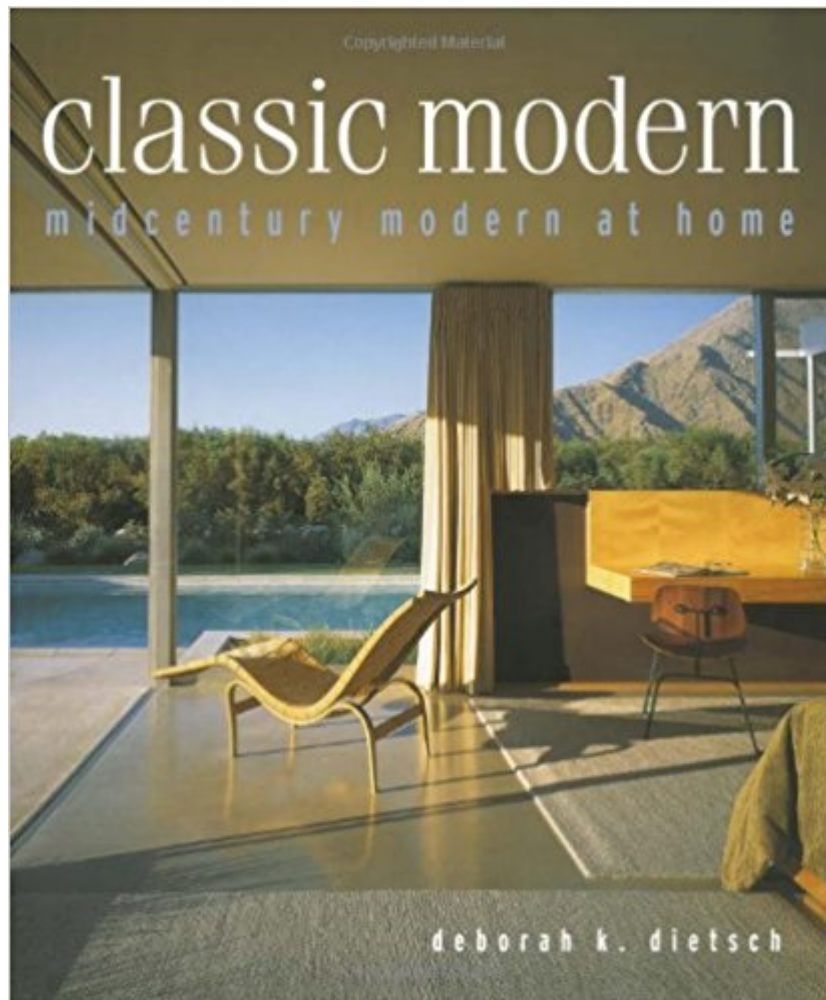




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# Classic Modern: Midcentury Modern At Home



## Synopsis

This gorgeously illustrated book is the only major work to document the hip and inventive design of the mid-twentieth century, a period that today reigns unchallenged among style setters as well as a new generation of home owners and collectors. There is no hotter style today than the cooler than cool work of modern designers and architects from the 1940s and 50s. Endlessly inventive and eminently livable, mid-century modernism has an optimism and confidence born of postwar abundance, and a spirited elegance that appeals powerfully fifty years later. In **CLASSIC MODERN**, design expert Deborah Dietsch introduces readers to the basic tenets of modern design and explains how the simple yet inspired forms typical of this style were so readily disseminated into mainstream American culture. Filled throughout with enticing examples of mid-century pieces from such timeless designers as Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Arne Jacobsen, and George Nelson, this beautiful book recaptures the excitement of the period's brilliant designs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In both homes and furnishings, the modern look, known for its clean, spare lines and inventiveness, elicited strong opinions--which is exactly what classic designers like Ray and Charles Eames, George Nelson, Eero Saarinen, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe intended. **Classic Modern: Midcentury Modern at Home** celebrates the work of these innovators and the longevity of their designs as we move into a new millennium. Starting off with side-by-side photos, we see several modern houses when they were originally built and how they now appear. They look both futuristic

and contemporary in the companion photos and are impressive in the way they integrate easily into the outdoors. The first section of the book concentrates on the "flexible system of elements tailored to the climate and topography of a certain site" and "interior spaces [which] flowed into one another, rather than being divided by separate boxes connected by hallways." The second section invites you to tour especially significant or evocative modern estates, some of which are inhabited and others which are showpieces. Particularly interesting is the curved glass Palm Springs home of Raymond Loewy, designer of the Coca-Cola bottle, which is arranged around a free-form pool lapping the desert. A subsequent chapter examines modern architecture in the suburbs where the midcentury influence can be seen on a smaller, less expensive--but not less impressive--scale. The photos show the sophisticated appeal of midcentury modern and illustrate the careful placement furniture for the greatest effect. And for those who want to know more about the furniture and the architects, the author has included lists of "where to buy" and biographies in the back of the book.

