

## The Bauhaus Movement

The legacy of the Bauhaus Movement has become the décor of our daily lives. The movement's combination of form and function and embrace of industrialization have allowed these principles into people's homes and everyday lives. Producing for the masses with both skill and artistry, as well as forced globalization at the hand of the Nazi party, makes the Bauhaus Movement uniquely situated for far reaching and long lasting impact,

- The Bauhaus Movement
  - Created in opposition to the ornate and opulent styles of Art Nouveau and Art Deco that came before
  - Objects defined by their nature, must be practical. "Form follows function"
  - Marrying arts and industry
  - Characterized as: (**Roseanne**) Bauhaus artists favoured linear and geometrical forms, while floral or curvilinear shapes were avoided. Only line, shape and colour mattered. Anything else was unnecessary and needed to be reduced.
- The Bauhaus School (Intro + Weimar)
  - Opened in 1919, lasted 14 years, closing in 1931
  - Three locations, three directors, across the rise and fall, and all shaped Bauhaus to be the impactful movement it is today
  - Founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar (**Siebenbrodt**) On the basis of a positive assessment of social and technical industry potential and new products such as aircraft, fast trains, washing machines and automobiles, aesthetics were developed which emphasised usefulness and functionality as well as material appropriateness in architecture and consumer devices, in the spirit of an industrial culture for all.
  - Workshops in many crafts and fields including courses of carpentry, metal, pottery, stained glass, wall painting, weaving, graphics, typography, and stagecraft
  - Admittance and equality of women (albeit admittedly equality overall a failure)
  - (**Winton**) "Art into Industry" Started off overreaching with emphasis on craft, dialed it back to focus on mass production
- The Bauhaus School (Dessau)

- New building encapsulated the Bauhaus style: **(Winton)** This building [in Dessau] contained many features that later became hallmarks of modernist architecture, including steel-frame construction, a glass curtain wall, and an asymmetrical, pinwheel plan, throughout which Gropius distributed studio, classroom, and administrative space for maximum efficiency and spatial logic.
- **(“Bauhaus Building by Walter Gropius”)** Gropius designed the various sections of the building differently, separating them consistently according to function. He positioned the wings asymmetrically; the form of the complex can thus be grasped only by moving around the building. There is no central view.
- The emphasis on practicality and affordable, simple design allowed the school to sustain itself. **(Cook)** Bauhaus wallpaper became the school’s bestselling product. At last, here was an art school which could actually pay its way.
- The Bauhaus School (Berlin)
  - The new location in Berlin was a result of pressure from the Nazi party.
  - **(Eskilson)** Scholars today view the political climate at the Bauhaus as harboring one central contradiction: the simultaneous embrace of communist ideology and an adoration of the capitalist industries that stood as icons of the modern machine age.
  - **(“100 Years of Bauhaus”)** Nazi party viewed Bauhaus as representing ‘foreignness’ and view designs and un-German
  - The ultimate closing of the school led to relocation for many of the schools’ founders, teachers, and students, spreading the movement and its teachings across the world.
  - Impact on Americas, etc.
- Legacy
  - Products: **(Morley)**
  - A New European Bauhaus – modern application of bauhaus **(A New European Bauhaus)**
  - Famous artists
    - Marianne Brandt
      - **(Bauhaus)** Marianne Brandt became the first female student in the metal workshop, going on to design the iconic Kandem bedside table lamp (1928)
    - Herbert Bayer
      - Universal typefont – **(Eskilson)** Bayer inadvertently found yet another way to aggravate German conservatives, who argued that his Universal

was not only 'un-German', but also that its roman lineage associated it with the tradition of France, Germany's sworn enemy...Universal became symptomatic of all that was wrong with the Bauhaus in the minds of right-wing politicians.

- László Moholy-Nagy
  - **(Eskilson)** Bauhaus Books + typophoto
- Marcel Breuer
  - **(Eskilson)** A fine example of Breuer's work at the Dessau Bauhaus is the Wassily Chair, named for his colleague Wassily Kandinsky. Its spare steel frame forms cubic shapes that seem to pass through each other, its beauty resting in proportion and the balance of simple forms
- Summary
  - The Bauhaus legacy is a result of making form and function commonplace, accessible, affordable, and is also a product of the historical times.
  - **(Cook)** Once a radical revolt against the status quo, Bauhaus style has become the new normal. And by becoming ubiquitous, it has disappeared - into the décor of our daily lives.

