

Building a Playa Quonset hut

Phil Hurvitz philhty@philthysanchez.com



This Quonset hut can be built in several hours by one person. Total cost around \$200.
Dimensions: 12 ft long, 11 ft wide, 7 ft tall at the peak.

I purchased all of the materials, other than the tarp, at Lowe's even though all of the materials were cheaper at [Home Depot](#). I purchased the tarp at Harbor Freight tools

Materials:

| material | count | cost | ext | purpose |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|----------|--|
| 2" x 4" x 12' stud | 2 | \$13.98 | \$27.96 | Base, treated for weatherization |
| 1" x 4" x 12' plank | 3 | \$8.87 | \$26.61 | Cross-supports |
| 1" pipe strap 4 pack | 7 | \$1.68 | \$11.76 | Attach the pipe to the planks. |
| 1-1/4" pipe strap 4 pack | 2 | \$1.88 | \$3.76 | Attach the pipe to the apex plank. |
| 1/2" pipe strap 5 pack | 1 | \$2.54 | \$2.54 | Attach the anchor rebar to the base plank. |
| 1" x 10' PVC pipe | 14 | \$3.14 | \$43.96 | Ribs |
| 1-1/4" x 10' PVC pipe | 2 | \$5.95 | \$11.90 | Coupling of 1" ribs |
| Duct tape roll | 1 | \$6.98 | \$6.98 | Attach ribs to each other |
| 3/4" lath screws box | 1 | \$8.98 | \$8.98 | Attach pipe strap to planks |
| 0.5" x 10' rebar | 1 | \$7.47 | \$7.47 | Anchor to ground |
| 15' x 19' heavy duty tarp | 1 | \$34.99 | \$34.99 | Cover |
| 3/16" x 50' line | 2 | \$1.87 | \$3.74 | Secure tarp |
| 1" interior diameter pipe insulator | 1 | \$2.12 | \$2.12 | Cover exposed plank ends |
| total + tax | | | \$212.05 | |

Tools:

- Impact driver, power drill, or screwdriver (for attaching pipe straps to planks)
- Power or hand saw (for cutting PVC pipe)
- Power or hacksaw (for cutting rebar)
- Small sledge or hammer (for driving anchors into the ground)
- Measuring tape
- Quick-grip clamp (for holding cross-supports in place)
- 1/4" wood dowel or other narrow spike (for temporary holding of pipe during installation)
- Pry bar (for lifting base while attaching the tarp)

Steps:

1. Cut the 1-1/4" PVC pipe into 7 two-foot sections. Mark each one at the center point for reference for attaching the apex cross-support.
2. Mark the 10' PVC pipes at the center point for reference to attach the cross-supports.
3. Attach the ribs. First tape two ends of the 1" pipe together. Then place the 1-1/4" sections over the joint, and tape them in place.



4. Place the base planks 11' apart. This can be adjusted for a lower or higher apex height. However, you will want to do this at the outset, otherwise you will likely need help from one or two other people.

5. Drive the rebar in on the outside of the base plank. This will hold the base in position while you attach the ribs.



6. Attach the middle rib to the base plank using one of the pipe straps.



Drive the dowel into the ground near where the rib will attach. This will be used to hold the rib in place as you get the pipe strap and screws in place.



Bend the rib over and place the free end on the dowel. Then fasten the free end using the pipe strap. I found it convenient to use a magnet to hold the screws during the fastening work.



7. Continue fastening the ribs.



8. Using the quick-grip clamp, place the cross support at the marked midpoint. It will support in place because it is fastened at its center of gravity.



9. Attach the ribs to the cross-supports with the pipe straps. Do this for all three cross-supports. Note that the apex cross-support requires the 1-1/4" pipe strap. The structure is now complete.
10. Place the pipe insulation over the ends of the cross-supports. This will prevent direct contact between the wood and the tarp, reducing the probability the wood will damage the tarp.
11. Pull the tarp over the structure.

12. Fold the excess tarp under the ribs at the ends. Fasten the tarp with the line.



13. Enjoy your new structure! It could be built longer by using different dimension planks and tarp and increasing the count of ribs and pipe straps.

