

## Some Facts About Quonset Huts

Quonset huts, those ubiquitous arched [metal buildings](#) that still dot our landscape today, originated and were constructed at a U.S. Naval facility in Quonset, Rhode Island for use during World War II. Originally modeled after the semicylindrical British Nissen hut, Quonset hut creators modified the Nissen design to include a wooden lining, insulation, and tongue and groove wooden flooring. The Seabee Museum and Memorial Park in Davisville, Rhode Island, houses a Quonset huts display to honor both the original Quonset huts factory in Davisville, Rhode Island and the historical connection between the Seabees and Quonset huts.

The genius of Quonset huts rests with their durability and mobility in the battlefield. The military needed something that could be quickly and easily assembled and taken apart for transport to the next location, sometimes every day. Quonset huts successfully addressed the need for lightweight and movable storage and housing and gradually evolved into structures that could be used as bakeries, showers, latrines, dental offices, and isolation wards. However, the initial Quonset huts design presented problems with its expanded uses and was subsequently recast from a sixteen feet by thirty six feet sized building with wall curve beginning flush with the floor to a structure with sidewalls and multiple interior designs. Following the war, the military was left with a surplus of Quonset huts and sold them to the public for one thousand dollars per unit. They proved so attractive that universities purchased some for student housing and returning soldiers purchased some of the huts for their personal housing.

The Quonset huts of today are so versatile that they are perfect for machinery or grain storage, backyard workshops, or even airplane hangars. Or, how about a guest cottage made from a Quonset hut. The lack of beams and trusses in the Quonset hut design equals 100 percent useable space, and the huts can be expanded to any length simply by adding additional sidewall panels. You can also customize Quonset huts with skylights, insulation, wiring, and colors that match the exterior of your home. With their corrugated steel construction, Quonset huts are amazingly strong; in fact, their rounded arch design is one of the strongest structures in architecture. Quonset huts have been known to withstand heavy rain and snow, earthquakes, tornadoes, and hurricanes.

Calling on a few friends to help, you can have your Quonset hut kit assembled in just a few days. After laying your foundation (on a graded and level surface), simply bolt the steel panels together and your Quonset hut is complete. Adding durable and attractive storage or workshop space has never been easier.

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## About the Author

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