## Sources

Siebenbrodt, Michael, and Lutz Schobe. *Bauhaus*. Parkstone International, 2009.

- On the basis of a positive assessment of social and technical industry potential and new products such as aircraft, fast trains, washing machines and automobiles, aesthetics were developed which emphasised usefulness and functionality as well as material appropriateness in architecture and consumer devices, in the spirit of an industrial culture for all.

Eskilson, Stephen J. *Graphic Design A New History*. 3rd ed., 2007. Yale University Press, 2017.

- An essential component of modern graphic design espoused at the Bauhaus was the use of rational, geometric letterforms...sans serif type was indispensable for three reasons: first, it was the only type capable of expressing the spirit of the machine age...; second, sans serif lacked any nationalist associations, so it could serve as a unifying force in the post-war era; and third, its simple clarity and impersonal character were the best match for photography—hence typophoto. (221)
- Scholars today view the political climate at the Bauhaus as harboring one central contradiction: the simultaneous embrace of communist ideology and an adoration of the capitalist industries that stood as icons of the modern machine age. (221)
- While these materials had been used for decades in architecture, in conventional buildings they would be cloaked under a skin of stone or terra cotta. Gropius, in contrast, boldly left these materials exposed, demonstrating the beauty of the Machine Aesthetic. (216)
- A fine example of Breuer's work at the Dessau Bauhaus is the Wassily Chair, named for his colleague Wassily Kandinsky. Its spare steel frame forms cubic shapes that seem to pass through each other, its beauty resting in proportion and the balance of simple forms. (217)
- Bayer inadvertently found yet another way to aggravate German conservatives, who argued that his Universal was not only 'un-German', but also that its roman lineage associated it with the tradition of France, Germany's sworn enemy...Universal became symptomatic of all that was wrong with the Bauhaus in the minds of right-wing politicians. (223)

Roseanne. "The Characteristics of Bauhaus." *Catawiki*, 31 Aug. 2020, [www.catawiki.com/stories/5263-the-characteristics-of-bauhaus](http://www.catawiki.com/stories/5263-the-characteristics-of-bauhaus).

[www.catawiki.com/stories/5263-the-characteristics-of-bauhaus](http://www.catawiki.com/stories/5263-the-characteristics-of-bauhaus)

- Influenced by movements such as Modernism and De Stijl, and as a counter-movement to the Art Deco and Art Nouveau styles; Bauhaus artists favoured linear and geometrical forms, while floral or curvilinear shapes were avoided. Only line, shape and colour mattered. Anything else was unnecessary and needed to be reduced.

Hartov, Oren. "The Bauhaus Is One of the Most Influential Design Movements in History." *Gear Patrol*, 30 Jun. 2020, [www.gearpatrol.com/briefings/a609440/influence-of-the-bauhaus-movement](http://www.gearpatrol.com/briefings/a609440/influence-of-the-bauhaus-movement).

<https://www.gearpatrol.com/briefings/a609440/influence-of-the-bauhaus-movement/>

- Examples of Bauhaus items and influence

Cook, William. "The Endless Influence of the Bauhaus." *BBC*, 10 Nov. 2017, [www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171109-the-endless-influence-of-the-bauhaus](http://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171109-the-endless-influence-of-the-bauhaus).

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171109-the-endless-influence-of-the-bauhaus>

- The Bauhaus produced an incredible array of artefacts, from angle poise lamps to chess sets, all distinguished by their functional and elegant construction. They were simple and useful, and their simplicity made them beautiful. In an era of ornamentation, their streamlined appearance was revolutionary.
- Bauhaus wallpaper became the school's bestselling product. At last, here was an art school which could actually pay its way.
- Mies van der Rohe's motto, 'Less is More,' is a good place to start ('chuck out the chintz' is just as good). Form follows function. Each element is stripped down to its bare essentials. Everything is fit for purpose. The result is austere, but strangely pleasing on the eye.
- Once a radical revolt against the status quo, Bauhaus style has become the new normal. And by becoming ubiquitous, it has disappeared - into the décor of our daily lives.

"Bauhaus Building by Walter Gropius (1925-1926)." *Bauhaus Dessau*, [www.bauhaus-dessau.de/en/architecture/bauhaus-building.html](http://www.bauhaus-dessau.de/en/architecture/bauhaus-building.html). Accessed 10 Mar 2021.

