

Make a sleek and simple design

Lesson Plan – Key Stages 3-5

Skills that you'll use

- You will learn about key designs and key designers.



Materials needed

- Pencil or pen
- Some paper
- Colouring pens or pencils (optional)



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Activity plan

Introduction (5mins)

Record players and radios would often look like pieces of furniture to blend in with their surroundings. The new devices were often wooden, with legs or made to look a bit like a cabinet. But that all changed with the invention of the SK4 'phonosuper'. The designers behind it wanted a record player/radio that would stand out and look really modern. Wood was kept to a minimum and this made way for the new design which included white painted sheet metal with just a few buttons and dials.

This clean and basic approach was called minimalism, but it was married up with something called 'ergonomics'. Buttons were indented slightly so that the person using the SK4 could use their fingers to find the buttons without looking. Ergonomics is about how the person using the product interacts with it.

The 'phonosuper' had a brand new material in its lid: plexiglass. This new form of acrylic meant that the record player could be viewed, even when the lid was closed, but not everyone was a fan of this ground-breaking look. Many people who disliked the look of the SK4 called it 'Snow white's coffin' due to the white case with the glass-like see-through lid.

Watch the Design Museum's film about the SK5, the improved version of the SK4. Fashion designer Paul Smith talks about why he likes the phonosuper so much.



Activity plan

Discuss (5-10mins)

Dieter Rams' '10 principles of good design' were the basis of his design approach. He later became the chief designer for Braun and held the job for over 40 years. Talk to someone in your house about an object that you both like. Does it live up to Dieter Rams' 10 principles?

- Good design is innovative
- Good design makes a product useful
- Good design is aesthetic
- Good design makes a product understandable
- Good design is unobtrusive
- Good design is honest
- Good design is long-lasting
- Good design is thorough down to the last detail
- Good design is environmentally-friendly
- Good design is as little design as possible



Activity plan

Research (10 mins)

- Go online (you may ask an adult for help) and look at some of Paul Smith's designs.
- Find some of Dieter Ram's designs for Braun.
- Do you think that they look similar or very different?
- Compare the designs together.
- Do you think that Paul Smith's designs would live up to Dieter Ram's 10 principles of good Design?



Activity plan

Activity (30 mins)

Find a complicated object and simplify it. Look for something from around your home (make sure that you ask for permission first if it isn't yours).

Redesign your object in the style of Dieter Rams.

- Remove any unnecessary buttons and combine functions of buttons that are not used very much.
- Make the design simple with clean edges and uncluttered surfaces.
- Make sure that your design meets Dieter Rams' 10 Principles of good design.

Now that you've completed your design why not share it with the Design Museum on social media using **#DesignFromHome?**

