'s consistency fails

loft above the bathroom. Since it was small and would not carry a very large load, 2x4s were used instead of 2x6s. This ended up being a poor decision as no recessed lights or bathroom exhaust fans are designed to fit in a 3½ inch ceiling cavity. In this particular case the fix was not very difficult, but it still took time and would have gone undiscovered in the plans had the house not actually been built.

*Revise: "Another benefit"  
Redundant transition.*

Another benefit to buying plans for a house that has already been built is that you get to see what it will look like when it is completed. Just as designs may not be as functional on paper, they may not look as good in real life either.

Finally, another benefit is that some plans come with additional valuable information like a materials list. As described in the Building Materials chapter, this can save a significant amount of money, essentially reducing or negating the cost of the plans.

The disadvantage of using an existing design is that it may not be exactly what you want, and depending on how easy it is to modify, compromises may need to be made.

## CUSTOMIZING AN EXISTING DESIGN

*All:  
consistency: "benefits"  
or "advantages"?*

*second-easiest option  
should be sub-section  
#2 of "design & plans"*

If you're only able to find a design that is close to what you want, but not exact, you may be able to customize it to fit your exact needs. Most plans are primarily framing plans, so changes to the exterior, including window and door locations, will require the most rework. Interior changes on the other hand, assuming that they still work with the existing window and door placement, may not require any changes to the plans at all.

### EXTERIOR CHANGES

Some minor framing and exterior customizations can be made to a design without making changes to the plans. Instead, these changes can be done during a house's construction and are usually referred to as 'site modifications'. An example of this type of change might be the removal of a window or even a slightly more difficult alteration like shifting the location of the wheel wells. While not having the plans exactly the way you want them before you begin construction is not optimal, with care and special attention they can still work.

If the plans that you purchase are provided to you in a format that can be easily changed, you will have a lot more flexibility as to the changes that you can make. For instance, the plans sold by Tiny Home Builders include not only a PDF version of the plans (that can't be easily changed), but also the Trimble SketchUp model (that can be easily changed). So if you plan to make alterations to a design, inquire about receiving the plans in a change friendly format.

## INTERIOR CHANGES

The framing of a house is primarily linked to the layout of the house through the window and door placement. For instance, if a kitchen is anticipated to be in a certain location it will likely have a window positioned above where the sink is expected. If instead you were to decide to move the kitchen to another wall, you'll need to ensure that any windows on that wall will not interfere with the cabinets.

Having the right tools for a job is extremely important as they can save a considerable amount of time and frustration

All: move onto  
following page.  
(it misses its friends ;)

TOOLS

Is this the only problem?

The problem for tiny home builders is that they are usually trying to minimize their belongings and so the prospect of acquiring a bunch of tools is unappealing.

will readers know what pneumatic tools are?

Some tools should be owned by every homeowner; however, others are large and would rarely be used (e.g. air compressor and pneumatic tools). While those tools can be rented, given the length of time that building a tiny house can take, an option to consider is buying them and then reselling them once you are finished.

Tools are often rented at a daily rate of between five and ten percent of their cost if new. That means that if a tool is rented for over twenty days, as much money or more will be spent than if it had been purchased new. However, if instead the tool was purchased new in the beginning, it could likely be sold at the end of the project for around fifty percent of the original cost. In this scenario the tool would be used longer and would cost only half as much as renting for the shorter length of time.

## FREE 'RENTALS'

Poor word choice

Revise: leave out 'free' tool claim. Focus on recuperable cost without the ethically dubious tone.

An even better option, if the required tools can be found in relatively good condition, is to buy used. A tool that is purchased used and only used for a few months adding little wear and tear could likely sell for near the same price that was originally paid, effectively allowing the use of the tool for free.

I was able to do this a few years ago with a refrigerator when I rented an apartment that didn't come with one. At that time I had the option to either rent one from the apartment complex for \$10 per month (\$120/year) or supply my own. After research I found that a new comparable model refrigerator cost \$200, while a used one between one and two years old cost about \$100. While the depreciation during the first year was significant, the depreciation during the second year was negligible. So I bought a one year old used refrigerator in near perfect condition for \$100, then one year later when I moved out I was able to sell it for \$100, thus paying nothing for the use of the refrigerator and saving myself \$120 in rental fees. This same method can be used for tools.

unnecessary repetition of point made in #3

Revise: Introduces one option, gives two.

A good place to look into buying and selling used tools is Craigslist.org and even eBay for smaller tools. There are also online retailers that are dedicated to selling refurbished tools.

