

All about Tiny Houses

Tiny houses are trending right now. But what's the hype all about?

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Page 1 of 4

Kötz, Germany. The Tiny House Trend Report shows where these mini houses are most popular in Germany. Plus, the experts from AL-KO Vehicle Technology reveal what needs to be considered when building a Tiny House.

Press contact:
AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group
Hans Posthumus
Ichenhauser Straße 14
89359 Kötz, Germany
+49 8221 97-8335
Hans.posthumus@alko-tech.com

www.alko-tech.com

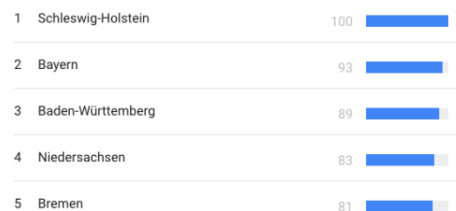
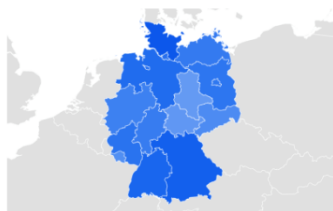
The trend from America

A Tiny House is exactly what the name implies: the smallest form of residential building. But there is more behind the concept than just a new kind of house. It is rather more of a modern approach to life. Although the trend for minimalist living originated in the USA, more and more people in Germany are keen to live in a Tiny House. "We're seeing strong growth in the number of people interested in Tiny Houses. So far, we have recorded over 500 Tiny Houses built each year," reports Regina Schleyer, Chairwoman of the Board of the Tiny House Association in Germany. It is also surprising that, when it comes to implementing their Tiny House project, the majority of interested parties are not young but between the ages of 46 and 55.



Caption 1: More and more people in Germany feel at home in a Tiny House.
[Number of interested parties in Germany © Tiny House Association]

The trend towards Tiny Houses is a direct response to contemporary issues. Housing is all too often a scarce commodity and rents are really exploding – particularly in urban centres. Tiny Houses offer the perfect housing alternative to expensive rented accommodation in big cities – especially for those who cannot afford a regular house. Some models are available from as little as €20,000, and the more you do yourself, the cheaper it gets. To meet the high demand, two Tiny House villages have already been created in Germany for permanent mini-home living. The Tiny House Village in Mehmeisel with around 35 houses was created by converting a campsite. In Hollenbek, the Tiny House village was built on a railway site and offers space for eight mini houses. Many more projects are in the pipeline.



Caption 2: The demand for Tiny Houses is particularly high in urban centres. [Number of interested parties by federal state © Tiny House Association]

If you are thinking about living in a Tiny House, there are several important things you should consider beforehand:

What requirements must a Tiny House meet?

Due to the rapid demand, the number of manufacturers and the range of different mini house variants is increasing every month. The Tiny House on Wheels variant is either built from the start on a trailer that can be towed by car, or it is designed to be transported by a low-loader. The experts at AL-KO developed their own AL-KO chassis for Tiny Houses based on their decades of experience in chassis construction. "We see this trend as a significant future market and want our chassis to provide a secure foundation for high-quality Tiny Houses," says Karlheinz Spägle, Vice President Sales CT & LCV at AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group, explaining the decision. The hot-dip galvanised chassis components and multi-stage inspection process guarantee longevity and the highest degree of safety. The AL-KO chassis for

Tiny Houses also allows different body lengths as well as bespoke bodies.

Page 3 of 4



Caption 3: AL-KO chassis for tiny houses ©AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group

Simply building according to your own taste will unfortunately backfire with the Tiny House. If you want to be truly mobile, Germany's road traffic regulations stipulate size and weight limits. If you are building a micro house on a trailer without a special permit, you will need a caravan permit and a TÜV. In this case, the Tiny House must not weigh more than 3.5 tonnes and must not exceed the maximum size of 4 metres in height and 2.55 metres in width. That's why Tiny Houses are rarely larger than 25 square metres. But although you may have to limit yourself in terms of household goods, the Tiny Houses built on trailers still have everything you need: a living area with kitchenette, sanitary facilities including a shower and toilet, and a sleeping loft.

Where can you set up Tiny Houses?

Mobility sounds great at first, but in Germany this actually involves navigating through a great deal of bureaucracy. According to German law, the Tiny House changes from a vehicle to a building when it is parked – regardless of whether it is on wheels or a foundation. Therefore, it may only be located on a developed plot with planning permission. This means Tiny House residents have to deal with the respective utility networks and obtain a building permit every time they move. If, on the other hand, the Tiny House is parked on a campsite or in a holiday home area, it can stay there permanently without planning permission. However, it must be clarified in advance whether permanent camping is permitted in the relevant municipality.

What other things are there to consider?

As this form of house building is still quite new in Germany, it is difficult to find suitable insurance. "It's still difficult to find building insurance for a house on wheels, as they are usually designed for buildings with a solid

foundation. Typical camping insurance policies, on the other hand, are limited to caravans parked on official campsites," Spägele points out. In addition, problems can arise with regard to financing Tiny Houses. If a house is firmly anchored to a plot of land, the loan for the building project can be entered in the land register by means of a land charge, which provides the bank with the necessary collateral for the loan. However, if there is no associated plot of land, as is the case with mobile Tiny Houses, a land register entry cannot be used as collateral. In this case, the value of the property must be sufficient as collateral.

In conclusion, Tiny Houses certainly have their charm. And if all criteria are considered in advance, nothing stands in the way of a safe and secure home!

About the AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group

The AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group is a globally operating technology company. With high-quality chassis components for trailers, leisure vehicles and commercial vehicles, the corporate group stands for best functionality, highest comfort and innovations for more driving safety. The AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group includes the 13 international brands AL-KO, Aguti, Bankside Patterson, Bradley, CBE, cmtrailer parts, E&P Hydraulics, G&S Chassis, Hume, Preston Chassis, SAFIM, SAWIKO and Winterhoff. Founded in 1931, the group currently generates sales of round about 700 million euros with around 3,000 employees and over 30 locations worldwide. The AL-KO Vehicle Technology Group is a wholly owned subsidiary of DexKo Global Inc., a portfolio company of KPS Capital.