



# A-frame

*Chad Randl*

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## **A-frame** Chad Randl

"A" was the architectural letterform of leisure building in postwar America. Eager to stake out mountain and lakeside retreats, an entire generation of high-end homebuilders and weekend handymen found the A-frame an easy and affordable home to construct; its steeply sloping triangular roof distinctive and easy to maintain (almost no exterior walls to paint!). Fueled by A-frame plans and kits, the style became something of a national craze, with tens of thousands of houses built.

Indeed, the A-frame was an icon for recreation, and acceptable form of modernism (although its origins go back thousands of years), and a convenient tool for marketing a wide range of products, including gas-powered toilets, motorcycles, and canned vegetables; Fisher-Price even made one for children. So popular on the domestic front, the A-frame was eventually adapted to other building types, from roadside restaurants to churches.

In a fascinating look at this architectural phenomenon, Chad Randl tells the story of the "triangle" house from prehistoric Japan to its lifestyle-changing heyday in the 1960s. Part architectural history and part cultural exploration, *A-Frame* documents every aspect of A-frame living using cartoons, ads, high-style and do-it-yourself examples, family snapshots, and even an appendix with a complete set of blueprints in case you want to build your own!

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