

Mondays with MoMA



MoMA

Step 1 Look closely

Questions

1. What do you notice about this object?
2. What color, shapes and materials do you see?
3. What do you think this object is used for based on how it looks?

Step 2 Learn more

Industrial designers are problem solvers who create objects that will be mass produced. The Carna Folding Wheelchair was developed by industrial designer Kazuo Kawasaki. He originally conceived the Carna Folding Wheelchair for himself after a disabling accident in 1977, stating, “I realized that by designing a wheelchair that closely met my needs, I could create a functional design that other people with similar needs might use.” The “Carna” in the wheelchair’s name was derived from the name of an ancient Roman goddess who had power over entrances and exits. The chair weighs 13 pounds and the seat and the back are easily removable and foldable, making it easier to carry and transport than the average wheelchair. The wheels are oversized for greater stability. Kawasaki designed optional parts that users can add to the standard frame package according to their specific needs. Kazuo Kawasaki’s goal was to create a wheelchair that felt as good and looked as contemporary and stylish as a new pair of sneakers.

Step 3 Activity: Design a Chair for Yourself

Get inspiration from over 350 chairs in MoMA’s collection:
<https://mo.ma/37TLH98>

Materials: Pencil and paper (optional: cardboard, tape, or other modeling material, like chenille stems, clay, aluminum foil)

1. Think about a chair you use in your daily life. Is it used in a specific setting, such as a lounge chair for the beach, a chair for studying, or an astronaut’s seat on a long flight to outer space? What special features of the chair would make it useful for you in this setting?
2. Draw a preliminary sketch of your chair design. Choose shapes and forms that will make your chair look good and be functional.
3. Add notes or instructions about the way the chair could be used.
4. Optional: Try modeling your chair in three dimensions using recycled cardboard or any other type of modeling material.

Step 4 Share!

Share your chair design with someone or share your work with us at MoMA:
schoolprograms@moma.org.



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Image: Kazuo Kawasaki. Carna Folding Wheelchair. 1989. SIG Workshop Co. Ltd., Ishikawa, Japan Titanium, rubber, and aluminum honeycomb. Gift of the designer.