## TOOL LIST

Below is a list of the tools that I use and a description of how I use them when building tiny houses.

## THE ESSENTIALS

organize into groups by material, function, type (hand vs. electric), or similar.

**HAMMER** - This is one of the most commonly used tools. From hammering nails to knocking boards in place, a builder won't get far without one of these.

inconsistency: "a must" doesn't adhere to "how I use them" intro of list.

**TAPE MEASURE** - A quality, sturdy 25 foot tape measure is a must.

But what is it?  
"Hammer" got defined  
why not "tape measure"?

**PENCIL** - Carpenters have their own pencils for a reason, a thicker lead means less time sharpening and more strength while marking rough lumber.

**UTILITY KNIFE & BLADES** - A utility knife is used to cut the house wrap, tar paper, and even to score the metal roof panels.

**CHALK LINE** - This is used to mark a straight line over an extended length. It's essentially a string that is covered in chalk. The string is pulled tight before being pulled back and released to strike a surface where a mark is left behind. This tool is used most frequently while installing the exterior siding and flooring. While using this tool be careful that the chalk doesn't come in contact with any wood that will be visible when the house is complete as it can be very difficult to remove or cover up. Red chalk is the most difficult to remove and so blue chalk is recommended.

**SCREW DRIVERS** - Screw drivers are used for ~~miscellaneous tasks throughout the project~~, particularly while installing the electrical outlets, switches, and plates.

**DRILL** - A drill is used to drill holes and to drive shorter screws. If the framing of the house is fastened with screws this tool will get a lot of use pre-drilling many of the framing boards

**IMPACT DRIVER** - Impact drivers are used primarily to drive screws (although they do make drill bit attachments). While this tool may be confused for a drill, it works in a different way to produce a lot more torque than a drill. While a standard drill might have a difficult time driving a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inch screw (without stripping it), this tool will do it with ease. The biggest drawback to this tool is that it is somewhat loud to operate.

**CIRCULAR SAW** - A circular saw is used to cut all of the sheathing and the occasional 2x4.

**MITER SAW** - A miter saw is essential to house framing. Behind the impact driver it is the most commonly used power tool. Almost every single board (except for the sheathing) used in your house will have an edge cut with this saw. While a 10 inch saw will do ninety-five percent of the cuts, a twelve inch version with a blade that pivots in both directions is the best option.

impact driver  
not described  
as "most used"  
tool in its  
earlier entry

All:  
inconsistent numbers/cts  
on this page, too.

All:  
Random collection;  
group into measuring,  
marking, or other  
logical relationship.



Carpenter's Pencil, Screw Drivers, Hammer, Tape Measure, Chalk Line, and Utility Knife



Captions don't  
make clear which  
tools are which.

