

Design research: Corner furniture

As a result of our activities in the field of design research, every now and then we discover unique types of furniture. We enthusiastically study their background as well as the patterns of everyday use. We spend time analysing the visible traces of production as well as adoption, and we try to examine the socio-cultural framework of their invention. We conduct this kind of research in order to generate fundamental knowledge that is generally applicable to our own output as furniture designers.

The origins of corner furniture

There has always been a need for clever corner furniture solutions. In looking at the history of ideas, we can distinguish between three different influencing factors.

1. The "Herrgottswinkel" (literal: God's corner)
The so-called "Herrgottswinkel" is a small house altar in the dining corner of Austrian and German farmhouses in the Catholic south. Equipped with a crucifix, corner shelf, corner table, and corner bench, it shifts the focus of religious and everyday life from the centre of the room towards a corner.
2. Vernacular wooden equipment
When browsing through Museums of Popular Art, next to wooden tools one can see a vast number of three-legged drying racks and wooden corner shelves. Typologically, we categorise these wooden artefacts somewhere in between tools and furniture.
3. Occasional furniture from the Biedermeier period
The desire for bourgeois, middle-class comfort together with the prevailing idea of an optimal use of space led to the design of numerous corner furniture solutions, especially in the first half of the 19th century. Various models with curved fronts are supposed to provide additional storage space, supplement the interior concept, and contribute to the softening (rounding-off) of rectangular spaces.

The appearance of many corner furniture models is rooted in these three traditions.

The catalogue "Furniture: A Typology for Museums and Collectors" illustrates the historic ingenuity of corner furniture solutions by listing a number of examples: Corner bench, corner fauteuil, corner bureau, corner cabinet, corner chair, corner table, and corner shelf.

We grab this leitmotif and transform it into a new and innovative piece of work furniture.



1. The "Herrgottswinkel"



2. Vernacular equipment



3. Biedermeier furniture

Design study: The Corner Office

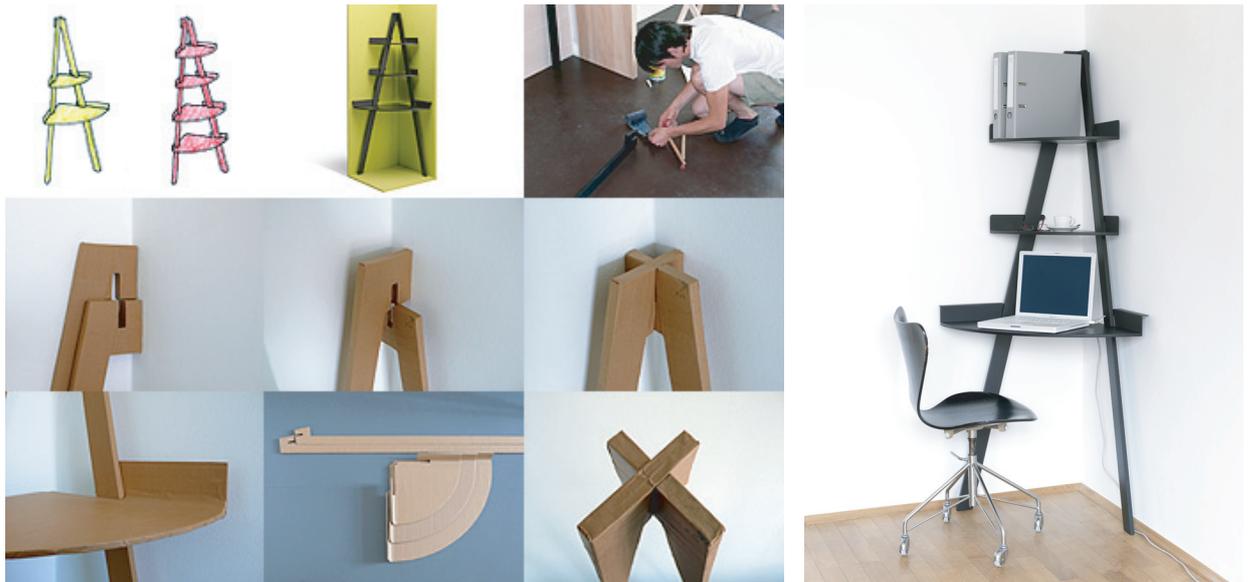
In carrying out this extensive design study, we particularly aim at an office furniture solution as a response to today's increasingly flexible work situations and workspaces.

The light and two-legged minimal construction is able to rest against the wall in any room corner. Opening up new fields of application, *The Corner Office* can be used as a compact workstation, a space saving shelf, or a kind of minimum-desk for public and semi-public areas.

It is designed as a knock-down and cash-and-carry piece of furniture. All parts are flat-packed in order to optimise the logistics. No tools are needed for assembly. Two interlocking upright struts in turn form an A-shaped frame. Rounded shelf elements provide for storage space and a desktop/worktop for mobile electronic devices.

The Corner Office stands a couple of centimetres clear off the walls, which thereby allows for tidy cable routing, bypassing skirting-boards, cable ducts, and electric sockets.

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