

1: DESIGN THESIS

With your project in mind, answer the following questions with *as much visual material as possible*. (Suggestions are included as examples with the questions.) If you can't find a single image to back up your thinking, either create the same effect with more than one image or sketch what is missing. Create a collage of words *and* images (physical or digital) that addresses the following:

1.1: What will you design?

Describe the physical product as succinctly as you can.

Examples:

- I intend to design a chair for home-office use. (Find pictures of chairs, home offices.)
- I intend to design a jacket for bicycle messengers. (Find pictures of bicycle messengers, bicycle sports riders, jackets of a similar nature, motorcyclists, cavalry riders . . .)

1.2: What is its nature?

Describe its function and the components of the design: materials, colors, mechanics, and so on.

Examples:

- The chair will have the comfort and adjustability of an office chair and the styling and feel of a home environment. It will be made of materials that are easy to clean and that come in an array of colors and are adjustable to a range of body types and sizes. (Find pictures of surfaces and fabrics, offices and homes, colors, different-sized people sitting in different locations.)
- The jacket will be of a durable, easily cleaned, waterproof, and lightweight material. It will have multiple pockets in various sizes. It will have add-on options for different seasons and climates (e.g., hood, lining, and face mask). Colors will promote high visibility. Reflective materials will be incorporated. All fasteners, zipper-pulls, and so on will be large-scale to facilitate operation while wearing gloves. Styling will be led by the aesthetic of the bike messenger culture. (Find pictures of jackets and other garments showing all the details mentioned.)

1.3: Who is it for?

Describe an end user and the environment to which he or she belongs.

Examples:

- The end user is a professional, working from home, who needs to spend several hours a day at a desk located in a multiuse home environment. (Find pictures of people like this. Note the "type" and "lifestyle" involved.)
- The end user is a bicycle messenger in a large urban environment. This involves cycling in heavy traffic at fast speeds while carrying packages and envelopes in inclement weather conditions. (Find pictures of people like this—these may be the same as in 1.1)

1.4: Why is it needed?

Describe the problem that requires this design as a solution.

Examples:

- Desk chairs for office use are functional and often ergonomically designed but less than attractive and generally at odds with home furnishings. A home office that is in a family area requires furniture that belongs to that environment and that provides the comfort and functionality of office designs. (Here, pictures that show a chair and environment that work together and also others that don't.)

- The jacket must be more versatile than any standard jacket because of different demands placed on it by seasonal fluctuations in weather and different requirements of motion and effort when riding or on foot. There is a challenge in combining such a high level of functionality with a sense of style. (Find images of any garment that does this or for any design that is stylish yet highly functional. Sports car? Motorbike? Something more ancient?)

1.5: What are the benefits of it?

Describe the benefits this design will bring. These should be the answers to the problems posed in the previous question.

Examples:

- The designs will provide a choice for those with home offices, allowing them to furnish their work spaces with a chair that belongs to their homes' aesthetic. Conversely, offices can be furnished in a way that is counter to the traditional functional look. (Put together pictures that play with these ideas. Break some rules. Follow other rules rigidly. See what happens.)
- The jackets will benefit bicycle messengers, making their day-to-day existence more comfortable, functional, stylish, and safe. The pockets and fabrics will create a garment that is an essential tool for the messenger's workday. (Show these details. Sketch onto existing images to add pockets, straps, flaps, to an existing design. See what happens. Be spontaneous.)

1.6: Why is this interesting?

Explain why this project is interesting to you and how it could be interesting to a client.

Examples:

- Designing this chair is interesting to me as I am very interested in blending the aesthetics of "home" and "work." With new materials and CAD/CAM technologies, I believe that the functional can now be subservient to any desired style. I think clients would be interested in anything that increases the number of options they have for arranging and decorating their personal spaces. (Show pictures that blend "home" and "work," find elements that speak of both, and combine them into a layout.)
- I am very interested in designing a garment that answers such intensely functional needs, while addressing the very individual stylistic approach of the bicycle messenger. The clients will be interested by the ease of use, the increase in their comfort, and the specificity of the garment to their situations. (Find images of garments that are stylish, comfortable, and functional. Find images of things that are NOT garments, but exhibit those same qualities. How do they do that?)

1.7: How will you proceed?

Explain how you will proceed to begin the design process. What will you do next?

Examples:

- I will begin by researching the ergonomics involved and the issues related to the end users' comfort and desires for style. I will then examine my options for materials, taking care to acknowledge issues of sustainable design. I will visit several home offices and note their practical and aesthetic concerns. (Find pictures of good ergonomic designs. Create a collection—a grab-bag—of different offices and interiors.)
- I will begin by researching the ergonomics involved and the issues related to the end users' comfort, safety, and style. I will then examine my options for materials, taking care to acknowledge issues of sustainable design. I will interview messengers and examine