

Kickin' It



Letting Their Feet Do the Talking

Cleats and sneakers have become a canvas of political and social expression for some of today's biggest and most outspoken sports stars.

Athletes are restricted by league and team rules in what they can wear on the court or field. But their shoes can be an exception.

"The only way that most guys in the league can get away with expressing themselves is their footwear," said Rachel Johnson, a stylist who's worked with some of the NBA's biggest stars, including LeBron James, Chris Paul and Amar'e Stoudemire. Sneakers, she said, are, "the smartest and most innovative way that they can express themselves without getting fined."

While the NFL has traditionally had strict guidelines about cleats, down to the exact color of the laces, rules have loosened up a bit over the last few years. In 2016, a half dozen players wore red, white, and blue cleats for the 15th anniversary of 9/11, and none of them were fined. In 2017, personalized cleats were allowed for pre-game. The NBA has also relaxed its shoe rules. While the league once required players to match their teammates, athletes are now allowed to mix and match from their team's color palette and wear special colors for events and holidays. This has allowed athletes greater expression and opened the way for shoes with political or social messages. In fact, a new NBA rule for 2018/19 that will allow players to wear whatever color of sneaker they want. [Watch ESPN's reporters discuss](#)

how the deal came about, the league's agreement with Nike, how this will affect the likes of LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers, Russell Westbrook of the Oklahoma City Thunder, PJ Tucker of the Houston Rockets, and more.

Marcus Rivero -- who goes by [@solesbysir](#) on Instagram -- paints shoes for athletes. He started doing them for members of the NFL's Miami Dolphins, and by now he's made custom-painted shoes for at least one player on every team in the NFL, as well as for athletes in the NBA and MLB, soccer players overseas, and boxers.

"When I first started doing this custom painting stuff, it was just changes blue to yellow, changes purple to black, and then it started becoming more messages," he told CNN's COVER/LINE. "Then they started to get deeper meanings."

Statement Pieces

Shoes offer players a level of individual expression shirts and jerseys do not. And they play a particular role in fashion for the American man.

Shoes -- and sneakers in particular -- are where many American men first began to express themselves. As the suit, the traditional uniform of masculinity, gave way to new ideals like sneakers-wearing sports stars and tech bros beginning in the '80s, it gave men permission to express themselves through their footwear.

"Sneakers were the first way that men could start to take sartorial choices and I think that men continue to take their greatest sartorial choices at the footwear level," said Elizabeth Semmelhack, senior curator at the Bata Shoe Museum and author of "Out of the Box: The Rise of Sneaker Culture." "

The colors that you see in sneakers, the bold designs, oftentimes you don't find those reflected necessarily in other garments that men wear," she said.

Sneakers remain "at the vanguard of male fashion," she added, and because they're associated with athletic masculinity, "they almost don't feel like fashion, which is often feminized, because of these hyper-masculine associations."

And they've proven an effective way to make a statement.

Shoes are subtler, less in your face. Yet at the same time, they rebel against the call to not speak out as wearable pieces of political pop art.

Johnson, LeBron James' stylist, sees political shoes as a sign of athletes maturing. As a generation of players have

KICKS FOR A CAUSE! EVERY CLEAT TELLS A STORY

Starting in 2017 than 800 NFL players showcased causes that are important to them with custom-made cleats during all Week 13 games through the NFL's [#mycausemycleats](#) initiative. Players have chosen causes ranging from dyslexia to supporting single parents, cancer, the American Heart Foundation, and more.

Many players have worked directly with Nike, Under Armour and adidas to design their cleats. Other teams worked with an independent designer to create cleats for participating players. Players then have the opportunity to raise money for their cause by auctioning their cleats off at NFL Auction; 100 percent of money raised will be donated to the player's charities. Fans may bid on game-issued player cleats to help players raise funds for their chosen causes. See images and the causes behind the cleats [here](#).



grown up, they've realized they can use their voice and platform to do more than sell products, and they've become fathers.

"Watching their own children grow up heightens that level of responsibility for them," she said.

Johnson likened the political shoe trend to the fashion revolution the NBA has experienced since the mid '00s. Johnson said she expects the trend will continue, especially if people continue to tell athletes they can't express their views.

"As long as there are people telling players to shut up and dribble and that they don't have the right to kneel at football games, there's going to continue to be an uprising in the way that players are expressing themselves."

Sneakers Have Always Made a Statement

Since its invention in the 19th century, the footwear has been about much more than athletics—conveying ideas about national identity, class, race, and other forms of social meaning.

Sneakers have always been canvases for political commentary and projection, whether or not brands want them to be. The cultural meaning behind sneakers is a constantly evolving dialogue between the people who produce the sneakers and the people who wear them.