<https://www.bauhaus-dessau.de/en/architecture/bauhaus-building.html>

- Gropius designed the various sections of the building differently, separating them consistently according to function. He positioned the wings asymmetrically; the form of the complex can thus be grasped only by moving around the building. There is no central view.

Morley, Madeleine. "Examples of Bauhaus Graphic Design that Shaped the Movement." *Aiga Eye on Design*, 2 Dec. 2019, [eyeondesign.aiga.org/5-examples-of-bauhaus-graphic-design-that-shaped-the-movement/](https://eyeondesign.aiga.org/5-examples-of-bauhaus-graphic-design-that-shaped-the-movement/).

<https://eyeondesign.aiga.org/5-examples-of-bauhaus-graphic-design-that-shaped-the-movement/>

- May need more citation for graphics

"100 Years of Bauhaus: What it is and How it Shaped Today's Design Industry." *Amara*, 14 May 2019, [www.amara.com/us/editorial/styling/bauhaus-design-movement](https://www.amara.com/us/editorial/styling/bauhaus-design-movement).

<https://www.amara.com/us/editorial/styling/bauhaus-design-movement>

- Decades prior to Bauhaus favored ornate and opulent styles like Art Nouveau and Art Deco.
- Objects defined by their nature, must be practical
- "Form follows function"
- Three stages of Bauhaus following 3 German Cities: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin
  - Weimar – very little architecture
  - Dessau – building design encapsulated Bauhaus
  - Berlin – Nazi party viewed Bauhaus as representing 'foreignness' and view designs and un-German. Closed the school in 1931
- By facilitating closing and fleeing of the students teachers and students, caused worldwide spread of the movements teachings.
- Furniture/graphic design/architecture – accessible and mass production

Winton, Alexandra Griffith. "The Bauhaus, 1919-1933." *The Met*, Oct. 2016, [www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd\\_bauh.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd_bauh.htm).

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd\\_bauh.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bauh/hd_bauh.htm)

- This building [in Dessau] contained many features that later became hallmarks of modernist architecture, including steel-frame construction, a glass curtain wall, and an asymmetrical, pinwheel plan, throughout which Gropius distributed studio, classroom, and administrative space for maximum efficiency and spatial logic.

- typography was conceived as both an empirical means of communication and an artistic expression, with visual clarity stressed above all.
- During the turbulent and often dangerous years of World War II, many of the key figures of the Bauhaus emigrated to the United States, where their work and their teaching philosophies influenced generations of young architects and designers.

“Bauhaus.” *Britannica*, 29 May 2020, [www.britannica.com/topic/Bauhaus](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Bauhaus).

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bauhaus>

- “The Bauhaus was founded by the architect Walter Gropius, who combined two schools, the Weimar Academy of Arts and the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts, into what he called the Bauhaus, or “house of building,” a name derived by inverting the German word Hausbau, “building of a house.””
- Intent to train students equally in art and technically expert craftsmanship, as executed in architecture.
- William Morris – English designer of the Arts and Crafts movement
- Emphasis on machine production, “producing functional and aesthetically pleasing objects for mass society rather than individual items for a wealthy elite.”
- Students required to take 6 month pre-liminary course, followed by 3 years of workshop courses of carpentry, metal, pottery, stained glass, wall painting, weaving, graphics, typography, and stagecraft. “generally taught by two people: an artist (called the Form Master), who emphasized theory, and a craftsman, who emphasized techniques and technical processes.” Receive a journeyman’s diploma.
- Nazi regime forced the school to close in 1933
- Bauhaus admitted women.
  - Anni Albers experimented with weaving unusual substances.
  - Marianne Brandt became the first female student in the metal workshop, going on to design the iconic Kandem bedside table lamp (1928)
  - Other women: Gertrud Arndt, Benita Koche-Otte, Gunta Stozl, Lucia Moholy

Perren, Claudia. “Bauhaus: The School of Modernism.” *Google Arts & Culture*, [artsandculture.google.com/story/bauhaus-the-school-of-modernism/6gli8UW9Rfa-Kw](https://artsandculture.google.com/story/bauhaus-the-school-of-modernism/6gli8UW9Rfa-Kw). Accessed 10 Mar 2021.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/bauhaus-the-school-of-modernism/6gli8UW9Rfa-Kw>

- Founded in Weimar in 1919 by architect Walter Gropius, then moved in Dessau in 1925. The Dessau university building became iconic representation of the Bauhaus movement.

*A New European Bauhaus*. Luxembourg: Publications Office, 2020. Print.

- Ad for modern application of Bauhaus