

Trash House



Reading

As the earth gets more crowded, the mountains of trash in every town and city are growing. What should we do with all this junk? Sharon and Jack Ehrhardt are helping to solve the problem. Their house is made of trash. They collected most of the building materials for the house themselves – for free!

The outside walls are made of about 1,000 used tires that were filled with dirt and then covered with plaster. The inside walls consist of old cans and glass bottles, which are covered with coat of dirt and mud. The thick walls make the home extremely strong. Since they move as the earth moves, the house can't be damaged in an earthquake.

The couple gets electricity from the sun. They collect rainwater for taking baths and washing clothes and dishes. The back of the house is buried under a small hill, which helps to keep it cool in the summer. The Ehrhardts are delighted with their earth-friendly home, called an "Earthship." Earthships are becoming more and more popular with people who are tired of trash.

Source: Totally True 3

Comprehension Check

1. What kind of materials did the Ehrhardts collect for their house?
2. What are the outside walls made of?
3. What about the inside walls? What are they made of?
4. Why can't the earthquake damage their home?
5. Where do their electricity and water come from?
6. How do they feel about their home?

Let's Talk!

1. Would you like to live in an Earthship? Why or why not?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in an Earthship?
3. What can you say about the house where you live in now?
4. If you could build your own house, what would your home be made of?
5. In Japan, what do you do with your trash?
6. Do Japanese people recycle?
7. Why is it important to recycle?
8. How do you save electricity and water?