Over the last 200 years, sneakers have signified everything from national identity, race, and class to masculinity and criminality; put simply, they are magnets for social and political meaning, intended or otherwise, in a way that sets them apart from other types of footwear.

Performance-enhancing, rubber-soled athletic shoes date back to the early 19th century, when they were primarily worn for tennis.

From the beginning, however, these so-called “sneakers”—named for their noiseless footfall—were stained with implications of delinquency, being the proverbial choice of pranksters, muggers, and burglars. This reputation would prove difficult to shake: a controversial 1979 [New York Times](#) article was headlined: “For Joggers and Muggers, the Trendy Sneaker.”

It was not until the 1920s that industrialization made sneakers widely available and affordable. Once an emblem of privileged leisure on the tennis court (after all, only rich people could afford to have white shoes), the canvas-and-rubber high-top adapted to the new, classless team sport of basketball.

The Converse All-Star sneaker first came out in 1917, and did not initially bear Taylor's name. That came about years later, well after Taylor joined Converse in 1921 and became a professional sneaker salesman. A basketball player turned salesman may sound unthinkable for today's hoop stars, but this was years before the NBA was founded in 1949 and of course well before basketball stars were being paid millions of dollars to play the sport.

Taylor joined Converse's sales force in Chicago, although there are mixed accounts of what prompted him to do so. Some say that he loved the All-Star shoes so much that he wanted to work for Converse, but the Basketball Hall of Fame, which lists Taylor as a member, says that in 1921, he “hobbled into the Converse Chicago sales office complaining of sore feet and persuaded executives to create a shoe especially for basketball.”

The Converse Rubber Shoe Company—founded in 1908 as a maker of rain boots—introduced its first basketball shoe, the All Star, in 1917. Later, in a stroke of marketing genius, Converse enlisted basketball coaches and players as brand ambassadors, including Chuck Taylor, the first athlete to have a sneaker named after him.

Politics, however, fueled the rise of sneakers as much as athletics. Countries encouraged their citizens to exercise not just for physical perfection or health but to prepare for the next war. It's ironic that the sneaker became one of the most democratized (made available to everyone) forms of footwear at the height of fascism. Mass exercise rallies were features of fascist life in Germany, Japan, and Italy. But sneakers could also represent resistance. Jesse Owens', one of the greatest Olympians of all time, dominance at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games (he won four gold medals) stung the event's Nazi hosts a little more because he trained in German-made Dassler running shoes. (The company was later split between the two Dassler brothers, who renamed their shares Puma and Adidas, sound familiar?) [Extension: Learn the story of the [18 African-American Olympians](#) who went to Berlin]



At the 1936 Olympics, 18 black athletes went to Berlin as part of the U.S. team. Pictured here are (left to right, rear) high jumpers Dave Albritton and Cornelius Johnson; hurdler Tidy Pickett; sprinter Ralph Metcalfe; boxer Jim Clark; sprinter Mack Robinson. In front: weightlifter John Terry (left); long jumper John Brooks.

Bettmann Archive/Getty Images

Rubber, Rations, and Rebels

When the U.S. government rationed rubber during World War II, sneakers were exempted following widespread protests. The practical, inexpensive, and casual shoe had become central to American identity, on and off the playing field. The growing influence of television in the 1950s created two new cultural archetypes: the celebrity athlete and the teenager. James Dean effectively rebranded Chuck Taylors as the footwear of choice for young rebels without a cause.

Sneakers became footnotes in the history of the Civil Rights movement. In 1965, *I Spy* was the first weekly TV drama to feature a black actor—Bill Cosby—in a lead role. His character, a fun-loving CIA

agent going undercover as a tennis coach, habitually wore white Adidas sneakers, easily identifiable by their prominent trio of stripes.

This updated gumshoe alluded to the “sneaky” origins of sneakers, while also serving as shorthand for new-school cool. Sneakers played a more explicit part at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, where American gold medalist sprinter Tommie Smith and his bronze medal-winning teammate, John Carlos, removed their Puma Suedes and mounted the medal podium in their stocking feet, to symbolize African-American poverty, their heads lowered and black-gloved fists raised in a Black Power salute. The ensuing controversy didn’t hurt the success of the Suede, still in production today.



Famous Footwear

Around the same time, the jogging craze necessitated low-rise, high-tech footwear that bore little resemblance to the familiar canvas-and-rubber basketball high-top. But these state-of-the-art shoes weren’t made for running alone; they were colorful, covetable fashion statements. In 1977, *Vogue* declared that “real runner’s sneakers” had become status symbols, worn by famous non-professional athletes like Farrah Fawcett and Mick Jagger. Instead of one pair of sneakers, people suddenly needed a whole wardrobe of them, custom-made for different activities—or genders. Sneaker companies embraced women’s liberation as a promotional ploy, advertising shoes specifically designed for female bodies and lifestyles.