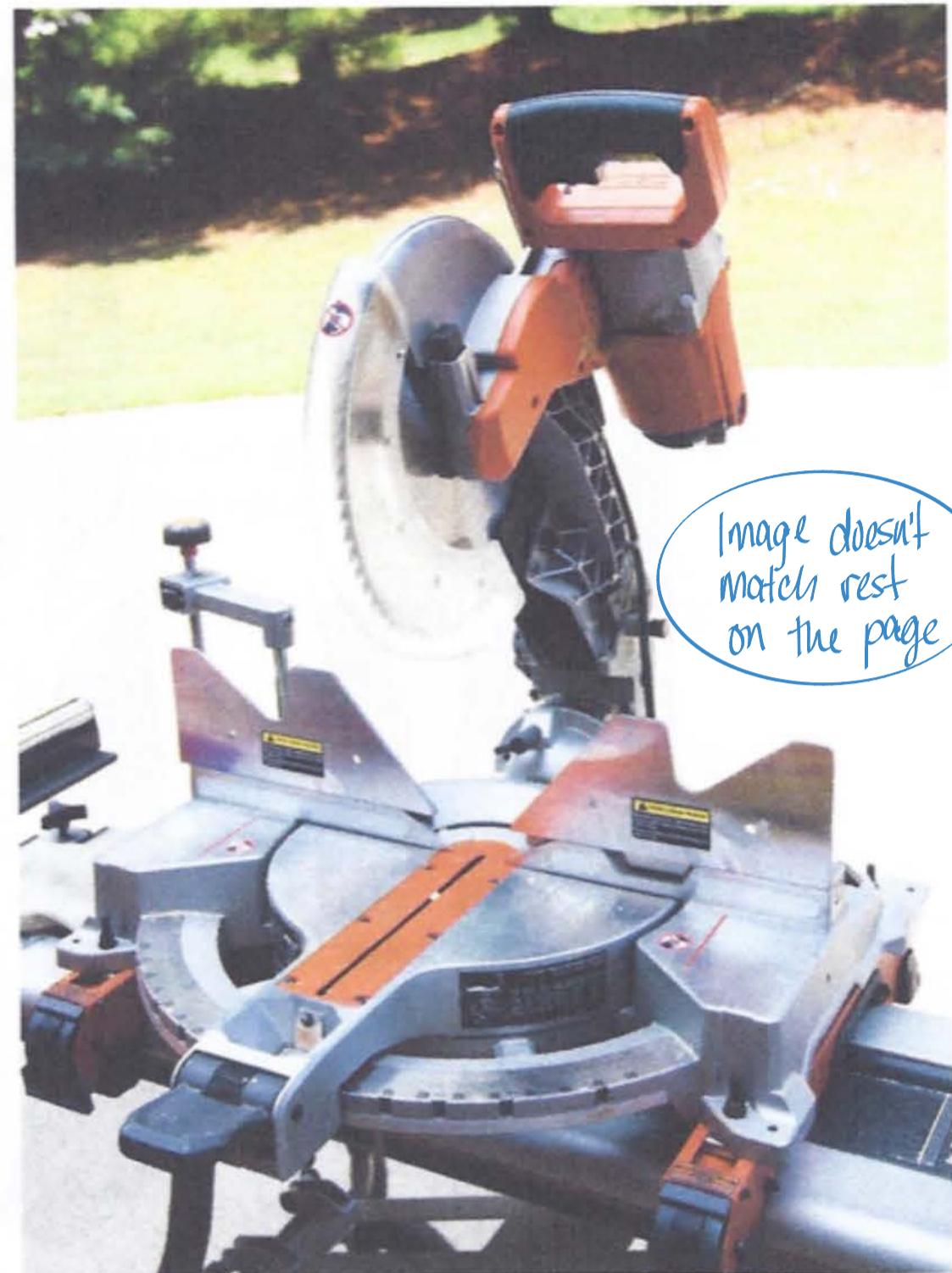
Drill and Impact Driver

Why is extension cord the most visually significant part of this photo?



Circular Saw and Extension Cord

not included  
in tools list



Miter Saw

Image doesn't  
match rest  
on the page



PVC Pipe Cutter and Hole Saw

Revision: decide if definitions should include specific tasks or simpler explanations, then make them more uniform

Consistency: Why is "PVC cutter tool" the only entry on page that talks about cost?

**PVC PIPE CUTTER** - A pipe cutter is an inexpensive tool that creates quick and clean cuts of PVC and CPVC. A hand or miter saw can also be used as a substitute for this tool but it is not nearly as convenient and will leave behind burs that will need to be removed before the pipes are attached to any fittings.

is it a tool  
or an attachment?

"hole saw" defined through specific (synonymous) tasks but "level" definition is much more vague

**HOLE SAW** - A hole saw is a blade that attaches to a conventional drill. This tool is used to make holes in the subfloor for the drainage plumbing as well as holes in the exterior walls for the bathroom vent and the plumbing exhaust.

**LEVEL** - A level is used often to verify that various surfaces are level.

Ex:  
last sentence  
main point.

**SQUARES** - Squares come in various shapes and sizes. The most commonly used square is called a speed square because of its small size. Squares are used to assist in marking lines and making cuts that are 90 degrees.

use positive  
constructions

**PLIERS** - Pliers aren't used that often except when installing the electrical. They are, however, an essential tool for any homeowner.

**WIRE CUTTERS** - Wire cutters are used while installing the electric lines. This is thick wire so the larger the cutters the better.

