



It would take you 52 years to sit in every type of chair—even if your butt was in each one for just a single second. OK, we made that up. Point is, lots of chairs exist! But only some have reached iconic status. Only some show up in rooms again and again. Here, six classic designs that deserve a sitting ovation.

AS SEAT

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Eames Lounge Chair

This cozy perch, designed in 1956, was meant to mimic a baseball mitt. Cool, right? Even cooler: The designers, Charles and Ray Eames, came up with their molded-plywood method while making leg splints for soldiers during World War II, says Chay Costello, associate director of merchandising at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. If you're shopping vintage, look for zero exposed screws, three plywood layers, and a label that says "Eames Office" or "Herman Miller."

THE REAL DEAL

Eames Lounge Chair and Ottoman, from \$5,995; hermanmiller.com

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Griffin Leather Swivel Lounge Chair and Ottoman, from \$900; wayfair.com



Bentwood Chair

An oldie but goodie! Developed by Michael Thonet more than 150 years ago in Austria, this curvy classic made mass-produced furniture a *thing* with its easy-to-replicate bent-wood technique, says Emily M. Orr, associate curator at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City. These days, it's a safe choice for traditional decorators and people looking to demodernize their homes a smidgen.

THE REAL DEAL

214 Bentwood Chair; thonet.de for info

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Eon Dining Side Chair, \$165; modishstore.com



Bertoia Side Chair

The metal webbing gives this chair a futuristic vibe, even though it was introduced by Harry Bertoia in 1952. The brilliance of the weave is its airy, there-but-not-really look, which translates to less visual clutter. It's also incredibly versatile, playing well with all kinds of furniture styles—like a chunky wood desk or a slim pedestal table.

THE REAL DEAL

Bertoia Side Chair, from \$1,065; knoll.com

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Mod Made Chrome Wire Dining Chair, \$114; overstock.com







Womb Chair

Weird name? Yep! The idea behind it? “A great number of people have never really felt comfortable and secure since they left the womb,” said Finnish American designer Eero Saarinen after he created the chair in 1946. The design was a new take on the armchair, with a refined aesthetic. Available in a bunch of bold fabrics, it’s still a go-to among designers who want a pop of color. If you spot one at an estate sale, confirm it’s legit by checking for the maker’s label (it’ll say “Knoll”).

THE REAL DEAL

Womb Chair Designed by Eero Saarinen for Knoll, from \$5,424; dwr.com

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Womb Chair, from \$799; bybespoek.com



Eames Molded Plastic Chair

Another Eames! Those two sure knew about sitting! The original fiberglass version came out in 1950, with an armless style in 1951. Now there are countless imitations in an array of hues and leg styles. “We associate this vibrant range of colors with the Eameses’ designs, bringing playfulness into the modern home,” Costello says. Variations often show up in kids’ rooms and dining areas

because they add not-too-fussy sophistication and can be easily wiped clean.

THE REAL DEAL

Eames Molded Plastic Armchair, from \$395; hermannmiller.com

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Jordan Arm Chair, \$208 for 2; allmodern.com



Cesca Chair

Designed by Marcel Breuer in 1928, Costello says, the Cesca was inspired by—drumroll—a bicycle! The tubular steel construction of Breuer’s bike got the designer’s wheels turning, and ultimately led to the chair’s frame. The chair shines as an accent in any room that needs some warmth, as the caning (currently super trendy) offers a dose of natural texture.

THE REAL DEAL

Cesca Chair, from \$927; knoll.com

THE LOOK FOR LESS

Breuer Side Chair, \$289; foromshop.com