As the suburbs became overrun with joggers, America’s cities saw a rise in basketball players, particularly in New York, where a bold new style of play transformed the game. Like break dancing, schoolyard basketball quickly bled into mainstream culture.



“In the 1970s, New Yorkers in the basketball and hip-hop community changed the perception of sneakers from sports equipment to tools for cultural expression,” the sneaker historian Bobbito Garcia explains in the *Out of the Box* catalogue. “The progenitors of sneaker culture were predominantly ... kids of color who grew up in a depressed economic era.” The 2015 documentary *Fresh Dressed* highlighted the prominent role of sneakers in the history of black urban culture—and its appropriation by mainstream culture.

Canvas Becomes the Cool Anti-Cool Footwear

The original humble canvas sneaker, since the '60s supplanted in the sports world by more ergonomic designs in futuristic materials, found new life as an everyday shoe. Over the next few decades, canvas sneakers came to embody youthful rebellion as much as athleticism. Beatniks, rockers, and skateboarders adopted them because they were cheap, anonymous, and authentic—not necessarily because they were comfortable or cool. Converse, Keds, and Vans got their street cred not from sports stars, but from punk and rock musicians like the Ramones, Sid Vicious, and Kurt Cobain. The All Star, formerly available only in black or white, suddenly appeared in a rainbow of fashion colors.



Let's Get Physical!

The ascent of aerobics in the early '80s left Nike, known for its jogging shoes, struggling to adjust. In February 1984, the company reported its first-ever quarterly loss, but that same year Nike signed basketball rookie Michael Jordan (before he ever set foot on the court for the Bulls) to an endorsement deal—arguably the birth of modern sneaker culture. Jordan wore his signature Air Jordans in NBA games, in defiance of league rules. Nike happily paid his \$5,000-per-game fine, while airing ads declaring: “The NBA can’t keep *you* from wearing them.” And so when the first Air Jordans hit stores in 1985, the sneakers carried with them a distinct whiff of rebellion against ‘the man’, despite their \$65 price tag. But not everyone wanted to be like Mike.

And Political?

The growing popularity of sneakers on both sides of the political divide set the stage for a raging culture war over the shoes’ ties to criminality, or lack thereof. In “My Adidas” (1986)—one of many hip-hop

sneaker shout-outs—Run-DMC defended their laceless Adidas Superstars against sneakers' thuggish image as "felon shoes," rapping: "I wore my sneakers, but I'm not a sneak." (The band was rewarded with an Adidas endorsement deal, a first for a musical group.)

The rise in sneakers' price and social status led to a wave of sneaker theft. A frenzied media even blamed Nike's Spike Lee-directed Air Jordan ads for a string of "sneaker killings" in 1990.

If the shoe fits...collect it?

But mounting customization and collectability (driven by eBay) only increased the cost of sneakers. Artists and elite fashion designers like Prada and Gucci began releasing their own designs or limited-edition collaborations with athletic brands. Sneakers had evolved from symbolic consumer objects into small-batch vehicles for unambiguous social commentary.

In one notable example, the artist Judi Werthein designed the 2005 Brinco cross-trainer to assist with illegal border crossings from Mexico. They call the act of crossing the "brinco" - literally "jump" in Spanish. And that is the inspiration for Werthein's crossing shoes, called Brincos. The trainers are adorned with unusual items. "The shoe includes a compass, a flashlight because people cross at night, and inside is included also some Tylenol painkillers because many people get injured during crossing," Werthein says.



Werthein distributed Brincos to migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border for free, while also selling them to sneakerheads for \$215 per pair at a hip San Diego boutique (where they were displayed on a pedestal under protective glass.). Werthein dismisses complaints that she is aiding and abetting illegal immigrants. She argues she is just provoking an important discussion. The real incentive for illegal immigrants, she says, is Americans' demand for cheap labour.