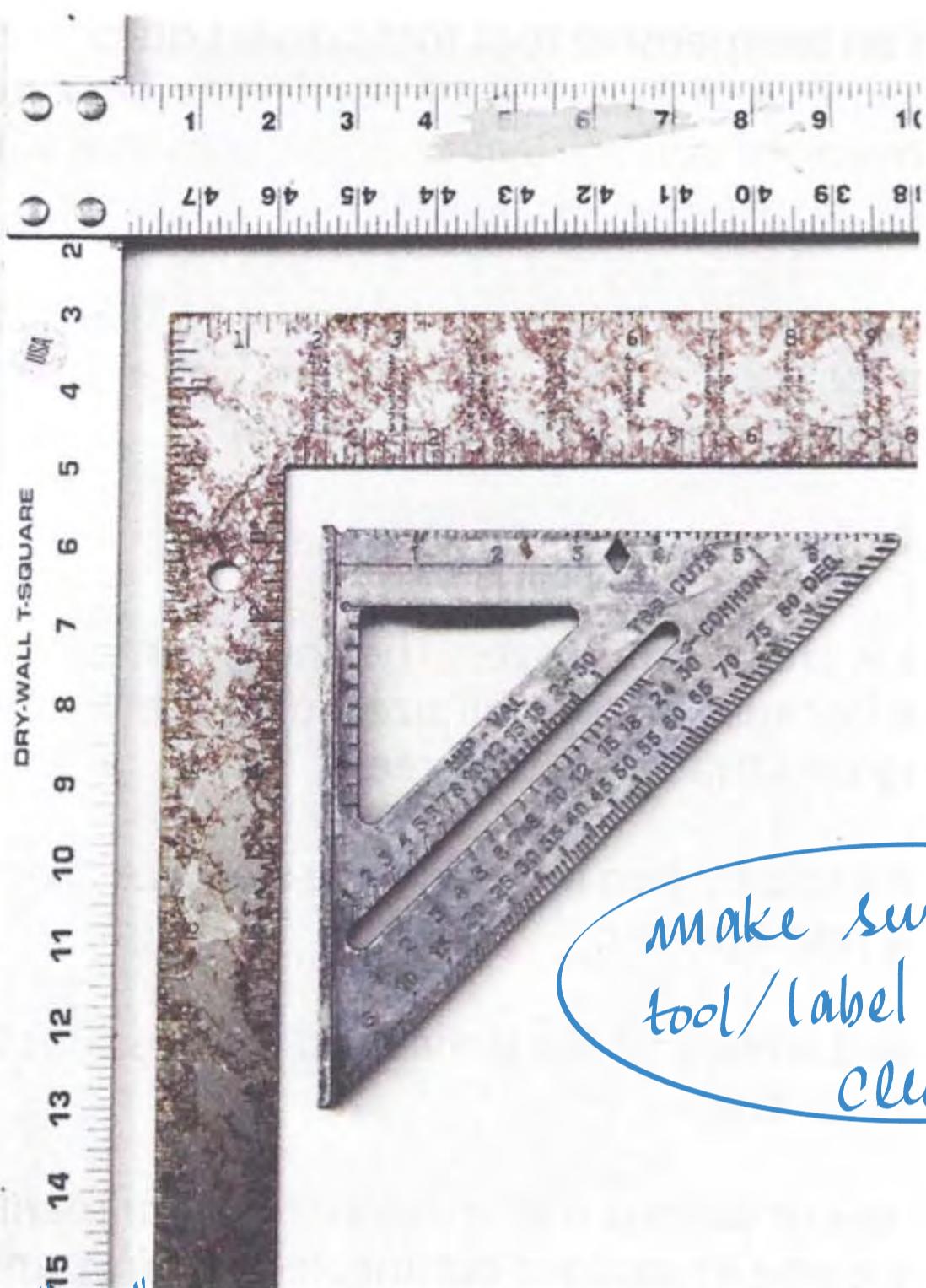
what sizes do they come in?  
how long is too long?

**STEEL SNIPS** - Steel snips are used to cut various metal components primarily while installing the metal roof. They come in straight cutting, left cutting, and

This is an inefficient  
use of space.



Level



Drywall T Square, Carpenters Square, Speed Square



Pliers, Tin Snips, Wire Cutters



Angle Grinder

right cutting versions that designate in which direction they can easily cut angles. These are discussed in more detail in the chapter on roofing.

include page number

**GRINDER** - A grinder is occasionally used on the metal roofing panels to cut sections where the snips or shears have a hard time reaching. These are discussed in more detail in the chapter on roofing.

include page number

## ALMOST ESSENTIAL

AU: revise for precision; this word combo is needlessly ambiguous.

**TABLE SAW** - A table saw is incredibly useful. It only made it to the 'almost essential' list because a circular saw can do a lot of what a table saw is used for (cutting boards lengthwise). But a table saw does it much more easily and with a lot more precision.

**FLAT BAR** - A flat bar isn't used that often but can be especially helpful with removing stubborn nails or adjusting sheathing and flooring. A straight claw hammer can often be used as a substitute.

**COMPRESSOR AND PNEUMATIC TOOLS** - Since a house can be framed by screwing together the boards, a compressor and pneumatic tools are not required. They can however speed up progress considerably and I wouldn't want to install interior plank paneling without a pneumatic brad nailer.

