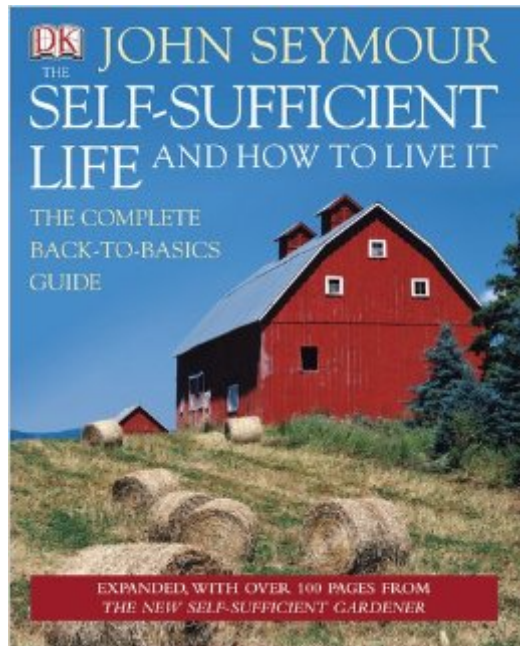


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# The Self-Sufficient Life And How To Live It



## Synopsis

The Self Sufficient Life and How to Live It is the only book that teaches all the skills needed to live independently in harmony with the land harnessing natural forms of energy, raising crops and keeping livestock, preserving foodstuffs, making beer and wine, basketry, carpentry, weaving, and much more. Our 2003 edition included 150 new full-color illustrations and a special section in which John Seymour, the father of the back to basics movement, explains the philosophy of self-sufficiency and its power to transform lives and create communities. More relevant than ever in our high-tech world, The Self Sufficient Life and How to Live It is the ultimate practical guide for realists and dreamers alike.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 408 pages

Publisher: DK; 100th ed. edition (August 17, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0756654505

ISBN-13: 978-0756654504

Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 1.2 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.9 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (160 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This book is an excellent one for dreaming. The volume looks like a coffee table book; it's large and filled with color pictures. And while John Seymour was able to live a pretty self-sufficient life on a farm, I know it's unlikely I'll ever do so. Nevertheless, reading about all Seymour learned and how he suggests others follow in his footsteps is inspiring. Seymour is quick to note that self-sufficiency isn't about going back in time and living what is probably an idealized version of the old homesteading days. But he does realize the more self sufficient we are, the more free we are. And so his book explains how to raise and grow food, produce your own energy, and build a variety of things (from compost toilets to brick walls). While there are a couple of pages with ideas for the urban garden, this book is really for those who have (or dream of having) real acreage. Seymour

explains what he'd do with one acre, five acres, and more. Those of us without the means to buy that much property can only drool. The gardening section of the book provides solid, organic gardening advice, with good information about keeping the soil working and healthy with crop rotation, growing grains, the basics of extending the season by "growing under cover," how to grow a wide variety of vegetables, herbs, and fruits, and building and using a greenhouse. The next largest section focuses on raising cows, goats, pigs, sheep, poultry, and bees. You'll also find information on obtaining power from water, the sun, and the wind; how to clear and irrigate land; a bit about obtaining food from the wild; building and using a dairy; making butter, cream, and cheese; building a store room; making bread, wine and beer; some bare bone information about crafts like basket making and spinning; and some rather incomplete information (along with some unsafe, outdated details) on canning. The author also offers some practical ideas on how to gradually become more self-sufficient. I enjoyed this book immensely.

Kristina Seleshanko

### Proverbs Thirty One Woman

If you have trouble with British English and/or don't want to take the time to look up a few words here and there, this book is not for you. Which is unfortunate, because this is the best organized, well written book on this subject. Specialized topic books may be more in depth, but other general homesteading books aren't. And I've read them all from my library. A great thing about this book is the season by season planning guides. The vegetable growing charts are a lot more useful as well because they focus on the work to be done at different times in the season rather than seed depths and spacing. That info is on most seed packets anyway. Another thing I like is that it does not repeatedly tell you to spend money and/or use chemicals. Many methods are described with options such as The Old Way, The European Way, the Conventional Way and the "I Don't Want To Spend and Money" Way. Many things are presented in a very "laissez faire" manner, which I appreciate. Unlike books such as *The Backyard Homestead*, this book is all always on topic. New, sometimes foreign, concepts are explained well. There is no filler and fluff. For example, this book gives instructions for making ice cream and provides a basic recipe. Fine. More time is spent explaining more relevant topics. The other book I mention has a few pages of "different" ice cream recipes - which are not really needed as it just involves adding different flavorings - but the gardening info is explained on a VERY basic level. BTW, the book is text heavy. I consider this a good thing because it really explains topics in much more detail. The text is also balanced by the superb diagrams and illustrations. Everything and every tool he mentions are illustrated. As another reviewer mentioned, there's some names for tools that you won't recognize because it's UK English.

But since there's a picture right there, you can figure out what we call it here in the U.S. or find a similar item. If you are looking for a good solid overview that's really useful, this is it!

While this is a really good book, a classic on the subject, it doesn't go into depth on any one subject. It's more like a list of what you might need to be self-sufficient and a page or two about each item. As an example, the pages on goats mentions how to house them and what to feed them, but never mentions that you'll need to trim their hooves and how to do so. It's a good book, and definitely one to have for your self-sufficiency library, but it won't teach you everything you'll need to know. I would also suggest "The Backyard Homestead" by Carleen Madigan and "The Encyclopedia of Country Living, 40th Anniversary Edition " by Carla Emery (for a start).

Hey! First I'll give you all my warning: This was written by a man who lived in England. And that is reflected by a lot of the things written inside this book. However, everything it contains can be used in other countries as well. Sure, if you live in a tropical climate, or even a semi-tropical climate, the information may be a little problematic, but I'm sure with some slight adjustments, you can still make it work. This information comes from a great source, a man who truly lived the self-sufficient life. And, sure, he's a bit annoying about how if you don't live his way, you're living the wrong way, but the publishers seemed to have strived very hard to smother that attitude, and have, for the most part, succeeded. This book allows for the option of living in a suburban neighborhood and still being self-sufficient. It lays out a lot of options, some truly awesome. One thing I didn't expect before I bought this book: It has recently been expanded to include over 100 pages from *The New Self-Sufficient Gardener* By: John Seymour. The version I checked out at my local library did not have this, so it was quite a pleasant surprise. Hope this helps all you potential customers, and happy reading! Luv ya, Tashi :)

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