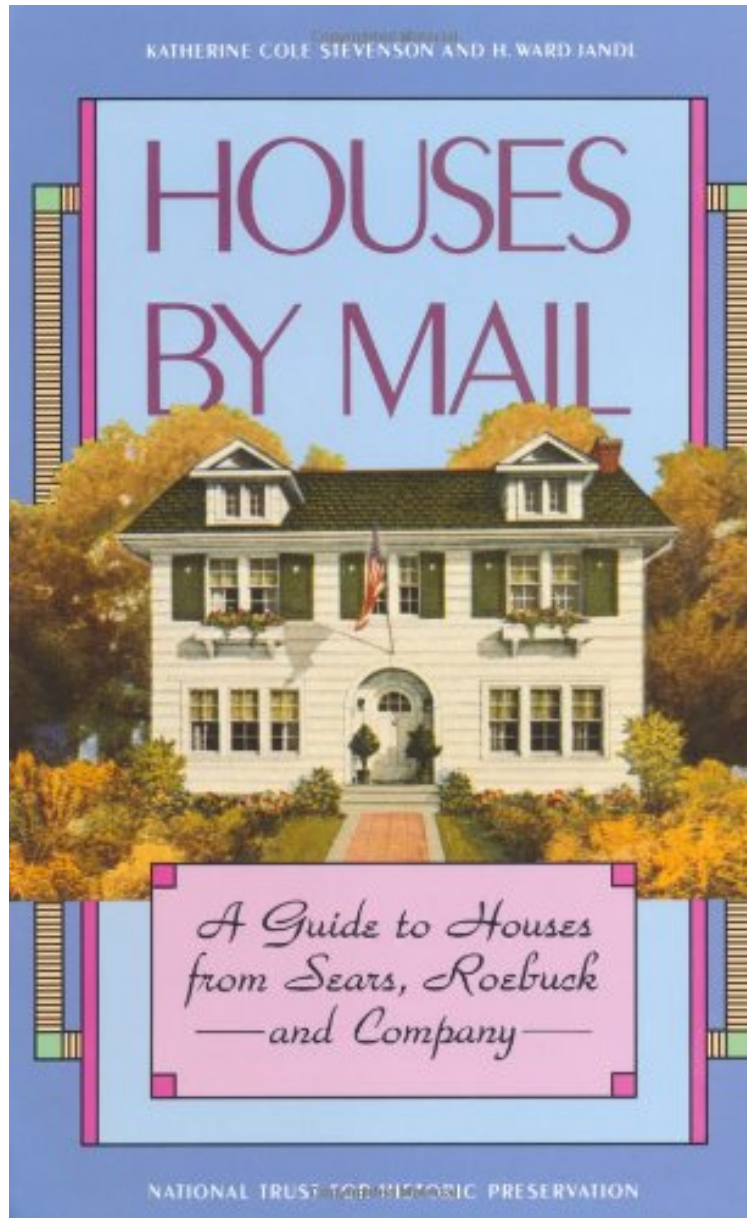


[Free] Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company

## Houses by Mail: A Guide to Houses from Sears, Roebuck and Company

*Katherine Cole Stevenson, H. Ward Jandl*  
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It was the American Dream by Mail Order --Smithsonian Americans have ordered from Sears, Roebuck just about everything they have needed for their homes for 100 years--but from 1908 to 1940, some 100,000 people also purchased their houses from this mail-order wizard. Sears ready-to-assemble houses were ordered by mail and shipped by rail wherever a boxcar or two could pull in to unload the meticulously precut lumber and all the materials needed to build an exceptionally sturdy and well-designed house. From Philadelphia, Pa., to Coldwater, Kans., and Cowley, Wyo., Sears put its guarantee on quality bungalows, colonials and Cape Cods, all with the latest modern conveniences--such as indoor plumbing. Houses by Mail tells the story of these precut houses and provides for the first time an incomparable guide to identifying Sears houses across the country. Arranged for easy identification in 15 sections by roof type, the book features nearly 450 house models with more than 800 illustrations, including drawings of the houses and floor plans. Because the Sears houses were built to last, thousands remain today to be discovered and restored. Houses by Mail shows how to return them to their original charm while it documents a highly successful business enterprise that embodied the spirit and domestic design of its time. "After decades of obscurity, Sears houses have become chic." --Wall Street Journal "These were . spacious, solidly built homes." --Parade "Don't be surprised if your own cozy bungalow turns up [in the book]."--Philadelphia Inquirer "A nostalgic and informative look at the tastes of Americans in the years before World War II."--Publishers Weekly "The bible to researchers of Sears' ready-cut homes."--Saturday Evening Post

From Publishers Weekly  
Between 1908 and 1940 Sears sold over 100,000 nearly completed houses across the country, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest. Some 500 models were available, and the company sought to make ordering them "as easy as ordering an automobile, radio or piece of furniture." The houses, which had on average 30,000 pieces and cost between \$650 and 2500, were usually shipped by rail and often were assembled by Sears employees. This volume reproduces copy from the original Sears house catalogues. There is, for example, the "Matoka," a two-bedroom bungalow that was popular during World War I. The "Rockhurst" had three possible exterior designs. The "Winthrop" was based on classic New England styles. This book offers a nostalgic and informative look at the tastes of Americans in the years before World War II. There are 800 illustrations, an informative introduction, a bibliography and an index. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From Library Journal  
Between 1908 and 1940, Sears, Roebuck offered ready-to-assemble houses from special catalogs. Over 100,000 of these dwellings were constructed across America. The authors have re-created the look of the catalogs in this heavily illustrated guide to 447 models. Each entry includes, among other information, promotional copy from the original catalog, house details and features, price, and a short list of cities where examples can be found. The book is organized as an identification guide, with sections arranged by roof design. A lengthy introduction chronicles the evolution of the catalogs and explores the reasons for Sears's success in helping Americans select, finance, and build low-cost homes of good quality. Recommended. Douglas Birdsall, North Dakota State Univ. Lib., Fargo  
Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From the Publisher  
A delightful look at America's past. From 1908 to 1940 some 100,000 people purchased their ready-to-assemble homes from Sear's mail order. Presented here are approximately 450 models sold by Sears together with a description, a picture, floor plans, prices and locations.