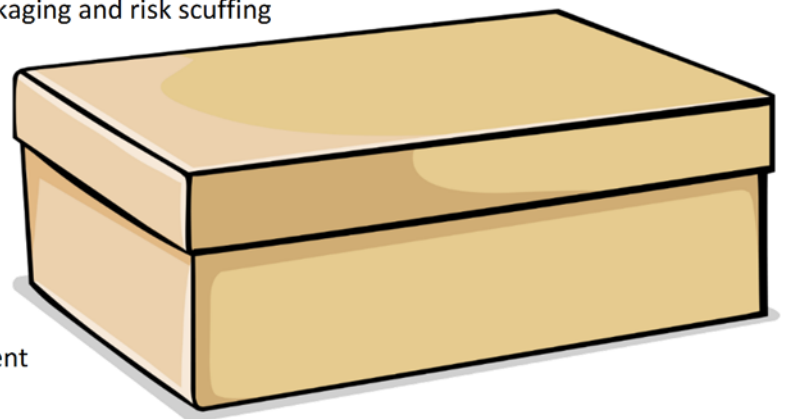
A few years later, "Obama Force One," the custom AF1 designed by the artist Jimm Lasser in 2008, had profile portraits of President Obama etched on each sole. And, long

before the Colin Kaepernick debate, the NBA star Dwayne Wade released a pair of Black Lives Matter sneakers.

Too Far? Not Far Enough?

Inevitably, some of these statement sneakers were accused of going too far, or not far enough. The line Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer designed for Converse in 2013 contained hidden human rights slogans and symbols. “It should be welcomed that Niemeyer is using this opportunity to raise political awareness,” *The Guardian’s* architecture and design blog noted. “But I wonder what he would make of accusations that dozens of factory workers making Converse sneakers in Indonesia have been routinely abused on the job?”

Such is one of the problems that can arise with socially conscious sneakers: The intent, the message, and the realities of production don’t always comfortably line up. Consider how many of today’s politicized sneakers are too expensive for most people to buy. And even for those who can afford the shoes, there’s little incentive to take them out of their packaging and risk scuffing them out on the streets. While their designers may see them as works of activism, to their owners, these costlier sneakers are more likely to be investment pieces—the hard-won fruits of waitlists, raffles, and overnight lines outside specialty shops. The *Out of the Box* exhibition catalogue even includes an essay on how to care for your “personal sneaker museum,” which prompts the question: If a sneaker makes a statement in a box, does anyone hear it? ¹



¹ Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell “Sneakers Have Always Been Political Shoes” *The Atlantic.com*
<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/12/sneakers-have-always-been-political-shoes/511628/>

That Lights Me Up!

What are YOU passionate about?

This isn't a question you'll only hear once. It's actually a pretty common one to pop up in job interviews. The reason interviewers ask this question is because they're trying to get a sense of who you are beyond your resume, and to know that you can commit to something and see it through to completion.

"If you can't figure out your purpose, figure out your passion. For your passion will lead you right into your purpose." -- Bishop T. D. Jakes

Even devoting a portion of work time to exploring passions is not a new concept. Almost 70 years ago, [3M encouraged their employees to devote 15%](#) of their work time to research and create innovative projects that captured their interests and passions. [Google did something similar](#) when they encouraged their engineers to take 20% of their time to work on something company-related that interested them personally. Both companies valued a spirit of innovation and productivity;

allowing employees to be creative resulted in the creation of such products as post-it notes.

You're more than just one thing! Take a look with students at some of the players' Cleats for a Cause cleats. See images and the causes behind the cleats [here](#). They may play for a team, but football is just one of the things they're passionate about. Do any of the choices by the players surprise your students?

Further Examples:

Lebron James uses footwear for many [causes](#).



[LeBron James](#) gave a group of children from Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital for Rehabilitation a day to remember after he personally presented them with their own pair of easy-entry sneakers at the [Cleveland Cavaliers](#) practice facility in Independence, Ohio, on Monday.

James helped design the Nike’s new LeBron Soldier 10 FlyEase sneakers—footwear which features a zipper and Velcro straps instead of laces, with its easy to slip on and off system designed with disabled athletes in mind.

Note: As a teacher, be ready to share a personal passion with your students. Passion is contagious. You aren’t likely to ignite the excitement of learning in your students if you aren’t excited yourself. Take time to share what makes you passionate about a specific topic.

Timeframe: 10 - 30 min

Materials

- Paper
- Writing utensils,
- Whiteboard/overhead projector
- Markers
- My Cause, My Cleats examples

Activity

Ask each student to give their own definition of passion. See, of course we all *basically* know what it means to be passionate about something, but if you think about it, it’s a surprisingly hard thing to define.

Another way of describing passion is by saying that it can be: a strong, compelling enthusiasm or desire for something.

The Canadian psychologist and researcher Robert Vallerand has made it his life’s work to study the psychology of passion. Of course, just because the guy’s got a PhD and done a bunch of research doesn’t mean he’s the final word total expert on what passion *really is*. But his work does offer a useful starting point for getting some clarity about this important but confusing concept of passion.



To very briefly sum up Dr. Vallerand's work on passion, he defines passion as a "strong inclination toward an activity" that has the following three characteristics:

1. It's something that people **enjoy**.
2. It's something that people find **important**.
3. It's something that people invest **significant time and energy** into.²

This activity is a quick way of introducing the idea of passion and how they can move people to take action.