**JIG SAW** - A jig saw's small blade makes it unique in that it can easily make curved cuts. This tool is not used often but is really handy when cutting the sheathing and siding around the wheel wells. A hand coping saw can be used as a substitute.

**POWER SHEARS** - Power shears are used to make quick and clean cuts to a metal roof panel. A combination of snips and a grinder, or a utility knife can be used as a substitute.

"hand coping saw" not included in list of essential tools



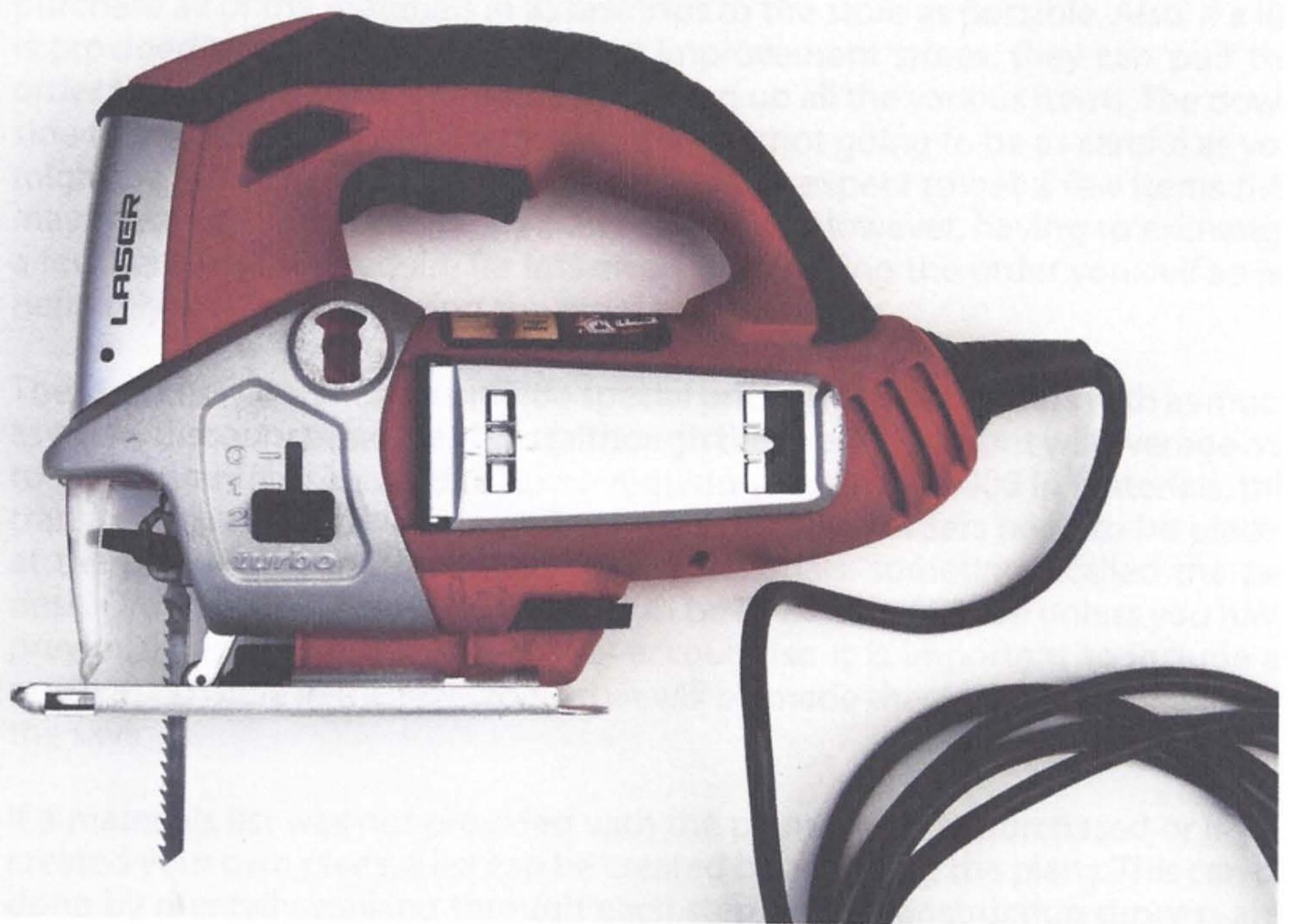
Flat Bar



Air Compressor



Table Saw



Jig Saw



Electric Power Shears