

### ICONIC DESIGN

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# ICONIC DESIGN

## 1. WHAT IS AN ICONIC DESIGN?

## 2. THE AUSTIN MINI - AN ICONIC DESIGN

## 3. TWENTY EXAMPLES OF ICONIC DESIGNS

# WHAT IS AN ICONIC DESIGN?

An iconic design is usually a design that is 'ground breaking' and one that sets new standards in its field. It is a design that other designers and manufacturers follow, as it becomes a bench mark for other similar products. Furthermore, an iconic design is one that stands up to the test of time, remaining a good design, despite the passing of years, decades and even centuries.

EXAMPLES: Red telephone boxes, red double decker buses, the Spitfire, Concorde, the Mini car, and the London Underground map.

**Tap the image** for more information and examples



SPIRITFIRE  
R.J. MITCHELL  
1936



STRATOCASTER GUITAR  
Electric Guitar Designed By  
Leo Fender, George Fullerton,  
and Freddie Tavares In 1954



SIR ALEC ISSIGONIS'  
ORIGINAL MINI  
1959



SONY WALKMAN  
Walkman TPS-L2 (1979)  
1979



iPod Touch  
2007

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## CRITERIA USED TO DEFINE ICONIC DESIGN

A design that sets a bench mark for others to follow.

A ground breaking design, in terms of its technology or manufacturing techniques used during its production.

A design that improves on the past.

A design that sets new standards in terms of quality, functions/features or style.

A design that stands the test of time, remaining popular despite the passing of years.

A design that stays in the memory of those who see/use it.

A design that is often recognised immediately by consumers.

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## THE AUSTIN MINI AN ICONIC DESIGN

The Austin Mini, first rolled off the production line in 1959 and was the brain child of Alexander Arnold Constantine Issigonis. It was manufactured by the British Motor Company and was developed as a result of the shortage of petrol during and after the Suez crisis of the 1950s. It had a production run of 5.3 million cars and was the best selling British car, between 1959 to 2000. During the 1960s it became popular with celebrities and was seen in films and on TV across the world, ensuring that it became design icon. One of its most famous appearances was in the film 'The Italian Job', driven by actors including Michael Cane.

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## THE AUSTIN MINI - AN ICONIC DESIGN

The original Mini design set the bench mark for other 'compact' car manufacturers to follow.

Ground breaking engineering and technology was developed during its design and manufacture.

The original Mini was an improvement on previous 'small' car design.

The original Mini set new standards in terms of the features it offered and its style, especially with the more expensive deluxe models.

The Mini brand has stood the test of time, The Mini design is instantaneously recognisable.

The Mini design has inspired other manufacturers to design their own small cars, some even look similar.

Mini designs remain aesthetically pleasing, despite the passing of decades.

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# SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Jorn Utzon

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## SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE- INSPIRED BY NATURE

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Jorn Utzon was a relatively unknown Danish architect in the 1950s, until he won the competition to design the National Opera House in Sydney Australia, in 1956

The design of the Sydney Opera House was inspired by nature, its forms, functions and colours. Utzon was influenced in his designs by bird wings, the shape and form of clouds, shells, walnuts and palm trees. He looked upon nature for guidance when designing, as nature over time combined both efficiency and beauty, hand in hand.

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Philippe  
Starck



# JUICY SALIF LEMON SQUEEZER

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## Philippe Starck's 'Juicy Salif' Citrus Squeezer (1990)

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Philippe Starck's 'Juicy Salif' - Citrus Squeezer (1990) is a design classic and an iconic product. It is said that the original design was sketched on a napkin whilst Philippe was on holiday in Italy.

A piece of sculpture more than a functional object, as it does not have a base to collect the juice. This fact has not damaged its popularity and it is one of Starck's most recognisable designs. The juicy Salif deserves to be the centre piece on the table, rather than storing it in a cupboard, waiting to be used.