1. Ask students (and yourself!) to respond to the following questions on a piece of paper anonymously:

- What makes you happy?
- Who do you look up to and why? What is that person passionate about?
- What do you get excited about? Angry about? Sad about? Overjoyed about?
- What would your best friend identify as your passion?

2. Collect papers and redistribute anonymously.
3. Students will then "stand" for someone else and declare "their passion".
4. When a student has declared a peers' passion, write the passion on board until all students have spoken and all "passions" have been identified



² <https://medium.com/swlh/how-to-find-a-side-project-youre-passionate-about-according-to-psychology-97bd16588a55>

- Discuss and celebrate the range and content of student passions.
Remember to validate passions of all students! Try not to let any bias creep into the picture when it comes to student passions. Value all passions equally. Even those passions you may not share, or even personally like.
- Wrap up the activity by highlighting that having a specific purpose or passion can be life-affirming and motivating. Passions can change over time. Identifying them can offer you direction.

Additional Notes & Tips:

- Remind students this may be a new idea – encourage students to be patient and consider what they enjoy and care about.
- Caution: Not all students can readily identify a passion.
- Focus on interests and strengths (social, emotional, physical, inter/intrapersonal skills).
- Encourage students to be patient, curious, respectful, open, and reserve judgement about their preferences.
- Help students find others who share the same passion.** It is one thing to share your passion with a marginally interested classmate, but it is something entirely different – and enormously powerful – to share it with someone who reciprocates that passion. Not only does it confirm that your passion is valued; it confirms that you, as a person, are valued. This is an especially useful tactic in a middle school setting, where, for students, fitting in can be an even higher priority than learning.
- Connect students' passions to real-world scenarios.** While students are preparing for their class-wide shoe design competition, show them videos of engineering projects from universities and institutes across the world. Emphasize the real-life significance of things that are built to help people, whether in life-threatening medical situations or in the kitchen at home.
- Divorce practicality from the picture.** While highlighting the practical value of a student's passion can be all it takes to keep that student interested for the long haul, sometimes it is best to let the passion flourish within the student organically, without much outside influence. Use your best judgment to decide what sort of support each student needs and when.



- **Connect passions with intelligence, not talent.** When a student creates an outstanding drawing, don't just make him feel talented; make him feel smart. Say, "You have a keen eye for detail" or, "You really know how to make things look realistic! I can see you took some time on that." This makes the student feel that the skill is in his control, something he earned because of his intelligence, not because of some random talent. It is a confidence he will take with him into other subjects as well.
- **Show students how learning about seemingly unrelated topics can help them learn more about their passion.** The power of interdisciplinary learning should not be underestimated. The best way to help reinforce a student's passion is to show her that it can be applied to and enriched by multiple subjects. Not only will this help her confirm the significance of her passion; it will prove to her that previously unfamiliar and uninteresting subjects actually do have value.



Studying the Masters

Students examine and then create a 3D replica of an iconic canvas 'sneaker' design (e.g., like a Converse All Star 'Chuck') or other shoe out of duct tape and other materials



Materials:

- Masking Tape
- Duct tape in appropriate colors
- Optional: Other kinds of specialty tapes (ex. Finger tape, washi tape, seam stick basting tapes, textured scrapbooking tapes (ex. Burlap texture, or Duck Texture crafting tapes)
- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Other support and construction materials as available, ex. Sponges, bubble wrap, Styrofoam, cardboard or other materials
- Measuring devices
- Student patterns and foot measurements
- Scissors

Have you ever wondered what goes into the process of the shoes, sneakers and footwear in general that you rock on a daily basis?

Ask students to (work individually or with partners) to recreate the shoe in front of them using only the materials available. The model needs to be to wearable and fit their/one partner's feet.

The goal is to duplicate every detail paying close attention to the

planes that create the structure of the shoe, as well as texture, weight (as much as possible), and scale.

This is a fun project that emphasizes problem-solving skills using a relatively forgiving medium. It asks students to examine the qualities, limitations, and advantages of the given materials. You may want to



have students work together in pairs, or individually, to create this first shoe, but they'll all need measurement data of their feet later.

Note! This data will be needed again, so have students create a master copy that they can then trace to make their shoes. They don't want to destroy the original. They'll just have to measure it all again.

Last comes first

First, have students create a template or 'last' of both of their feet by working with a partner to precisely trace their foot, or the current shoe they are wearing. Then have them work to gather and record all of the measurements shown on the included 'measurements for shoes' graphic. Do this for both feet! (Not all feet are the same size.)

