

# Product Design Summer Assignment

*Your summer assignment must be submitted in the first lesson for this subject in September. The completion of this assignment is compulsory and we expect you to put every effort into completing it to the best of your ability. Failure to submit this assignment will jeopardise your place on this course.*

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***Congratulations you have chosen to embark on a product design course at LaSWAP!***

## **Guidance**

- The summer assignment must be completed independently and will be assessed in the first week of the A Level course.
- The task has been written in the style of the A level writing component of the exam and the marking grid and grade conversion table below will help you know what you are expected to produce.
- The task will be marked out of 40 (20 marks for your exhibition review and 20 marks for your product analysis).
- You will need to bring your summer assignment to your first lesson and will then be expected to make a presentation of your ideas to the class.

**TASK 1:** Visit a gallery/exhibition or design shop and write a review of what you learnt and 'understood from the visit. You should add photos/sketches to your review and discuss what you liked/disliked and critically analyse what you have seen. Make the review personal to your own taste and give your own opinions, as well as researching background information about the exhibition/shop. This should be over two A4 pages.

**TASK 2:** Produce two A4 annotated pages on product analysis. Choose a product made from more than one material that you consider to be 'iconic'. Use ACCESS FM (you should all be familiar with this acronym from studying DT GCSE. If not it stands for aesthetics, cost, client, environment, size, safety, function, material) to write about your product, focusing on materials, manufacture and function. Include detailed labelled sketches. Your research should be primary. It can be from a museum/ exhibition/ designer shop/ or from your own environment. Suggestions of sites to visit are listed at the end of this document. Ensure the products you have analysed are something you are passionate about to show your own interest for product design.

**Extension task:** Reinvent and redesign the product that you have analysed so that it has a new or improved function. **Include labelled sketches and diagrams.**

**Use subject specific vocabulary to write in full sentences, explaining each point that you make.**

The examples below show the quality and level of written work needed for a product analysis. These are examples of previous students product analysis of primary sources.



### Store research

When coming up with an idea for a product I went to multiple shops along Tottenham Court Road that sold furniture (i.e. Habitat and Dwell). I took inspiration from the types of furniture these stores sold, the materials and the different designs that were used. I came across multiple components of different products that I thought I could incorporate. As well as looking at the different features of the products I looked at how the designer had mixed different materials together, i.e. metal and wood tables to give the industrial look.

I feel like this part of my research was very important as it showed me what kind of products are being sold, it made me think how my product could be sold and it gave me ideas for different mechanisms and features that I could use in my product.

Dwell is a furniture retailer, that many sold products using wood and the products were displayed as part of a set up. This allowed me to see how different features of a product can fit into different setups. This shop gave me ideas for different mechanisms and features that I could use in my product.

I also went to Habitat which is a retailer of household furnishings. In Habitat I saw a lot of products that were set up in a home environment as well as this they showed a lot of small pieces such as the metal briefcase. This shop gave me ideas on how different products can fit into different home set ups.

### IKEA visit

**Secondary Research**

My favourite part about this feature is that you can move the pegs to suit you. I could incorporate this feature in my design by adding a back board where the client could hang tools that he uses frequently for easy access.

This housing joint allows for the door of the cupboard to open easily. I like this joint as its easy to use and make. If possible I could use this joint for the shelf under the table which would allow the client easier access to his toolbox.

I like the wood used in this cabinet and in this bench. I will use these when considering materials.

From this product I like how they've used wood and metal together. The wooden bench with the metal table adds to the industrial look which is quite trendy at the moment.

This cabinet draw is quite unique. I could use this in my product as a draw to store tools. It opens on a slant allowing for easy access to tools.

This provide more storage as I'd be able to prop the tools up and I could partition the draws so the tools are more visible.

This is an adjustable mechanism I found on the IKEA website. I like the simplicity of this mechanism. However as there would be many pegs it would be more time consuming to adjust the height compared to a cutch or "A-Frame" mechanism.

Could add a partition where I prop up tools, more tool storage.

Easy access to tools.

