This Is the Most Popular Design Style from the Decade You Were Born

If you've kept an eye on home design trends over the past few years, you'll know that everything from 1980s-era squiggles to retro 1960s patterns have re-entered the style rotation — oftentimes paired together, no less. The term "decade dabblers" has officially entered the 21st century interior lexicon, too, as renters and homeowners harness decorating with blasts from multiple decades past. Recently, I myself was pleasantly surprised finding a coffee table book from 1998 that's packed with inspiring interior ideas that look like they could have been photographed today.

It's no secret trends are cyclical, and there's a huge need for the comforts of nostalgia. Increased interest in secondhand shopping also feeds into this ongoing throwback decorating fad, with old-school home decor just a thrift shop away. And while it's easy to pinpoint mid-century modern furniture or '70s-era printed wallpaper, I started to wonder about *every* decade design-wise from the past century. What would be considered the single most popular interior style from every time frame since?

To answer this, I polled designers and experts on the most prominent design style to come out of each decade from 1920 to the 2010s. They weighed in on their biggest trend takeaways and the historical context that set the scene for these designs in the first place. Of course, it's impossible to narrow down just one style for every decade (I can think of at least five from the 1990s alone), so I'll be nodding to many need-to-know honorable mentions, too. Whether you're looking to learn about the decade you (or even your parents or grandparents) were born, or just want to scroll through some cool vintage interiors, read on for a crash course in American home design from the past 100 years.

1960s: Mid-Century Modern

Akin to a "Mad Men" TV set, the 1960s were synonymous with space-age styles, texture, bohemian touches, and — of course — a continuation of the mid-century modern aesthetic. "Jetsons"-esque designs took off in the wake of the Space Race, which propelled plastic as a new furniture material because it "allows these almost futuristic shapes" to come to life, says Lichtman. You'll see this with Eero Aarnio's planet-resembling Ball Chair from 1963, or Danish designer Verner Panton's sculptural plastic Panton Chair. Simultaneously, "you have this counterculture that's starting: psychedelic colors, patterns, and posters are also coming to the fore," Lichtman adds. "It's all of these mixing together."

Speaking of, Kim Coombs of KBCO Design identifies one specific "it" color that dominated the decade: avocado. Fast forward to today, when a handful of paint brands have since declared shades of green as their 2022 colors of the year, which feels like a vestige of yesteryear. "To me, it's a nod to the '60s 'avocado' that was often coupled with bold pops of color, shag rugs, oversized fan decor, and wall coverings with striking patterns," Coombs says. Overall, she explains that the 1960s "showed us minimalist, clean lines where form and function were prioritized."