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**CHARLOTTE PERRIAND**

**LC4 CHAISE LONGUE  
(LOUNGE) CHAIR - MODEL  
B306 - 1928**



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## LC4 CHAISE LONGUE (LOUNGE) CHAIR - MODEL B306 - 1928

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Charlotte worked very closely with Pierre Jeanneretan and another famous French designer, Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris), in the late 1920s and early 1930s. They co-designed a number of commercially successful pieces of furniture, largely manufactured by a company called Cassina. The LC4 Chaise Longue (Lounge) Chair of 1928, was an innovation in design, known also as the “relaxing Machine” due to the way the curves trace a person relaxing. It is said that the chair design was inspired by the smooth arcs of 18th century French daybeds.

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Robin  
Day



# POLYPROP CHAIR

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## ROBIN DAY - THE POLYPROP CHAIR - 1963

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Probably one of the most used chairs in the world is Robin Day's Polyprop Chair of 1963, which continues to be manufactured to this day. Although the design has slowly evolved over the years, it is very popular as a stackable chair in schools, universities, canteens and conference venues.

High impact resistant polypropylene, is used for the seat and tubular steel for the frame. This means that the chair is cheap and can be mass produced. Over 30 million have now been manufactured.

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**MICHAEL  
GRAVES**



# **WHISTLING BIRD KETTLE**

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## WHISTLING BIRD KETTLE, 1985, BY MICHAEL GRAVES

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Whistling bird kettle, by Michael Graves has become an iconic design and incorporates influences from both Art Deco and Pop Art, with its bright colours and geometrical shapes. The design is the development of a typical kettle with whistle, into a desired, 'designer' product. There is an obvious Bauhaus influence, in the shape of the handle and lid. The concept is simple, when the kettle boils, the bird 'sings'. This has been a very successful and popular product.

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ALESSANDRO  
MENDINI



**ANNA G.  
CORKSCREW**

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# ANNA G. CORKSCREW 1994 BY ALESSANDRO MENDINI

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The design pays 'comical' homage to a woman and has a smiling face and a retro bob hairstyle. In fact, it was inspired by a friend of Mendini, called Anna Gili. The levers are designed to look like open arms when in use. A perfectly symmetrical product, that led to a range of similar designs.

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# APPLE iPhone

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## APPLE iPHONE 2007

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Apple move to the development of consumer electronics in 2005, which was definitive , resulting in the first iphone (2007). This was one of the first smart phones and developed from Apple's innovative and imaginary work on touchscreen technology.

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Charles Rennie Mackintosh



**MACKINTOSH CHAIRS**

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## CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH

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Renowned Scottish designer / architect, who contributed significantly to design in the early twentieth century. He designed inspirational buildings, such as the Glasgow School of Art (1899). He also produced floral and landscape watercolours, textile designs and interior designs. His furniture was innovative in design, at a time of change from Art Nouveau to Modernism.

He was influenced by the Japanese style and design, recognising Japanese simplicity, style, functionality and their use of natural materials .

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**CHARLES AND  
RAY EAMES**

# **EAMES LOUNGE CHAIR**

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# LOUNGE CHAIR BY CHARLES AND RAY EAMES - 1956

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The classic chair, was designed by Charles and Ray Eames in the 1950s. It was first manufactured for sale in 1956.

New materials and techniques were used in its construction, such as the use of laminated plywood (layers of veneers) which was extensively developed during the Second World War, for military purposes. The metal supports / frames were manufactured from lightweight aluminium. Rubber spacers between the laminated veneers and aluminium supports, allows slight flexibility, especially in the headrest and absorb 'shock', when the chair is initially sat on.

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## HARRY BECK



## UNDERGROUND MAP

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# HARRY BECK – LONDON UNDERGROUND MAP

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In 1930, Beck worked on a style of 'topological' map, that would eventually become the standard graphical method of presenting maps, around the world. He was interested in producing a functional map that only conveyed information needed by passengers. Only stations and routes were displayed, in a straightforward manner, making the map easy to read and understand. The new map was designed in Beck's own time and without a commission from the London Passenger Transport Board. His original sketch was drawn in a school exercise book, whilst he was 'laid off' during an economy drive by his employers.

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**EILEEN GREY**



**BIBENDUM CHAIR**

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# EILEEN GRAY - The Bibendum Chair

(1917 - 1921)

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It has a chromed steel frame and curved leather tubing, giving rise to an extremely comfortable seating position. The seat is supported by a beech frame with rubber webbing.