Lasts look like feet, with extra space in front of the toes to accommodate the sleek pointed style common in shoes.

Lasts are important because they allow you to accurately draw your patterns and they also provide a quick context when you are unsure.



Creating a Pattern

Create patterns for the different parts of the shoe. Your pattern should consist of at least four parts

- 1) Vamp: This part covers your laces and moves down to the bottom of the shoe
- 2) Counter: This is the back of the shoe. It is usually stiffer to give the shoe shape (but not necessarily)
- 3) Toe: The front of the shoe
- 4) The... other part: This part is in between the front of the shoe and the vamp.

Note: remember to draw a pattern for a shoe tongue as well!

*Important! You'll want to continue your patterns down onto the bottom of your shoe at least 1". You will need this extra fabric to properly put/tape your shoe together in later steps.

Tip: You may need to cut darts (triangles) into the extra few inches of pattern from the bottom of the last to help the patterns be able to more smoothly curve from 2D to 3D later.

Trace your patterns on paper.

Add at least 1/4" seam allowance on all your patterns for room to connect all the pieces together. You

may want to add even more allowance so that you can "fudge" your shoe construction, especially this first time.

If we left things here we'd have a problem: when putting the pieces together again it would be difficult to allow for the seam allowance purely by eye. So you'll want to cut out small holes along the original pattern tracing so that we can mark our materials in the next step.

Arrange your patterns on your tape 'fabric'. Consider which direction any pattern on the 'fabric' is going and how it will look on your shoe. Using either tape or pins, stick the patterns onto the fabric.

Using a pencil or marker, lightly outline the patterns on the fabric and remember to mark the seam allowance in the holes we cut in the last step.

Cut your pieces out.

Putting it all together

Line your patterns up and tape them together so that the seam allowance guides you marked follow each other.

Depending on your style, you may want to cut the seam allowance off **one** of the two patterns, simply overlapping it with the adjacent pattern so that its edge lines up with the seam allowance markings you drew earlier.

Before you begin, know which side will be showing and which side will be hidden and work on the hidden side.

Taping your darts (cut out triangles) back together will give your patterns shape.

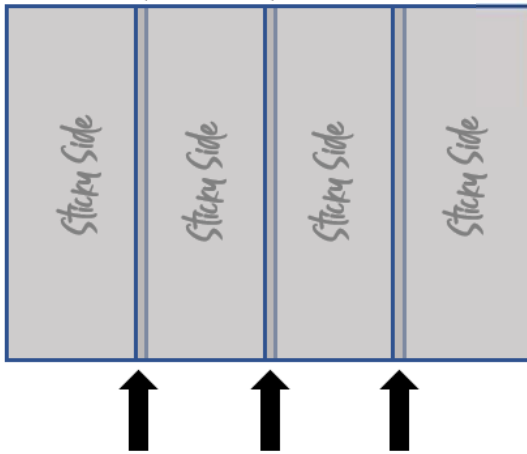
To tape these back together fold your fabric such that the corners of your two edges line up.

Remember. Keep your paper patterns; for the opposite shoe you will flip your patterns over and repeat!

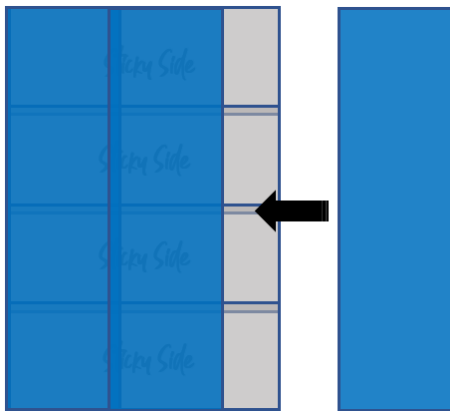
Making a Sheet of Tape 'Fabric'

Create sheets of 'fabric' from your chosen tape that the different parts of the shoe will be made from.

