

# Simply Elegant

Thoughtful homeowners opted for a modern yet vintage update to their “new” mid-century home

By contributing writer Brooke McGrath

**F**our years ago, these Leawood homeowners found a 1950s mid-century ranch that was long and narrow with secluded rooms. To transition to an open floor plan while keeping the mid-century character, they tore down walls and elegantly spruced up the decor.

With design direction from Doug Wells, an additional 5 feet enhanced the living room, resulting in a little more living space and a brilliant wall of windows. Once the floors, walls, and ceilings were polished in neutrals, the furnishings were carefully curated.

“The owners, parents of Kansas City native, New York-based artist Brady Legler, are creative themselves and appreciate craftsmanship and great design,” Wells says. “They love a warm, modern aesthetic. Combining rich, natural woods with notable modern and vintage pieces helped attain a look that



truly represents their style.”

It’s hard not to immediately notice the complementary styles of the Vladimir Kagan sofa with the smoky blue mohair sofa from New York. “We found two sofas that we really loved and put them together,” Wells says.

That blue-gray color flows down into a custom Brady Legler rug, while Rodarte drapery hangs delicately until needed, providing a bit of movement and texture. In such an open, engaging space, the vintage St. Theresa chandelier, from Mission Road Antique Mall, unifies the space.

“We wanted to focus on Brady’s art, rug and rich fabrics,” Wells says. “We didn’t want any surrounding colors to compete or overpower the view or the furniture, so we went neutral on the walls, keeping it light and bright. This wall palette lets the furniture and art stand on their own.”

## WHY *it* WORKS

**1.** “I think that while the furniture styles vary, there is an overriding theme of clean, modern lines, helping to unify the room,” Wells says of the preferred mix of high-quality furnishings. “All of the pieces are strong, though nothing overpowers the eye.” The vintage vignette, with Kagan sofa

and glass and brass table, looks good next to the modern duo of the smoky blue sofa from The Bright Group and custom cocktail table by Polivka Furniture Design & Studio in Kansas City. But while this room is sophisticated, it’s also livable and inviting. “It’s important to add a bit of whimsy and joy to a room, whether it’s through color, pattern, or with objects you love and make you smile,”

he says. “If a room is too serious or perfect, it’s hard to connect with the space.”

**2.** The carefully chosen, fairly simple color palette involves mostly white with hints of blue and salmon. “I love white walls because they help showcase beautiful pieces, whether that’s paintings, furniture or, in this case, the amazing Brady Legler rug that was creat-

## GET *the* LOOK

Neutral walls allow high-quality furnishings to stand out. Make an elegant stance in your home with these local finds



1. Available at Museo, B&B Italia's Ray sofa is a modular system that offers a clean-lined, versatile look. Find additional modern flair in a die-cast U-shaped foot. 2. Is there anything more elegant than a glass chandelier? This 24-light crystal chandelier in chrome radiates beauty while unifying any look from above. Available at Wilson Lighting. 3. The Art Deco-inspired sculptural brass coffee table at West Elm is fun and flirty in its crossed iron frame and antique brass finish. 4. This gray leaf fabric, one of Fabricut's exclusive patterns from the French General Collection, is made of linen and rayon and also works well as a bedspread or light upholstery. Find it at One Stop Decorating Center. 5. Stop into Plus Modern Design to get a closer look at the hand-tufted Glacier Rug. Cool in a neutral color palette, it features silky viscose and plush pile in a dramatic abstract form.

ed for the space," Wells says. The new bank of windows, a focal point from the front entry, plays with the neutral walls, putting the light-drenched room even more in the spotlight.

3. Another key to making a room work is creating a space that feels accessible. This spacious living room leads directly into the kitchen, providing plenty of room for fam-

ily gatherings, where, occasionally, one of the owners entertains on the piano. Another party perk is that the room looks out onto the pool and well-maintained backyard. "Though it's a good size, the space doesn't overwhelm, mixing wood wall paneling with a stylish chandelier and well-staged furnishings that create a cozier atmosphere," Wells says.

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