The chair is modernist in style, very different to traditional designs of the same period. It has a simple and functional form and is a timeless design, still popular today and regarded as a classic, iconic design.

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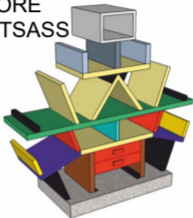
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**ETTORE  
SOTTASS**



**CARLTON  
DRESSER**

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# THE CARLTON DRESSER -

By Ettore Sottsass - 1981

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In 1981 Ettore Sottsass presented his Carlton Dresser. As a dresser it lacks functionality, in fact it would be fair to describe this furniture as virtually unusable. It is typically Post Modern, in that can be described as a display piece or even a discussion piece.

Nevertheless, it is an interesting design, with its choice of bright colours and its angular arrangement of sides and supporting pieces.

The design challenges traditional and modernist design principles, just like many other Memphis designs.

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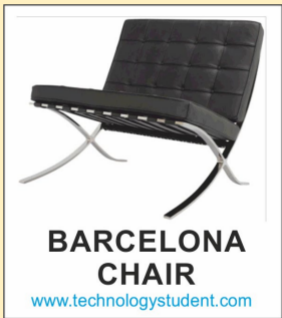
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**Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe**



# **BARCELONA CHAIR**

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# THE BARCELONA CHAIR – 1929

## Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe

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The original chair, each side frame was manufactured from two pieces of steel welded together and then 'bolted' together. In the 1950s stainless steel, a new material in furniture manufacture, was used for the construction of the frames. The adoption of stainless steel meant that the frame could be manufactured in one piece, without joint lines. It was mass produced in 1950s by 'Knoll' furniture manufacturers and this continues today.

From the side, the frame of the chair has a 'scissor form, a sign of power from ancient Egyptian times. manufactured from two pieces of steel welded together.

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OWEN  
MACLAREN



**MACLAREN  
B-01 BUGGY**

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# OWEN MACLAREN AND THE MACLAREN B-01 BUGGY

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Maclaren was always looking for problems to solve. He saw an opportunity to apply his skills, when watching his daughter struggling with a child's push chair. Existing push chairs were heavy and very difficult to lift and manoeuvre and lacked style. Owen Maclaren, looked at the problem from that of a designer and experienced engineer. Whilst working in the aeronautical industry, he worked with modern lightweight materials such as aluminium, due to the weight restrictions of fighter planes. He applied his knowledge of folding lightweight tubular structures, to that of children's push chairs. In 1965 he patented his design of the B01 and it reached the shops in 1967.

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**MARCEL  
BREUER**

**MB-118 CHAIR**

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# MARCEL BREUER

## MB-118 CHAIR 1928

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Through designers such as Breuer, the Bauhaus promoted the use of modernist materials including tubular steel. Material that had not been used previously in furniture design or even considered as a suitable material for furniture. Tubular steel is light, versatile and cheap. It can be joined, shaped and formed in different ways, opening up new design possibilities. This was the design philosophy of the Bauhaus.

Marcel Breuer used tubular steel in the construction of his famous / iconic cantilever chair. The MB-118 Chair is manufactured to this day, from one piece of steel tube. This is now regarded as a design classic.

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MICHAEL  
THONET



THONET  
NO 14 CHAIR

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# MICHAEL THONET THE No 14 CHAIR

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The No 14 chair (1859), also known as the Vienna Coffee House Chair, was made in separate parts, which could be assembled later, allowing for ease of transport around the world. This is possibly the first example of 'assembly' furniture. A trend that is even more popular today, with modern knockdown furniture (also called flat pack furniture). Innovative in its day, the No 14 Chair is held in high regard as a classic / iconic design / product and still purchased today by customers around the world. Fifty million No 14 Chairs were sold before 1930. It is one of the most recognisable chairs ever mass manufactured and possibly the highest selling chair of all time.

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**DELOREAN**  
**DMC-12**

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WHAT CAN FIND OUT  
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**WHAT CAN FIND OUT  
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**RALEIGH CHOPPER**



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**ANGLEPOISE®**  
**LAMP - 1932**

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