

MOVE

Modernist homes for sale in the UK

The call of concrete and clean lines... our pick of the minimalist
properties on the market



Try not to get contemporary buildings mixed up with modernist ones. One is a skinny glass tower with a flashy brand name, such as the Shard, while the other is a concrete slab that looks as though it could survive a bulldozer or three.

Modernist architecture is a rejection of the ornamental for the functional. It may not be everyone's idea of beautiful, but it works, and everything in it has a purpose.

In this zero-waste age we should be revisiting the utilitarian spirit of architects such as Sir Denys Lasdun, who designed the National Theatre on London's South Bank. And in this housing crisis we should be channelling the ambition of public housing projects such as the Barbican Estate and Trelick Tower.

These buildings are icons, still, because they were built to last. They are made from industrial materials — hunks of reinforced concrete and steel frames — that speak of a quality and dependability that's woefully missing from contemporary housebuilding culture.

That would explain our continued fascination with modernist buildings, and why we're still building homes in a modernist style today.

Strictly speaking, the Modern movement in Britain only lasted from the 1930s until the 1960s, and it was pioneered by visionaries such as Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier (who didn't build in Britain, but had a big influence).

Some typically modern features may have fallen by the wayside since then, notably concrete façades and leaky flat roofs. However, others appear to be everywhere we look for them: large, blocky window frames that allow light to pour in; open-plan living layouts; courtyard gardens; and clean lines.

Is it any wonder that, in the image-obsessed age we live in, design-led estate agencies such as the Modern House have gained such huge followings online? Those geometric shapes are made for the rectangular tyranny of the Instagram grid.

The properties here are only a small selection of what's on offer. There are authentic masterpieces — from a modernist mansion built in 1936 by Sir Raymond McGrath to the family home of John Winter, another pioneer of the period, which was built in 1961. There are also newer homes reimagined with modernist elements, and even a University of Cambridge development that takes its cues from the original modernist masters.



Cornwall, Elm

This copper-clad pad has three bedrooms and is the only residence on the Drift reservoir near Mousehole and Penzance. It can be rented from £1,550 per week on [Unique Homestays](#).

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