



CALIFORNIA RANCH ARCHITECTURE

1935-PRESENT



CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

- Orientation of house parallel to street frontage
- Low-pitched gable or hipped roofs
- Large roof overhangs
- Exposed rafters
- Attached garage
- Minimized front porch
- No porch stoop (slab foundation)
- Board and batten or clapboard siding or stucco
- Brick chimneys
- Picture and casement windows

The California Ranch style was created through an evolution of American architecture. The Craftsman and Prairie styles as well as elements of the period revival styles and modernism contributed to this evolution. This evolution in style combined with the emerging lifestyle changes of Americans after the Depression. These changes required a new architecture to address the way modern American lived. The California Ranch has also been pointed to as one of the things that contributed to the uncontrolled sprawl of the last half of the 20th Century, since the style required larger lots and was used in dominant style of home in new subdivisions across the country. This style, along with the Early Post War Tract home is also important for introducing an important new home feature to the average home buyer...the attached garage. No longer was the porch an important feature of the home. Instead it was replaced with the one-, and later, two-car garage with a wide driveway directly connecting house to street.

MASSING AND PLAN

- Wider street frontage
- One story
- Low pitched roofs
- Appearance of the house as a low wide structure
- Attached front garages

FACADES

- Stucco
- Board and batten or clapboard siding to accent elements
- Brick chimneys

PAINT COLORS

- 2 to 3 color schemes
- Muted tones
- Brighter color Trim
- Sometimes a third accent color was used.

ROOFS

- Low-pitched
- Gable or hipped
- Gable roofs were more common.
- Large overhangs
- Exposed rafters common
- Boxed eaves could be used.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- Simple trim
- Used to accent openings and building elements

DOORS AND WINDOWS

- Plain, painted wood doors
- Aluminum frame windows (pre WWII examples used wood frames)
- Individual casement and sliding windows common
- Fixed glass, large picture windows also common

PORCHES

- Front porches/entries were minimized
- Small covered entry common
- Entry not raised because of went to a slab foundation

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.