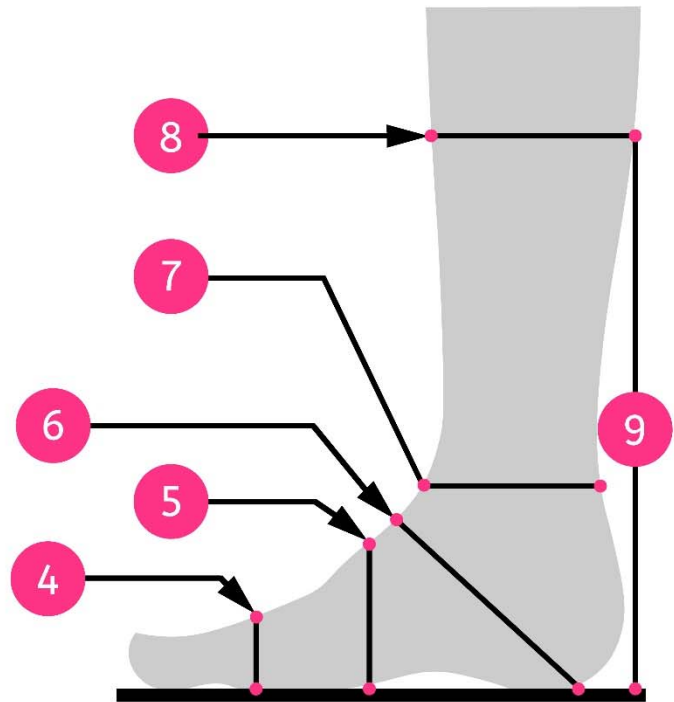
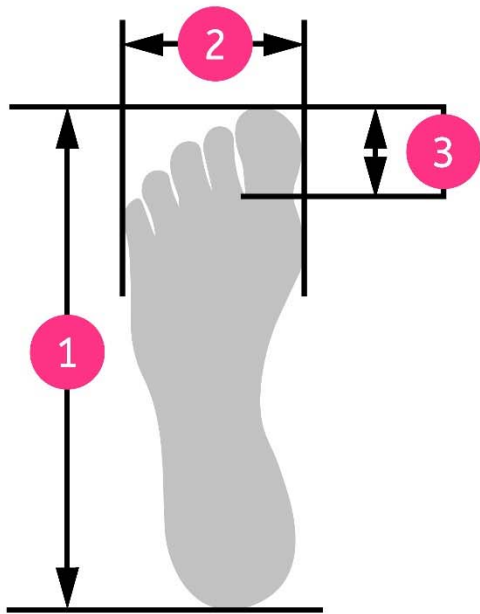
1. Lay a strip of tape sticky side up, on your cutting board or work surface.
2. Lay the next strip so it slightly overlaps the other (See black arrows in the illustration below.) Continue until you have the desired size.



3. Take it and turn it (90 degrees) sideways so the strips are going left to right.
4. Lay the next strips, sticky side down, (on top of your original tape) going up and down so it is laying the opposite direction. Again, make sure it overlaps slightly. Trim off any excess.



