

# guide to

# vintage modern design

Expect a crowd of aging hipsters evenly mixed with youthful creative types when **20th Century Cincinnati** hits the Sharonville Convention Center later this month for its 24th anniversary. The annual retrospective is the region's mecca for moderns, featuring fifty dealers and a big treasure chest full of home furnishings, art and fashion. Shop the last century's signature styles: from the staid Arts & Crafts era to Art Deco and Streamline; from the cool, uncluttered look of Mid-Century Modern to the psychedelic-tinged Pop Art period. For the modern design enthusiast, the pursuit of happiness has never been easier.

Showtime is **February 24 and 25, 11:00 am** until 5:00 pm both days. Want first dibs? A two hour spree before general admission is available – see the [Java Preview](#) page at the show's website. For more information, log onto [www.20thcenturycincinnati.com](http://www.20thcenturycincinnati.com).



A period, architect designed home decorated with completely vintage furniture and art can be cool beyond belief. Most collectors, however, start out with just one or two vintage pieces. Rooms come together over time as one treasured find follows another.



## glossary of terms

Knowledge and experience are the collector's best friends. Familiarize yourself with these few important terms before you hit the pavement in search of that first vintage modern piece:

**Authentic Originals** are designs produced by the original manufacturer in the original production period. Museums and serious collectors compete for the rarest of these specimens at the most important auction houses. **Authentic Originals** can often be identified by manufacturer labels and stamps. In lieu of such marks, it may take the skilled eye of an expert to identify the authentic by scrutinizing frame materials, fabric quality and other construction details.



A **licensed original** is a piece produced by a manufacturer that has been granted legal permission by the designer (or, the designer's estate) to use the original name in conjunction with the original design. It may also be difficult to authenticate a licensed original without a designer's signature and serial number and/or manufacturer's stamp. Like authentic originals, licensed, copyrighted originals tend to appreciate in value over time.



**Reproductions and knock-offs** are closely related terms that are often used interchangeably. Both refer to unauthorized copycat products, sometimes contemporaries of the original, or at other times manufactured years afterwards. "Repros" are not illegal, but construction materials and workmanship may be all over the map. Regardless of quality, they are unlikely to appreciate in value.

## Why Buy Vintage?

Good design is everywhere in the 21st century. So, why buy vintage? Here's what 20th Century Cincinnati dealers had to say:

- 1 Vintage Is Quality** – better materials, better construction, and better craftsmanship than most of what is manufactured today. Everything was made better to last longer. Buying comparable quality today will cost far more than buying vintage. 
- 2 Investment Value** – most vintage will either retain its value or actually increase in value over time. A contemporary purchase today loses most of its value tomorrow. Vintage pieces are relatively liquid and easy to sell. This allows collectors to "trade up" as their tastes change over time. 
- 3 Vintage Is Green** – vintage pieces were created years ago with materials and energy that are long gone. Every vintage article reused today represents trees that are left standing, minerals left in the ground and fuels that will not be burned. 
- 4 Vintage Is Unique** – express your individuality with the unusual. Even mixing in a few vintage pieces with your existing wardrobe or décor can stimulate conversation and show others that you live outside the box.
- 5 It's A Brave New World** – there is an entire world of vintage modern collectors out there. Some are scholarly, some are quirky, but all share enthusiasm for the subject. Collector clubs and chat rooms abound. Still, the real thrill is in the hunt – whether alone or in a pack. Collecting is fun!

## modern design & style timeline

<p><b>1901</b>                  First issue of Gustav Stickley's "The Craftsman" magazine. Arts &amp; Crafts movement begins modernism in the U.S.</p> 	<p><b>1929</b>                  Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona chair</p> 	<p><b>1939</b>                  New York World's Fair introduces U.S. to the "World of Tomorrow."</p> 	<p><b>1946</b>                  Charles Eames one man exhibit at Museum of Modern Art</p> 	<p><b>1956</b>                  Herman Miller debuts the Eames 670 Lounge and 671 Ottoman.</p> 	<p><b>1973</b>                  U.S. Postal Service issues the 8 cent Robert Indiana "LOVE" stamp.</p> 
<p><b>1908</b>                  Robie House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. His Prairie School is closely aligned with the Arts &amp; Crafts movement.</p> 	<p><b>1925</b>                  Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes. The expo does not launch Art Deco, but it does provide the period's name.</p> 	<p><b>1933</b>                  Union Terminal dedication brings Streamline to Cincinnati in a big way.</p> 	<p><b>1946</b>                  Bikini bathing suit introduced in Paris</p> 	<p><b>1948</b>                  Terrace Plaza opens in Cincinnati. Mid-century modern arrives downtown</p> 	<p><b>1963</b>                  Eero Aarnio's Ball chair</p> 