



What Is A Contemporary-Style Home?

The elusive style has been rising in popularity since the 1990s, but what does it mean?

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When asked to define a 21st century home, there is a good chance that each and every person would picture a different home. That's not a bad thing. In fact, it's kind of the point. The most defining characteristic of the 21st-century style home, often called a contemporary style home, is its lack of a definition. As with most things "postmodern," the style is frustratingly hard to pin down. Don't worry, we're here to help. One way to start the discussion is to say what contemporary is not. First of all, contemporary style is not modern. These two terms often get confused or inaccurately interchanged. While modern style usually refers to homes built in the mid-20th century, contemporary style is a tag designated for homes built since the 1990s. So, what sets contemporary-style homes apart from the crowd? The Style Unlike modern style, which came out of an artistic attempt at breaking the rules, contemporary style doesn't really have a history. Although it started gaining traction in the 1970s, the style is still finding its identity. Always in the "now," the 21st-century style is constantly evolving. Think of it as a snowball collecting whatever trends and design features happen to be in its path. Simply put,

contemporary style is the style of today. Contemporary home design is also all about making the client happy, combining whatever styles necessary for the ideal living experience. Of course, the houses that fall into this category do have certain identifiable characteristics for the keen eye. What are Some Defining Characteristics of Contemporary Style?

Eco-Friendly In line with the green movement of today, many contemporary architects and home builders are opting for eco-friendly and sustainable materials. This trend often features an emphasis on repurposing, resulting in a whole slew of incredible conversion homes. Some examples include the jaw-dropping Lime Works house, two water towers converted into a six-bedroom property featuring a luxury indoor pool and spiral staircase. Shipping containers have also become popular in the adaptive reuse world, often including solar-paneled rooftops for optimal efficiency. The list goes on and on. Maybe you want to live in a cozy train car? How about renting a room in a sewer pipe hotel? If there is a way to make a place a home, lovers of contemporary style will find it!

Color Muted tones and neutral colors usually find their way into contemporary design. Think mature and unintrusive, with various shades of beige, eggshell white or soft grey. Color blocking is also popular in contemporary decorating, with juxtaposed accents such as wood and white paint used to complement each other. The most vibrant pop of color is often from the artwork on the wall, oversized and purposefully loud as an aesthetic choice.

Clear Lines In both the interior and exterior, contemporary style features strong and clear lines to emphasize the feeling of clean living spaces. These distinct lines can include anything from low furniture to geometric shelves.

Functionality Considering contemporary style is all about being smart and efficient, it's no surprise that the houses often include unique storage solutions. Think of furniture-based storage units under trundle beds or secret wall compartments used as closets. The more clever, the more contemporary!

Comfortable Just because contemporary houses are hard-edged and efficient doesn't mean they aren't comfortable! Many of these homes include cozy corners with layer upon layer of fabrics on top of floor mattresses. In line with the simple aesthetic, ruffles or fluffy pillows are very rare. Instead, it is more likely you will see very tailored bed sheets and comforters.

Patterns It's important not to mistake contemporary for minimalistic. Just because the 21st-century style favors simplistic tendencies over colonial, overly-ornate detail doesn't mean that it refuses to use fun patterns.

Exterior You may have noticed that most of these characteristics were interior design qualities. This is because no two contemporary houses are alike! While these homes may look modern on the outside, each one is a combination of various styles. For example, some houses may be a combination of rustic and contemporary, with wood-heavy features but plenty of slick, monotone colors. There are even contemporary houses that feature a variety of traditional characteristics.

What to Take Away So, what have we learned today? First of all, even though most real estate agents use the terms "modern" and "contemporary" interchangeably, they are not the same thing. An easy way to remember the distinction is by thinking of modern style as grounded in the mid-20th century and of contemporary style as grounded in the now. All in all, the 21st-century style house is anything but boring, constantly evolving and adapting to the hippest trends of today.