### Primary Research

This table shows a mechanism that adjusts the height and also gives added storage. With my design I could add a patch of the table that is adjustable therefore the client can use this for making certain features.

I like the locking system in this product as its quite simple to use and is secure. If I'm thinking about how to make my product transportable I could use these looks to hold table together.

Table made from sheet metal. The use of having a cross over adds to the sturdiness of the table. I will use this when thinking about how I'm going to make my work-bench legs.

I saw this in the bathroom section of the IKEA store, however this mechanism could be used in my product as a way of adjusting the height of the bench.

## Primary Research

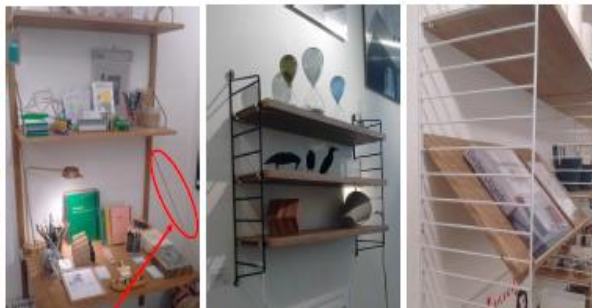
Similar to the shelves, the join between metal and wood is moderate and minimalist in style.

This shelf has been seen, adding additional support to the shelf.

This design illustrates how different shapes can be used together in order to create functional designs. For instance, the shelves (designed for storing wine bottles), have square gaps on the front, making it easier to read the labels of the bottle. The circular holes on the side panels support the bottle base. This juxtaposition creates a visually interesting design.

Whilst this shelf is made predominantly from oak, additional brass features have been added to support the books. Using tubular brass is aesthetically pleasing, but also makes the design more minimalist, and means that it lighter than a whole brass sheet.

This shelving unit was not modular, but it was designed in a way that gave the illusion of modularity. For example, the shelves have purposely been made to sit at different heights and be different in width and depth to one another. Despite this, it is all still one component. Whilst this is a pleasing aesthetic, it suggests that modular furniture is desirable, yet not always practical. However, if furniture is made to be modular, it should be a conscious, practical step that is taken in order to make the product more versatile. This could simultaneously make the product more affordable, as it can be brought in sections, rather than the client having to financially



These shelves have a minimalist aesthetic, reminiscent of the Modernist design movement. This is achieved only using two materials (ply/oak with aluminium frames). The metal frames have been painted, so the simple colour palette also helps create the minimalist look.

I was specifically interested in the customisable shelving that I saw. There were boards with holes drilled into them, and then thick dowels could be pushed into these holes. Boards rest on the dowels as they have routed slots on the bottom, meaning that they are stable and can therefore create a shelf. This gives the client the ability to customise the height and position of their shelves, which makes the design more flexible. The actual length of the shelf is the only components with fixed dimensions as these are a pre-determined component. Despite this, the design still gives the client freedom to choose from different sizes of board, facilitating for different shelving combinations.

As well as having plywood examples of this product, twentytwentyone also had examples of modular shelving created using hardwood boards that look onto a slender metal frame on either side. This frame means that the client can choose to move their shelves up or down between regular intervals, again giving them a degree of flexibility. I like the way that these shelves provide the user a piece of functional design, but also give them the opportunity to personalise with, what is effectively, a modular system.

These products are made to a high standard. However, they are also generally very expensive and twentytwentyone is often viewed as being a prestigious design shop. I would like to design products that are accessible to everyone.



I visited the design shop twentytwentyone in order to gain some Primary Research.

I was particularly interested in products that provided either shelving or storage, as I see my indoor garden project as providing a similar function.

Although there was a large number of products to choose from, twentytwentyone has been careful to curate the aesthetic of the shop. Although it is a shop that stocks several different designers, including names like Alvar Aalto, it has been displayed so that everything is in the context that it could be found in a domestic home. This was useful for my research because I was fully immersed in their designs.