--Dana Van Nest

Deborah K. Dietsch is the art and architecture critic of the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel. She is a former editor in chief at ARCHITECTURE magazine and has written about contemporary design issues for The Washington Post, House Beautiful, Progressive Architecture, World of Interiors and Metropolis. She lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

This book was a gift for my son. I grew up in a house like those illustrated in the book and with similar furniture and accessories. My son and his wife are interested in furnishing a home in this style. I have saved photos of my parents' home for our children and was happy to find a book with more examples of the classic modern period. I was able to pass down a few items I have saved, some just like ones in the book.

Having recently read over a dozen books on classic modern homes and interiors, including brand new ones like *Modernism Rediscovered* as well as classics like Schulman's own *Architecture and Its Photography*, I was still in awe at the quality and quantity of photos in this book. They're almost all full or double-paged and in brilliant color. There is an occasional paired "original period" photo in black and white for an interesting contrast. Unlike some reviewers, I found the text informative because views of the clients and current owners are included - as opposed to just the critics and designers, as in most of the other books. The several appendices are very useful, as well. I would highly recommend this book at more than its "suggested" price, let alone at its incredibly low bargain

price. Get it while you can.

It's a real shame it's out of print now and so expensive. Just such a great introduction to Mid-Century Modernism and full of photographs that illustrate the movement's various trends. It isn't an academic work by any means. True fans who really want a deep understanding and appreciation will want something a little more substantive, but for the photographs alone this book is well worth it.

This book is great for those who have some knowledge of mid century architecture and furniture and want a reference guide. The list and short bio of the best known designers in the back is extremely helpful for reference and the pictures are very helpful to show exactly what is being discussed. This is the best book of its kind I have seen.

Was disappointed in this book. Why do all the books on mid-century modern architecture have to be so period pure in their interior design?

Some critics say that Mid-Century Modern designs tend to look cold and passive. Many, however, including myself, believe this design style to be beautiful and exciting. *Classic Modern: Midcentury Modern at Home* was written for those of us who love the designs from the 1950s and early 1960s. The photos and captions alone are enough to excite and inform, but when combined with the text, they really add insight into how the designs were created and how they can be re-created in our own homes. I used to consider myself a midcentury modern enthusiast, but after having read this book, I consider myself a bit of an expert. Especially useful are the catalog of furniture and the "Further Reading" sections at the back of the book. One last surprise was the portrait at the back of the book which pictures six of the most prominent designers from the era, including my personal favorite, Charles Eames.

I must admit I've only sat with this book at a major book retail chain, and don't actually own it yet, but I am impressed (I'm adding it to my wish list)! Beautiful, stunningly clear color photographs throughout document beloved mid-cench furnishings set in the classic homes from both Art & Architecture's Case Study program, and other classic beauties by famous modern architects like Neutra, Koenig, Saarinen, Eames and Ellwood. Also featured are homes by some less well-known talents that are nonetheless wonderful. As a result, both the furniture and the buildings are married in a perfect union. Not only that, but the photos are a refreshing departure from the black & white

photos of the 40's & 50's we're all so used to seeing in previous books on this topic: most of them show the homes as they are today, with their owners' proud collections of mid-century pieces shown off. Highly recommended if you love this sort of thing.

This book is not only beautifully photographed, it is also beautifully written and thoroughly researched as well. Beautiful houses are featured, along with great furniture. The book contains the history of each house, their designers and how the present owners came about collecting their furniture and accessories. Most of the important Fifties designers are featured - Nelson, Eames, Jacobsen, Heywood-Wakefield, Bertola, Saarinen, Noguchi, just to name a few. There is a list of retail outlets, manufacturers and distributors at the back of the book that those of us hoping to acquire some of the furniture featured in the book will find useful. This book is a thoroughly enjoyable read and a feast for the eyes, and is definitely worth every cent you spend on it, and more.

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