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Property listings usually specify the architectural design of homes. Understanding something in general about these different styles can give you some sense of what a house looks like before you even see it and of what the interior will look like before you even walk in the door. Therefore, knowing about these styles may help you better identify what you like and what you don't like and significantly shorten your search for your new home.

Let's take a look at some of the most popular styles in the Dayton area:

**Colonial** --This style comes in many varieties (American, Cape Cod, Georgian, Dutch, English, Adams, etc.) but all share common characteristics. Generally, a Colonial style is a one-and-a-half or two story rectangular home with a central front door and a symmetrical arrangement of windows. Inside, you'll find living and dining rooms often located on either side of a center hall entrance. The kitchen will be at the back. And in Colonials built before 1960, you'll find hardwood floors, fine staircases and at least one fireplace. One of the most authentic local collections of Colonials in the Williamsburg style may be found in the Kings Grant development in Washington Township.

**Ranch** --This one-story house was especially popular as the suburbs blossomed in the late '40s, '50s and '60s. Such was the case in Huber Heights to the north and in Kettering to the south. Originally constructed with hardwood floors, many have since been carpeted throughout. Inside, guests enter right into the living room which may include a dining area off a Pullman style kitchen. The earliest Ranches had a breezeway to the garage, but the more recent trend is for attached garages. Some Ranches are built on a slope so that basement windows may be exposed.

**Victorian** --With towers, irregular shapes and plenty of corners, this style remains perennially popular. Victorian houses come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, from simple clapboard to ornate Gothic, from heavy Romanesque to lacy Queen Anne, a style familiar for its gingerbread woodwork decorating the gables and porches. Dayton's historic districts--Oregon, Huffman, St. Anne's Hill--among others, are full of Victorians as are many surrounding villages, most notably Waynesville and Tipp City. But you'll find modern versions of classic Victorians in the newest suburbs as well. Inside, oddly shaped bedrooms and rounded turrets with staircases add drama to these stately homes with their very high ceilings, detailed woodwork, tall and narrow windows, fireplaces and hardwood floors.

**Tudor** --Steep roofs, gables adorned with heavy timbers and a front door surrounded with stone or brick arches are features you will usually find in these two-story stucco houses. All Tudors have fireplaces, sometimes many, which are as distinguished on the outside as on the inside. English Tudors with their broad beams were especially popular with local Dayton architects in the 1930's. The 1995 Dayton Philharmonic Showcase House, Red Oaks, in north Dayton (off Philadelphia) is one such example of a fabulous Dayton Tudor. Both Oakwood and Dayton View Tudors feature high ceilings, hardwood floors, built-in bookcases, large formal dining and living rooms, and three or four bedrooms on the second floor.

Dayton Tudors may even have ballrooms on the third floor while newer Tudors feature more practical first-floor family rooms and large kitchens.

**Bi- and Tri-Levels** --Designed for comfort and ease for active families, multi-level homes generally open into a stairwell that allows easy access to the living room, eat-in kitchen and bedrooms; or downstairs to the family room/recreation room and office/workshop. Multi-level homes offer the most square footage for the dollar. They are especially abundant in Miamisburg, Centerville and Beavercreek.

These are just a few of the many architectural styles you'll find in Dayton and among the 60 million or so houses around the country. Newer homes may not fit into any one of these styles, as new homes tend to combine aspects of many classic styles. But if you have an idea of the features that you find appealing both in terms of exterior and interior, you and your REALTOR® will have an easier time narrowing your choices down to those which best fit your style, and lifestyle. Happy hunting!