

Eames Fiberglass Side Chairs

vitra.

Charles & Ray Eames, 1950



Eames Fiberglass Side Chairs

In 1948, Charles and Ray Eames participated in the 'International Competition for Low-Cost Furniture Design', organised by the New York Museum of Modern Art, entering a chair with a seat shell moulded to fit the contours of the human body along with a concept for a variety of bases. Their design won second prize. However, the metal seat shell proved too complex and expensive to achieve successful mass production.

The couple's search for alternative materials eventually led them to glass-fibre reinforced polyester resin, which until then had been primarily restricted to military applications such as aircraft radomes and cockpit covers. The Eameses recognised and fully exploited the advantages of fibreglass: mouldability, rigidity and suitability for industrial manufacturing methods. With this material, which was previously unknown in the furniture industry, they successfully developed the moulded seat shells for mass production: the Fiberglass Chair was born. Its organically shaped, one-piece shell proved to be a much-admired innovation at a time when chairs typically consisted of a seat and backrest. Fibreglass offered the added advantage of pleasant tactile qualities and a perfectly moulded form for optimal comfort.

Charles and Ray developed a striking series of individual bases that could be freely combined with these shells – such as the Eiffel Tower version made of welded steel wire or the wooden base reinforced with metal struts. This combination of

revolutionary seat shells and innovative bases gave the chair family the iconic traits that are still instantly recognisable today.

Charles and Ray attached great importance to the use of colours – as fibreglass had previously only existed in a colourless version. They consequently spent many days in the factory, mixing hues for countless prototypes in their efforts to create colours that best accentuated the organic shape of both shell forms – with and without armrests – in a range of coordinated shades. The first colours developed by the Eameses were greige (a mix of grey and beige), elephant hide grey (to which Charles was referring when he said 'What I really want is a black with feeling') and the slightly transparent tone parchment. Colours such as sea foam green, yellow, ochre and red followed shortly after in the very early days of production.

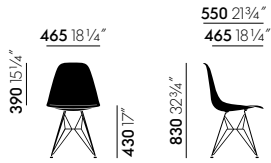
The Fiberglass Chairs were launched on the market in 1950, introducing a new furniture typology that has since become widespread: the multifunctional chair whose shell can be combined with a variety of bases to serve different purposes. In response to the enormous popularity of the chair, the choice of bases and colours was subsequently expanded. Over the course of the following decade, the Fiberglass Chairs became one of the best known furniture designs of the twentieth century.

Vitra manufactures the Fiberglass Side Chairs and Fiberglass Armchairs by Charles and Ray Eames in some of the early original colours. The fibreglass shells are characterised by their lively visual appeal, which is much-prized today. Fibreglass owes its charm to an irregular surface, which appears almost like a natural material thanks to its clearly visible fibres. The version with a polypropylene shell – the Eames Plastic Chair – also remains available. Together the two chair groups form an extensive family, enabling countless variations of the classic Eames design, with a suitable version for almost every taste and purpose.

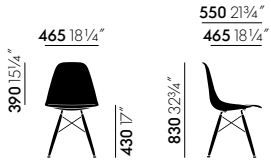
Materials

- **Seat shell:** dyed-through, glass-fibre reinforced polyester (fibreglass). Just like the earliest models, today's fibreglass shells are also slightly transparent in some colours.

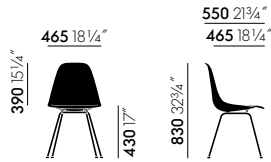
DIMENSIONS



Eames Fiberglass Side Chair DSR



Eames Fiberglass Side Chair DSW



Eames Fiberglass Side Chair DSX

COLOURS AND MATERIALS



04
Eames Elephant
Hide Grey



03
Eames Red
Orange



02
Eames Navy
Blue



05
Eames Sea
Foam Green



01
Eames Parch-
ment



07
Eames Ochre
Light



06
Eames Raw
Umber



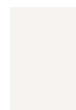
08
Eames Ochre
Dark



09
Eames Classic
Red



65
ash honey tone



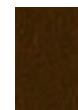
04
white powder-
coated (smooth)



02
golden maple



01
chrome



95
dark maple



30
basic dark
powder-coated
(smooth)



30
black maple

Seat shell

Base DSR, DSX

Base DSW

Eames Fiberglass Armchair

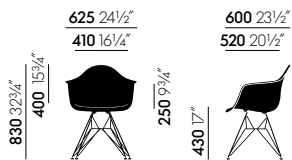
vitra.

Charles & Ray Eames, 1950

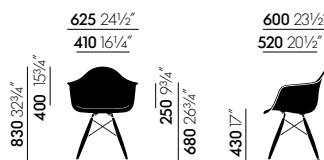


Eames Fiberglass Armchairs

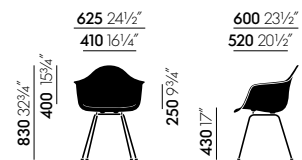
DIMENSIONS



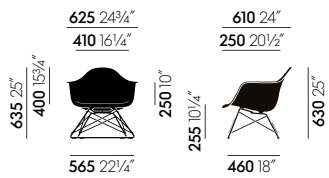
Eames Fiberglass Armchair DAR



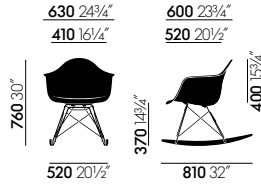
Eames Fiberglass Armchair DAW



Eames Fiberglass Armchair DAX

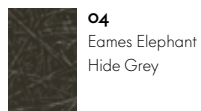


Eames Plastic Armchair LAR

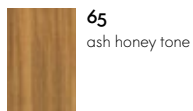


Eames Plastic Armchair RAR

COLOURS AND MATERIALS



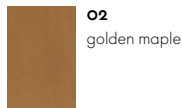
04
Eames Elephant
Hide Grey



65
ash honey tone



01
Eames Parchment



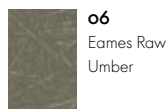
02
golden maple



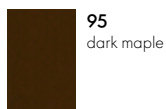
04
white powder-coated (smooth)



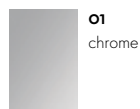
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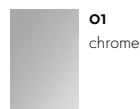
06
Eames Raw
Umber



95
dark maple



01
chrome

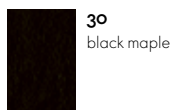


01
chrome

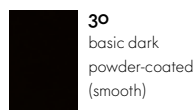
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golden maple



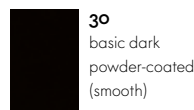
05
Eames Sea
Foam Green



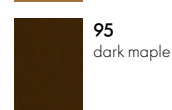
30
black maple



30
basic dark
powder-coated
(smooth)



30
basic dark
powder-coated
(smooth)



95
dark maple

Seat shell

Base DAW

Base DAR, DAX,
LAR

Wire
base RAR

Rocking skids RAR

