

# Bauhaus architectural style

[Design](#), [Architecture](#)



Bauhaus Architectural Style Question 2: What were the two main design features of the Bauhaus movement? As an artistic and architectural movement, Bauhaus items had two main design features; functionality, and symmetry as observed in the Wassily Chair, and the Bauhaus Cradle.

Primarily, other architectural movements that emerged before and after the Bauhaus style favored the ornamentation aspects of a structure as opposed to functionality aspects (Barry, 2009). For example, chairs designed during the Gothic, Baroque and Renaissance architectural periods were fond of ornamentation, and paid little regard to prioritization of functionality.

Contrarily, Bauhaus design of the Wassily Chair primary regards to space over mass and aesthetic appeal. Apparently, Bauhaus style ensured that the functionality aspects of the chair are optimized. For instance, Wassily chair has flat seat and leaning boards, all aligned to form a cubic shape (Barry, 2009). In this context, the functionality design in Bauhaus architecture strived to optimize space enclosed by the chair, instead of incorporating decorative auxiliaries that would unnecessarily occupy space. Unlike Baroque or Gothic styles which favored curved arm rests in a chair, Bauhaus style rejected ornamental details, and focused on functional optimization of artworks.

Fig 1: Wassily Chair

Besides functionality aspects, Bauhaus style favored the geometric elements of regularity and symmetry over asymmetry. As aforementioned, creation of optimal space in Bauhaus objects was achieved through cubic shapes, and occasionally pyramidal shapes (Chen & He, 2010). In addition, rounded corners were avoided as much as possible, as seen in Bauhaus cradle.

Primarily, facades met at right angles, and auxiliary features like curvy handles were scarcely added. Technically, cradles developed in other periods like the Baroque not only occupied more space, but their facades were also irregular and asymmetrically aligned. However, facades possessed by Bauhaus items like the cradle were relatively regular (Chen & He, 2010). In the cradle's image below, the front regular triangular facades corresponds to the hind triangular. Essentially, Bauhaus architectural style employed social aspect of optimal functionality, and economic principle of cost minimization in design and construction of artworks. Below is an image of the famous Bauhaus cradle.

Fig 2: Bauhaus Cradle

Question 3: Describe in your words whether Bauhaus style is still with us today, and why?

Historically, Bauhaus was introduced and gained immense popularity during the early 20th century, specifically before the rise of Nazi Germany.

However, primary features of Bauhaus architectural style are still observable in modern styles. For example, the Seagram Building in New York City is characterized by two features; a flat roof symmetrical to the building's floors, and right-angled edges. The Seagram building was completed in 1958, decades after popularity of the Bauhaus architectural style had considerably declined (Chen & He, 2010). However, the Seagram building has a visibly flat roof, coupled with facades meeting at right angles. In addition, the simplistic appearance of the Seagram building indicates scarcity of ornamental design accessories (Chen & He, 2010). Besides the Seagram building, other skyscrapers and commercial houses in today's New York and other US cities

have the primary features of Bauhaus architecture; structural symmetry, and general lack of ornamentation.

Undeniably, Bauhaus architectural style possesses the advantages of simplicity and functional optimization. Technically, enlargement of space is an economically oriented principle in architecture (Barry, 2009). Irrespective of time and culture, commercial buildings are supposed to offer maximum interior space, within a restrictive exterior space. In addition, commercial buildings today pay limited attention to decorative details. Observably, Bauhaus-based structures like the Seagram building are not only physically spacious, but also ornamentally calm. Technically, the geometric concepts of physical symmetry prove instrumental in maximizing space (Barry, 2009). On the other hand, simplicity in decoration offers limited aesthetic appeal; a primary characteristic of business buildings today. In this regard, it is undeniable that key features of Bauhaus style are still in use today because of two main reasons; the need to optimize physical space in buildings, and cost minimization associated with limited use of ornamental designs.

#### References

Chen, W. & He, Z. (2010). Analysis of the Influence and Inspiration of the Bauhaus on Contemporary Design and Education. *Journal of Engineering & Architecture* 5 (4), 92-106.

Barry, J. S. (2009) *Bauhaus 1919 – 1933: Workshops for Modernity*. New York, NY: Museum of Modern Art.