

Timber Frame: Build Your Own, Larger Frames FAQ

Group Size

Standard pricing includes participation for a minimum of 6 people and a maximum of 8 people on your building team. Due to Covid restrictions, larger groups will not be permitted in 2021.

If you end up with fewer than the recommended number of participants, it may not be possible to completely finish the project in the allotted time. North House often receives inquiries from people interested in working on someone's project but not able to pay tuition to do so. If you are open to including these students in your group, please let us know and we will share their contact information so you can determine if they are someone you'd want to work with.

Lodging & Food

Finding lodging for your group is the responsibility of the student. Some groups choose to camp in the next door municipal campground, others rent a house or stay at the hostel or other hotels. For the best list of available lodging options, see visitcookcounty.com. Many places offer a discount to North House students; don't forget to inquire!

Daily Schedule & What to Expect

A typical day in class begins at 9am and concludes at 5pm with an hour long lunch break. There can be some flexibility in this schedule with your instructor when class begins. Students should expect to be on their feet and physically active all day, but people of many ages, abilities and prior experiences can learn to timber frame: there is no need to have extensive woodworking skills prior to this course. Students should wear close-toed shoes and clothes that can get dusty.

Tools

Each participant ideally needs:

- 1 1/2 inch Chisel: you will need a chisel with at least a 5" blade. The Stanley "Contractor Grade" and Buck Brothers are less expensive options. Woodcraft and Sorby make good framing chisels, but make sure they measure exactly 1 1/2". The Barr chisel is an excellent tool and is available at the North House School Store for \$150. (Call 888-387-9762 to reserve your tool)
- Wood mallet: with a wood handled chisel you will want a 20-40 oz. mallet with wood, plastic or rawhide head. (Also available @ North House School Store).
- ear and eye protection: available to borrow, but you may prefer your own for comfort & fit

Optional Tools to Bring

- framing square
- combination square



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- tape measure
- Pencil
- circular saw with sharp blade (thin kerf blades work well)
- extension cord
- hand saw (Japanese pull saws with both crosscut and rip teeth work well)
- corner chisel
- slick

Information about where to purchase many of these items is provided after registration.

Instructors

All Build Your Own Larger Frame courses are taught by highly experienced, qualified professional timber frame instructors. Generally, each instructor teaches one session per year based on their availability. In 2021, the August session will be taught by Peter Henrikson.

How do I get my frame home?

How you transport the frame depends on many factors. Using the 24x28 as an example, the frame weighs approximately 15,000 pounds. The longest timber is 24 feet, but if this will be too long for you to transport then we can modify the design so all timbers will be 16 feet or less. This will be at least two trailer loads with a pickup and heavy duty trailer. North House can also provide contact info for trucking options in the area.

Can I store my frame at North House after the class?

Short term storage (one week or less) is generally available depending on North House event scheduling.

What kind of timbers are available?

The majority of projects at North House use Eastern White Pine timbers, sourced sustainably and milled locally (5 miles from campus). White Pine is both easy to work and excellent to use green as it remains fairly stable as it dries. The timbers are band sawn and have a uniform “rough cut” surface. Most students choose to keep the rough cut look but use a sanding brush to remove the “fuzz”. Planing the timbers either with hand planes or power planer is an option for students. This adds to the person hours and thus the cost of the project. Species other than White Pine are available with enough notice to have them cut and delivered.



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