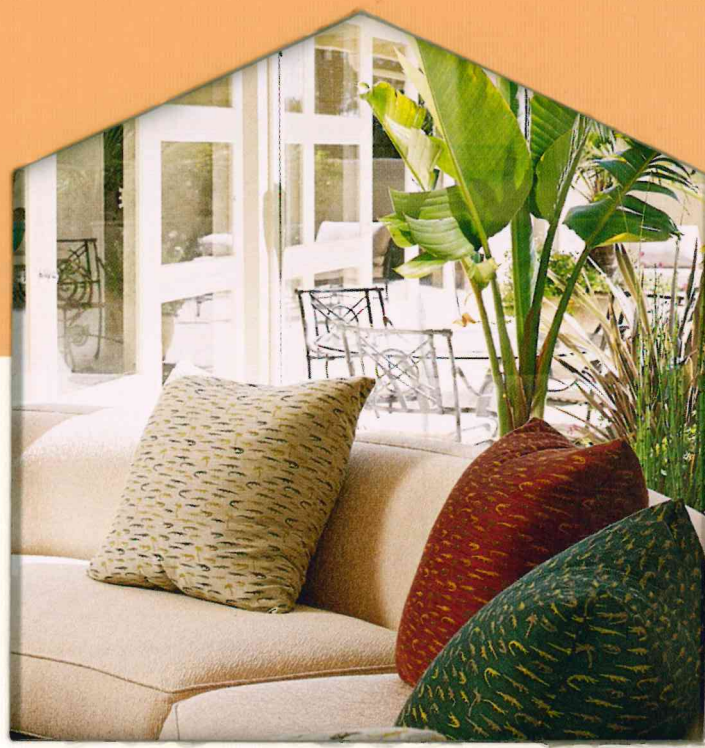


Better Homes and Gardens.

SMALL HOUSE



BIG STYLE

AIR APPARENT

/ Breezy Ranch /

2750 SQ. FT.

Open style is a good choice for mid-20th-century ranch homes. For example, even a once down-and-out post World-War II house readily sings a Moderne tune. The basics were built in: Lots of big windows for light and sight, long lines of sight between rooms and down hallways, and peaked ceilings emphasizing height.

Real estate agent Nancy Rothman trusted the instincts of her favorite designer, Daen Scheiber, when he said that a few alterations would stretch the open feel of the house: A wall between dining room and living room, typical of the home's era, cut up the floor plan. Removing this wall achieved a sense of flow, and the clever decorating that followed enhanced the open space.

Right

A plethora of windows visually annexes the patio to the indoor living areas. Furnish the outdoors as carefully as the indoors to keep the harmonious feel.

Opposite

The curved sectional sofa is as sweeping as the view. Floor-to-ceiling windows and strategically placed plants blur the line between indoors and out.







Opposite

Removing a wall between the living room and dining room made both feel much larger. View and light now flow freely between. The large opening also allowed room for the piano. The dining room is minimally decorated, keeping the emphasis on the living room.

Below

An open floor plan that's decorated in contemporary furnishings can play up the geometric angles, causing an overly harsh appearance. This room is softened up by a curved sectional sofa and a round coffee table in the seating area. Full, floor-length draperies soften the edge of the big corner window. The large mirror above the fireplace is a key view extender.

Light, sight, and height are maximized with neutral tones on walls, floors, and window treatments. This palette provides a perfect backdrop for an eclectic collection of new modern pieces and Rothman's favored family furnishings. The clean lines of the built-in shelves draw little attention and set off the striking objets d'art.

/OPEN SESAME/ Creating an open feeling in a small house requires finding, then going with the flow. Think minimal detailing, extend views, and maximize light.

/Carry on. Use a single, light-color palette on the walls and ceilings throughout connected areas. Whites or pale neutrals work best. Keep trim details spare and of a light color, and continue them from space to space.





Left
Travertine tiles cover both the hallway floor and the patio, blurring the line between indoors and out. Transom windows allow privacy and bring light to the bedrooms. A rug at the living room entry is both practical—catching dirt at the patio door—and aesthetic; it defines part of the space and, along with the angled chest, keeps the hallway from looking like a long, white tube.

Opposite Top Left
Tucked behind the dining room, the den is furnished in softer, more casual pieces than the main living areas are, but the streamlined architecture matches the living and dining rooms to maintain the feeling of openness.

Opposite Top Right
The home's crisp, light background recedes, so almost anything goes for furnishings. In this corner, a French farm table, topped with Asian ginger jars, fits in because it shares the home's simple lines and nothing else in the room visually fights with its deep color.

Opposite Bottom Left
The master bedroom accommodates a diversity of styles. A custom Spanish-style cabinet sits peacefully next to a modern side chair. The chair's quiet tones, curve of repose, and lowness contrast the cabinet's tall, firm lines and deep tones. The room also shows the freedom that comes of a restrained hand: A few well-chosen furnishings make as strong a style statement as a room stuffed with items.

Opposite Bottom Right
The white bedroom exudes serenity. The tone-on-tone approach of several shades of white creates warmth and avoids the stark feeling that can come of too much white. The bed has a padded headboard and tapered square legs. The bed's soft lines complement the strong geometry of the classic 1930s Eileen Grey glass and chrome side tables.





Opposite

Originally, a lumpy peninsula divided the long galley kitchen; now the job is done with changing styles. The kitchen has a sleek and efficient look with simple white cabinet fronts and streamlined handles. The dining area pops with pattern and color in the banquette. The separation of window groups simultaneously widens the space and defines the two areas.

/View through. Make the most of the view to the outdoors with windows and few, simple window treatments. A clear view between interior rooms is also important to create an open feel. Remove doors where possible or widen passageways from room to room.

/Down in arms, up in legs. Furniture that's leggier looks more open; so do chairs and sofas with thin, low, or no arms and backs.

/Turn an eye to the sky. Light-colored ceilings with minimal texture and simple molding visually rise. Add light sources from above, too, to keep the sense of height at night.

/Define rooms with details. Use a light hand to apply spots of color: Area rugs, pillows, or even a few dark

pieces of furniture anchor a space. Intermediate tones can be used more generously but still judiciously. Wood cabinetry in a smooth, rich hue adds warmth and character. Tone-on-tone fabrics, or simple repeating prints work well to maintain an open feel.

/Maximize light, day and night. Keep open rooms well lit so that the far walls are always clearly in view.

/Store more. Open style doesn't mean jettisoning the stuff of life, but putting some away improves the view. Smooth front, built-in cabinets "hide" well along walls.

/Lean into the curve. A few curved furnishings or walls help soften hard angles. Curves also visually extend a room, making it appear just a bit farther from here to there.

STYLE / FILE

/ Put a Little Cozy in Open /

To keep a house with an open floor plan from feeling cavernous, make a room snuggle up a bit. This kitchen has lower beams, a painting of darker hues hung above, and a dark wood cabinet—items that conspire to create a cozier feeling even though the kitchen's width and height match the expansive dimensions of the adjoining living room. The connection between the spaces is maintained with a flow of white walls and wood floors.