Looking round a shop is useful from a design perspective, because it gives examples of several different types of product, some of which are fulfilling the same purpose, but all are doing so in a way that is unique. For instance, I was able to look at number of different types of shelving. I realised just how many possibilities would be available to me, especially if I decide to use a mechanism to hang my small-scale garden from a wall. In order to investigate this properly I will need to complete some more product analysis of different designs and then compare them.

An advantage of twentytwentyone being laid out like a show room is that it gives me inspiration by reminding me of potential additional features to a product.

A lot of the products in twentytwentyone are of a minimalist design. I will show these pages to my client and receive feedback on what they think of the design style as a whole. Finalising the style of a product is really important because that decision will then influence where to draw the rest of your inspiration from. Therefore I would like to decide this as early as possible in the design period. Another similarity that I noticed between a lot of twentytwentyone's products is that several of them have adjustable or modular features. As well as this, it they also use darker, unfinished hard woods, or paler manufactured boards (like plywood) and white painted metals. Whilst the colours of the materials are more for the aesthetic than the functionality in this case, the adjustability and modularity of the product is an indication of a popular products in the design world. People are attracted to products they can change and personalise, but also alter in order to take up less space. This is definitely something that I should follow up, especially as my product is intended for small spaces.

**Sites you can visit**

**SHOPS:**

Tom Dixon shop  
Conran shop  
Habitat  
Hobbs  
Ikea  
Folklore  
Scandium  
twentytwentyone

**Galleries:**

The design museum  
V&A  
British Museum  
Tate Modern  
Science Museum  
Transport Museum  
Museum of Brands, Packaging & Advertising  
New London Architect  
The Geffrye Museum  
William Morris museum



**Assessment criteria**

Your teachers will use this marking grid to assess task 1 and task 2. Marks will be added up and grades based on the grade boundaries below. It is linked to Section A of the AQA A level scheme of assessment 'Identify and investigate design possibilities'

Mark	Description
<b>16-20</b>	<p>The content is relevant and links directly to the task that has been set. Reference is made to the end user / target market and the potential for new innovative design ideas is identified.</p> <p>Student employs a comprehensive range of strategies and techniques, including both primary and secondary methods of investigation. All sources have been fully referenced.</p> <p>Excellent, clear communication of ideas through a fully appropriate variety of methods and techniques, eg sketching, photographic evidence, overlays.</p> <p>The student demonstrates a deep understanding of the information gathered in their written work by explaining their points in detail. Relevant and skilful use of subject specific terminology.</p>
<b>11-15</b>	<p>The content is relevant and links directly to the task that has been set. Reference is made to the end user / target market and the potential for new design ideas is identified.</p> <p>Student employs a broad range of strategies and techniques, which may include primary and secondary methods of investigation. Most sources have been fully referenced.</p> <p>Ideas are well communicated through a variety of methods and techniques which are mostly appropriate. eg sketching, photographic evidence, overlays.</p> <p>The student demonstrates a good understanding of the information gathered in their written work by explaining their points. Relevant use of subject specific terminology.</p>
<b>6-10</b>	<p>The content is mostly relevant but may require more clarity and focus. Some reference is made to the end user / target market. There is limited reference to the potential for new design ideas.</p> <p>Student employs a limited range of strategies and techniques, which may require more primary methods of investigation. Some sources have been referenced.</p> <p>Ideas are adequately communicated through techniques, but a wider variety of methods eg sketching, photographic evidence, overlays should be included.</p> <p>The student demonstrates some understanding of the information gathered in their written work by explaining their points. Some appropriate use of subject specific terminology</p>
<b>1-5</b>	<p>The content contains limited relevant information and requires more clarity. Minimal reference to the end user / target market</p> <p>Student employs a single strategy or technique, with a lack of primary research. Source referencing is minimal.</p> <p>Ideas are only communicated through basic methods. Techniques and involve the over use of the internet.</p> <p>A limited number of points are discussed. The student demonstrates only a basic understanding of the information gathered. Texts require a better use of subject terminology.</p>

<b>Grade Boundaries Mark /40</b>	40-36	35-32	31-28	27-24	23-20	19-16
<b>Equivalent Grade</b>	A*	A	B	C	D	E