The Ultimate Tiny Pine Cabin Financing Checklist

Your step-by-step guide to securing the funds for your dream cabin.

Phase 1: Financial Assessment & Preparation

This phase is about understanding your current financial standing.

- [ ] **Check Your Credit Score:** Obtain your score from all three bureaus (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion).
    - My Score: __________
- [ ] **Review Your Credit Report:** Dispute any errors you find.
- [ ] **Calculate Debt-to-Income (DTI) Ratio:** (Total Monthly Debt / Gross Monthly Income) x 100.
    - My DTI: __________% (Goal: below 43%)
- [ ] **Create a Detailed Budget:** List all income and expenses to see what you can afford for a monthly cabin payment.
    - Max Affordable Payment: $__________
- [ ] **Estimate Total Project Cost:** Include land, cabin price, utility hookups, taxes, and permits.
    - Estimated Total: $__________

Phase 2: Saving & Down Payment

This phase is about building the capital you need upfront.

- [ ] **Set a Down Payment Goal:** Aim for 10-25% of the total project cost.
    - My Savings Goal: $__________
- [ ] **Open a Dedicated Savings Account:** Keep your down payment funds separate.
- [ ] **Build an Emergency Fund:** Save 3-6 months of living expenses to show lenders you are financially stable.
- [ ] **Automate Your Savings:** Set up automatic transfers to your down payment account.

Phase 3: Research & Lender Comparison

This phase is about finding the right financial product and partner.

- [ ] **Research Loan Types:**
  - [ ] Personal Loan
  - [ ] RV Loan
  - [ ] Builder Financing
  - [ ] FHA/VA/USDA Loan (if applicable)
- [ ] **Identify Potential Lenders:**
  - [ ] Local Credit Unions
  - [ ] Online Lenders (specializing in tiny homes)
  - [ ] Traditional Banks
- [ ] **Get Pre-Approvals:** Contact at least 3-5 lenders to compare offers.
- [ ] **Compare Loan Estimates (LE):**
  - Lender 1: Rate **%, Fees $**, Term _______ years
  - Lender 2: Rate **%, Fees $**, Term _______ years
  - Lender 3: Rate **%, Fees $**, Term _______ years

Phase 4: Application & Closing

This phase is about finalizing the deal.

- [ ] **Gather Required Documents:**
  - [ ] Pay Stubs (last 2-3 months)
  - [ ] Tax Returns (last 2 years)
  - [ ] Bank Statements
  - [ ] ID and Social Security Card
  - [ ] Cabin Purchase Agreement
- [ ] **Submit Formal Loan Application:** Choose the best lender and apply.
- [ ] **Review Closing Disclosure (CD):** Ensure the final loan terms match the Loan Estimate.
- [ ] **Sign Closing Documents & Receive Funds!**