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**Family
Weekly**

Let's Look at the Home of the Future



The house of tomorrow
will embody an entirely
new and wonderful
concept of living.

by Frank Robinson

THE END of World War II saw the biggest building boom in U.S. history. Farmers made a fortune selling cow pastures for subdivisions, and new homes went up at a million-a-year clip. The ranch-style house was acclaimed a modern miracle, the picture window made its debut, and the dining room seemed obsolete. Tomorrow's house was here today and everybody was happy.

Everybody except the housewife moving into a new home. When the Housing and Home Finance Agency invited 100 women to tell what they thought of the modern house, the women complained that the average house was too small. They wanted three bedrooms and at least one-and-a-half baths. The picture window was no bargain, they said, if the view wasn't worth looking at.

The complaints didn't stop there. Homemakers wanted smaller living rooms, separate dining areas, and most of all, a room where the family could relax and the kids could romp. They wanted more storage space and a decent-size utility room. And they definitely didn't care for housing developments where all homes looked alike, streets were laid out geometrically straight, and the only trees were skinny saplings doomed to die in the first heat wave.

Builders with an eye to the future heeded the housewives' gripes and scurried back to their drawing boards. What they'll come up with is anybody's guess, but they're well aware that yesterday's designs will not satisfy the family of the future.

What will the house of tomorrow look like? To get an idea, we have to go back to the early part of the century when Frank Lloyd Wright declared a house should be functional, yet fit in with its surroundings and reflect the owner's character. Architects have flirted with the idea ever since, and were experimenting with house designs long before the deluge of complaints to the HHFA. By taking a look at a few houses already built, the average man can peep into the future and see how the revolution in housing is shaping up.

ONE OF THE basic changes is in framing for new homes. Almost all houses in the past have used stud frames, the familiar two-by-four skeletons. This type of framing—designed to hold up two stories—was wasteful for one-story houses and difficult to work with if you wanted a lot of window area. Today, stud framing is going the way of the rumble seat, to be replaced by several newcomers. Perhaps the most promising is concrete "bents"—reinforced concrete forms that look like inverted L's. A pair of the bents, bolted together, make a complete arch. Eight such arches make the frame for a good-sized house. They're economical and allow for unusual interior design. What's more, the frame plus roof can be thrown up in a day and a half.

Another new idea, bound to be popular with newlyweds, is the prefabricated modular house consisting of living and sleeping areas. Available in different sizes, the units can be bought separately.

Other sections can be added as the family grows. Other innovations are typified by 19 houses selected by New York's Museum of Modern Art as examples of the architectural revolution America has experienced since the war. These include a two-story house with the bottom story half-buried so you can see flowers at eye level, a circular house so the homemaker can work in "continuous" space, a glass house in which the landscaping becomes part of the house, and a "meccano set" house built from steel parts that can be ordered from a manufacturer's catalogue.

And what about appliances of the future to furnish the house? A lot of them are already with us. Comforters and sheets will come electrically wired. Vacuum cleaners that you have to tug or push are now outdated—the new ones float on a cushion of air.

Air conditioners that cool, filter, and dehumidify the air are already with us, and by tomorrow central air conditioning may be standard equipment.