

For many, simply following their parents' footsteps when it comes to the 'game of life' is no longer a path to tread. Gone are the days of the job for life, the perfect two up two down house and the nuclear family. Today's young people want a more personalised experience – a whole new approach to life, one that is unique to them, rather than one that merely symbolises membership to the masses.

Millennials in particular have made self-expression and personalisation a defining characteristic of their generation, so it's no surprise that this is inspiring their approach to the home. After all, if home is where the heart is, and our very own sanctuary away from the rest of the world, then it's the ideal canvas for stamping your mark on.

Embracing this creativity, more and more young people are realising that retired steel shipping containers are a way of making this happen.

They provide the basis for those wanting something a bit different to call home; a blank canvas for building their dream home. Whether it's a sun-chasing beach house or a secluded eco-pad perfect for stargazing, more and more people are realising the benefits of choosing a steel container as a house.

But aside from creating luxury holiday homes, steel containers are also making it possible for many who otherwise couldn't compete with

rising house prices, to get that all important first step on the property ladder. Unlike traditional brick and mortar, container houses are more affordable and don't have the costs associated with building materials. Their intended use also makes them incredibly easy to transport and plant in a desired location. It's no surprise then, that we're seeing more and more container houses popping up on the horizon.



Savannah, Georgia, US

1. Affordability

Steel shipping container homes can turn the idea of a dream home into reality as the costs are significantly lower compared with the bricks and mortar equivalent. As the 'frame' shell of the house already exists, the remaining costs are cosmetic and as minimal as desired. Against rising house prices, retired steel container homes can make it possible for young people to get that all important first step on the housing ladder.

For example, retired shipping containers allowed the owners of this property to create their very own jungle pad secluded within Georgia's wilderness on a budget. The house is part of a project aimed at creating comfortable and inexpensive places to live, and it really brings that mission to life. This single couple residence is made of two 20m² shipping containers and is everything a downtown apartment would be, but for a fraction of the cost and housed in a wonderful location.



Cordell House, Texas, US

2. Eco-friendly

Steel shipping containers are relatively low emission throughout their working lives and beyond. Reusing a steel container to build a home reduces harm to the environment and can even form the basis of an eco-home, from the outside in! Around half a million go on to become homes, making them incredibly reusable.

Cordell House in Texas is made from recycled shipping containers and features structural insulated panels in the roof and floor, significantly exceeding code-required insulation values, making it cheaper and easier to heat without costing the earth. The three bedroom, three bathroom, single-story residence has been designed to the owners liking, including a spacious garden and decking area. The owners also generate solar power, making it an all-round economical and environmentally friendly alternative to bricks and mortar.



Pocket House, Brazil

3. Mobility

The easy to transport nature of the containers means that they can be situated almost anywhere the owner desires – be it a beach front or secluded in the countryside. The solid structure of them also means that half the house building work is done, giving owners the luxury of a simple starting point, speeding up the process of renovating and moving in.

You'd never guess this stylish Brazilian pad started life as a steel shipping container. Pocket House is nestled amongst beautiful palm trees, making it a truly peaceful retreat. Its beautiful glass façade makes it bright and airy while letting the sunshine in. And if that's not light enough, the cabin even has a roof terrace for watching the sun go down. Making it completely unique, the owners took advantage of the versatility of steel to create a truly playful design while maintaining the highest levels of functionality.



Bokuhomes, Argentina

4. Design

For many budding interior designers, or those who dream of building their very own home, retired steel shipping containers are the perfect blank canvas. While the steel provides a solid structural shell, the rest is limited only by the imagination. Container homes are becoming increasingly popular for those wanting to create a house from scratch that is unique to them. The nature of the containers allows owners to modify both the interior and exterior, as well as using multiple containers to create different layouts and add multiple storeys.

The innovative owners of this home used the gaps in the corrugated panels to support an awning that provides shelter for much of the stylish outside deck. The flexibility and versatility of the metal means the owners were able to create the unique L-shaped layout to give the place an added dimension. Even the interior features customised furniture to ensure a feeling of spaciousness and light is felt throughout.



Mill Junction student housing, South Africa

5. Flexibility

Finding both the perfect house AND the perfect location is no longer an issue with houses made of reused steel shipping containers. Retired steel shipping containers can be fast and effectively deployed to create affordable housing solutions in a number of formats. The robust and solid structure of the steel means that the outer core of the house already exists, forming the perfect shell to start from. The flexibility of the containers means they can be used alone, combined or adjoined to solve a variety of housing needs, sizes and shapes.

Multiple containers can be used to provide complexes such as this one in Johannesburg, South Africa, which was constructed in response to a shortage of student accommodation. Combined with an old mill, the shipping containers were fast and painlessly deployed to provide effective and funky accommodation for hundreds of students. The 40m high structure features 375 apartments as well as lounge areas, libraries and computer rooms.