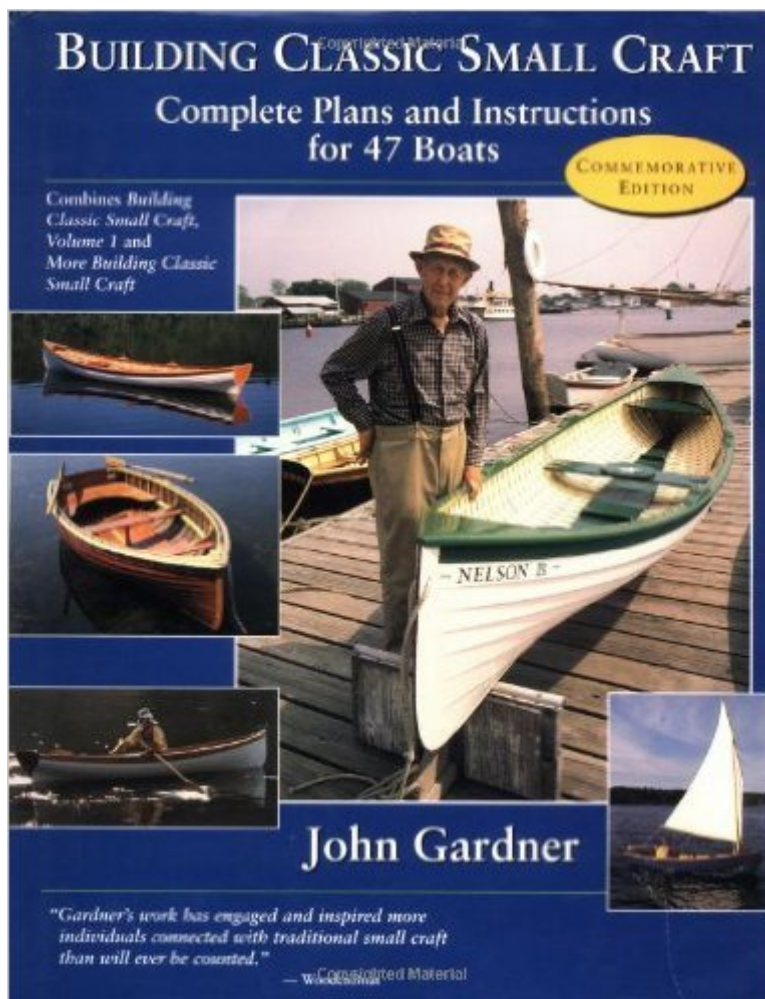


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# Building Classic Small Craft: Complete Plans And Instructions For 47 Boats



## Synopsis

Featuring the collected wisdom of the dean of American small craft builders, this commemorative volume combines John Gardner's building Classic Small Craft, Volume One and More Building Classic Small Craft into one definitive magnum opus. Besides a lifetime's worth of tested projects, it includes salutes and eulogies from Gardner's legions of fans.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I find the book to be a good general guide to the various boat designs covered - but, only for the previously experienced boat builder. It is not a good book for the beginner to learn basic shipwright skills and does not cover the more specific aspects of construction (such as a beginner would need) and the plans are a bit difficult to read at times. In summary, a good book for the seasoned boatbuilder who wishes to expand his horizons. Beginners be cautioned.

It is very difficult to find a book that presents buildable plans of elegant traditional American working boats. Anyone suffering from this frustration will be delighted by Gardner's work. You can leaf through the book and when you see something you like, you are in a position to build it instead of sending off for hundreds of dollars worth of plans. I built a one-meter long model from the "alpha dory" plans in the book, using the table of offsets to loft the plan by hand. I noticed that one measurement in the offset table was way off, but that was obvious and caused no difficulty. I built the model following Gardner's masterful instructions for building the real thing and everyone who

sees the model is very impressed by the beauty of the result. It was an easy and rewarding project. The book is not intended to be a newbie introduction, but reading one other book like Macintosh's Building Wooden Boats or John Leather's Clinker Boatbuilding will provide more than sufficient background.

Yes, you can read John Garner for history/background, and he shares enough, most of the time, to make you look further. Yes, you can read John Gardner for technique, because there is so much (spiling, planking, plane-making). But best of all, you can read John Gardner to find a boat you want to, and can, and really should build. In fact, start this week! Clean out the garage or shed, match up a couple of sheets of plywood and make some battens, and go to it! For decades Mr. Gardner encouraged boatbuilders, and this book of his, like the others, carries on that encouragement. The writing style is educational without being pedantic, the technical terms are not a barrier, the drawings are superb. I rate this five stars.

This collection of complete boat plans, instructions, and boat-building tips is simply wonderful. Mr. Gardner was a man with the common touch and the ability to communicate clearly--all of these boats are aimed at the "amateur" builder. He has no axes to grind; his designs include all of the traditional construction techniques plus glued plywood and taped seam plywood; there are rowboats, sailboats, and powerboats. The articles are also sprinkled with historical and editorial commentary. I'm reading it for the fourth (or is it fifth?) time. When I finish my canoe...

John Gardner died in 1995, and left a legacy of preserving the designs of 19th century American small workboats and recreational craft. The designs are not for the beginner, and those looking for a how-to primer would be greatly served by reading "How to Build Glued-Lapstrake Wooden Boats" by Hill and Brooks. But Gardner gives great inspiration on the type of boat that you would like to invest your scarce project hours into. Gardner took the care to measure the vestiges of classic small craft that were still observable during his lifetime, and wooden boat enthusiasts will appreciate this comprehensive effort.

What a great book! I had a hard time putting this book down and find myself going back often to compare boat designs. John Gardner places great value on traditional techniques but does mention modern materials once in a while. Still, I wonder if some of these boats could be built lighter with less solid wood and more marine plywood than he recommends. There are enough different

designs to satisfy most boat builders. The plans are excellent in detail but too small really for construction purposes. You will need to loft them with care.

- Author storytelling abilities are great so this book is a pleasure to read.- there is a lot of valuable boatbuilding material inside, though as it is contained within boat's construction notes, it's hard to extract. This book will not be a reference manual.- Boat's construction methods are not so classic. There is a lot of plywood and epoxy.- Selection of designs was rather unsatisfying for me. There are wonderful rowboat designs (peapods, whitehalls) but it lacks in sailboat area. If you are not sailboat maniac you will find interesting designs on all levels of difficulty, after all.- The level of details vary from design to design. Some are very complete step by step guides, others only rough sketches.- As the book is about small craft there is little information about heavier backbone member construction. But to tell the truth I haven't found any book that would be satisfying in this field.- For me, notes at the end (boatbuilder's planes) were one of the most interesting and part of the whole volume (along with boat's and builder's histories).

John Gardner has rightfully been called the "Father of Small Craft" in The U.S.. The fellow knew more about small boats - how to design them, build them and enjoy them - than just about anybody in the late 20th Century. This book combines two of his classic works into one. Now don't expect to start building your first boat a day after this book comes in the mail. Although the plans and construction notes are very good, John assumed that you knew how to carve a rabbet and lay a plank. I don't. And yet this book lives in my bathroom where I can open it to just about any page and be inspired in a minute or less. His description of what makes the right kind of rowboat got me to build my first row boat. I've been hooked on rowing and building since. Thank You Mr. Gardner!

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