



MID-CENTURY MODERN PERIOD

1940 - 1960S



The Mid-Century Modern period is one of great change in the architecture of California. It is also one that put California on the forefront of architecture in the country. As with the Pre-War period architecture took hold in California and spread to other parts of the country, rather than architecture spreading to California. Starting with Frank Lloyd Wright in 1920, some of the country's greatest architects came to California, which was booming, to practice architecture. R.M. Schindler, Richard Neutra, Lloyd Wright, John Lautner, Jock Peters, Cliff May, and William Krisel were all based in California.

Many of these styles represented what was unique to culture of California. The Googie style showcased Californian's love of the automobile and helped define the California "Car Culture". The California Ranch showcased the modern casual living that was California and expanded on the outdoor living that started with the Craftsman homes of the Pre-War period. Modernism impacted California and changed the way California developed.

USONIAN ARCHITECTURE

MINIMAL TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

CALIFORNIA RANCH ARCHITECTURE

MID-CENTURY MODERN ARCHITECTURE

EARLY POST-WAR TRACT ARCHITECTURE

CORPORATE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE

GOOGIE

2-67

2-69

2-71

2-73



MINIMAL TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

1930S-1950S



CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

- Cross gable roof
- Front gable end
- Siding or brick were common exterior materials
- Small front porch
- Decorative details on windows, typically shutters

The Minimal Traditional style was a transitional style between the revival styles of the 1920s and 30s and the post-war tract homes. The Great Depression help spur the use of this style, since the Minimal traditional style is a compromised, more economical version of the various revival styles. The Minimal Traditional style reflected the traditional forms of other architectural styles without providing the decorative details of the original styles. This allowed the style to reference traditional styles without actually achieving them. Elements common to many styles, but belonging exclusively to none, are favored. These include gables, chimneys, and shutters. Houses of this style may be built of virtually any traditional material; brick and wood are common. Roofs always lack the eaves or overhangs found on more assertive styles. Most examples are one or 1 ½ stories in height.

MASSING AND PLAN

- One story
- 1 ½ stories (the second story under the roofline) possible
- 2 story examples rare in California
- Buildings wide but not very deep
- Rectangular in plan

FACADES

- Asymmetrical with a front facing gable
- Variety of exterior materials
- Siding, brick and stucco common, combined in different areas

PAINT COLORS

- Light or white main body color
- Dark accent color

ROOFS

- Cross gable roof
- One front facing gable end
- Gable sometimes used instead of cross gable
- Eaves shallow
- Eaves either exposed or boxed

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- Simple trim
- Shutters on front windows most decorative feature

DOORS AND WINDOWS

- Double-hung, multi-pane, wood frame windows
- Simple wood doors, may include glass panels

PORCHES

- Very small
- Covered with a low pitch shed roof

FENCES AND WALLS

- Simple wood fences
- Fences separate front yard from side and rear yards
- Separates formal public view and private space
- Not in front yard.

