

# COMPARISON OF THE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY OF MODERNISM (BAUHAUS) AND POST MODERNISM (MEMPHIS GROUP)

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On behalf of The World Association of Technology Teachers

## W.A.T.T.



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# COMPARISON OF THE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY OF MODERNISM (BAUHAUS) AND POST MODERNISM (MEMPHIS GROUP)

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1. Design principles, generally followed by modernist / Bauhaus designers are written below. Consider each of the paragraphs and then write the equivalent Memphis design principles, in the available space.

The key phrases at the bottom of the page may help you complete the question.

## MEMPHIS GROUP 1980s

VISUAL IMPACT:

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FUNCTIONALITY:

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MARKET / TARGET MARKET:

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SCALE OF MANUFACTURE:

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MATERIALS:

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## MODERNISM / BAUHAUS 1920s -30s

VISUAL IMPACT:

Simplicity of design, producing a 'purer' form of design.

FUNCTIONALITY:

Function and form central to modernist ideals. Designs kept simple, with artistic work banished from the final product.

MARKET / TARGET MARKET:

Designs aimed at the general public, although the best known designs such as the MB-118 CHAIR (1928) have become collectors items in their own right.

SCALE OF MANUFACTURE:

Mass production. Designs manufactured on a large scale, using industrial techniques. For example, the MB-118 Chair. This tubular steel chair was manufactured on a production line, through techniques employed in engineering and steel works, forming steel.

MATERIALS: Modernism promoted the use of materials such as tubular steel. Materials that had not been previously considered as suitable for furniture. Tubular steel is light, versatile and cheap. It can be joined, shaped and formed in different ways, opening up new design possibilities. New materials used to enhance the function of the product. For example the MB-118 Chair.

## MEMPHIS GROUP ( POST MODERNIST) PRODUCT DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. Emphasis placed on aesthetics, shape and form. Designs often influenced by fashionable trends.
2. Styles from different ages, mixed to form a design/product.  
Often 'Memphis' designs are controversial.
3. Use of common, everyday materials such as MDF, glass, steel and stone. This principle was shared with the Bauhaus and Modernism.
4. Often materials used that are not normally not associated with the product. (E.G. the Etruscan Chair designed by Danny Lane 1984). Glass chair.
5. Most of their designs were One Offs or for very small scale production.
6. A combination of craft skills often displayed. For instance, accurate engineering combined with high quality individual craft work.
7. Memphis designs can be regarded as works of art, rather than functional objects.