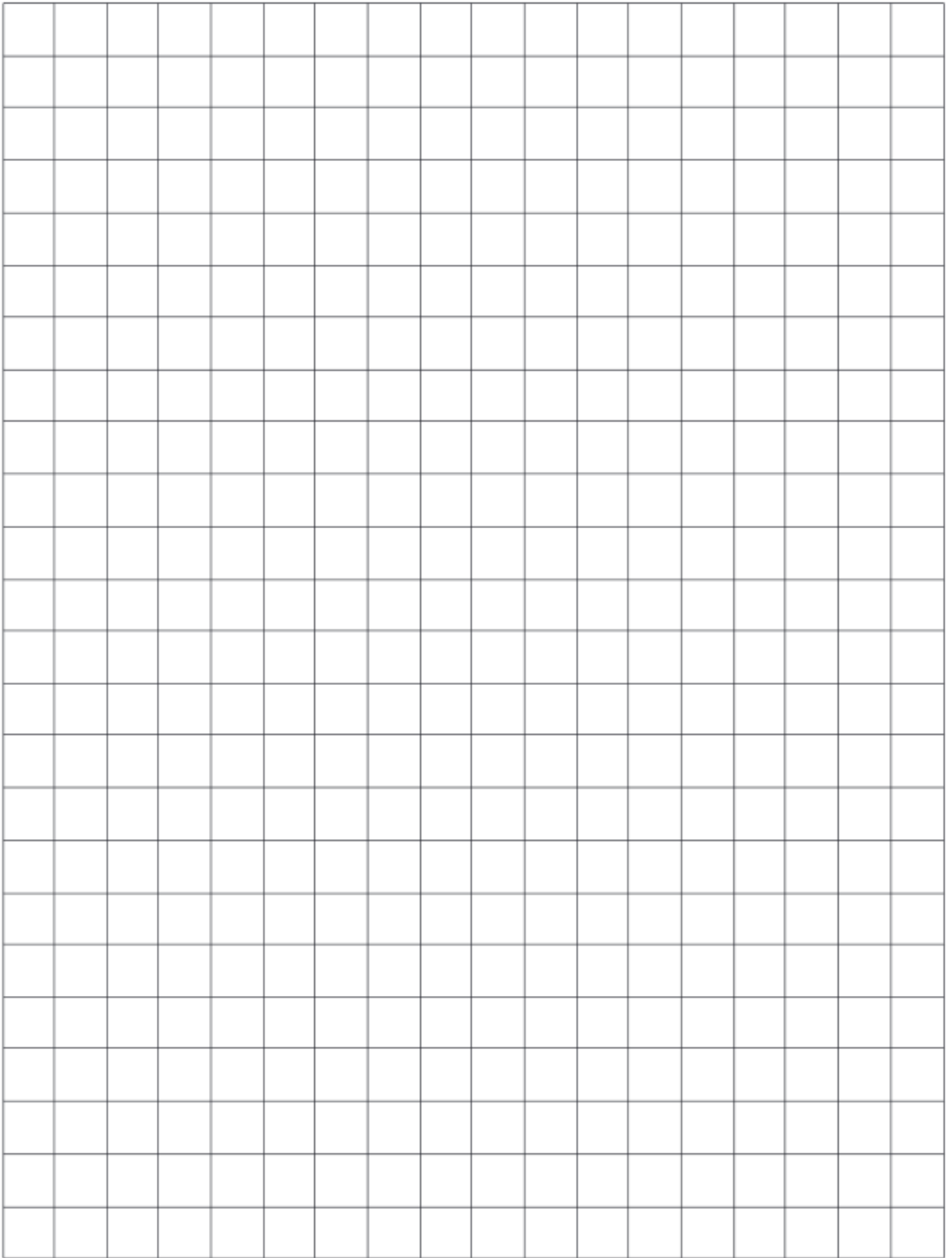
MEASUREMENTS FOR SHOES



Attention! Measurements must be removed with no reserve, tight stepped foot on a piece of paper.

1. Foot length.
2. The width of the foot.
3. The length of the thumb (from the inside of the recess between the fingers).
4. Small girth of the foot (in the bone area).
5. Big girth of the foot.

6. Oblique girth of the foot (in the heel area).
7. Circumference of the ankle.
8. Circumference of calf feet.
9. The height of the shoe.
10. The girth at the height of the shoe.



A Company by Any Other Name?

Nike co-founder and chairman Phil Knight has been called the most powerful man in sports, changing the way the world works out and making athletes of all ages feel like they can be a champion. But long before "Just Do It" became a household phrase and before the iconic swoosh was instantly recognizable, Phil was just a boy from Portland, Oregon, who dreamed of playing in the majors.

"Up until the time I was 14 years old, I was sure that I was going to be a big-league baseball player. But that dream came to a rude awakening when I got cut from my high school baseball team," he says. So instead of the baseball diamond, Phil took to the track. In 1955, he enrolled in the University of Oregon, where he ran track for renowned coach Bill Bowerman.

Phil calls Bill "the greatest track coach that ever lived," but aside from their love of running, they also shared the belief that the existing track shoes were slowing runners down. So Phil began importing better-quality running shoes made by Japanese company Onitsuka Tiger (now known as Asics), and in 1964, with a handshake and \$500 apiece, Phil and Bill launched Blue Ribbon Sports.³

In the early years of the company, Phil sold Japanese shoes out of his car at track meets.

In 1971, Knight and BRS launched an effort to manufacture and distribute their own shoes - which would first appear as cleated shoes for football or soccer-under their own brand. The first shipment of their own shoes would go out the next day, the boxes were piling up, and they needed a new name.

What's in a Name?

Next, they needed a name. And it had to be by 9am, since they were making up the shoe boxes. Knight wanted to name the brand "Dimension Six." Another employee suggested



³ <http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Nikes-Phil-Knight>

“Peregrine” (staying in same kind of name style as the popular German shoe company Puma.) Someone else suggested “Bengal.” But these ideas weren’t popular with the rest of the group.

Jeff Johnson, BRS's first employee, was in Massachusetts when he got a call from Bob Woodell, the company's first President. "Knight just came in and told me we needed a name by 9 a.m. because they're making up the shoe boxes," Woodell explained to Johnson. Johnson, who ran the company's East Coast factory in Exeter, NH, would come up with another idea. Johnson had read an in-flight magazine about great brand names, such as Kleenex and Xerox.

"They had no more than two syllables and at least one exotic letter or sound in them with a Z, X or K," writes McCue, paraphrasing Johnson.



At 7 a.m. the next morning, Johnson awoke with the name "Nike." But it was only 4 a.m. in Portland, so Johnson waited 3 hours before calling Woodell.

"I've got it!" Johnson said to Woodell, according to Strasser and Becklund.

"What?"

"Nike!"

"What?" Woodell asked. "What's a Nike?"

"It's the Greek winged goddess of victory," Johnson said. *[The goddess was an inspiration to Greek warriors. When the warriors won a war they used the say 'Nike' to each other.]*

"[Johnson] calmly emphasized 2 syllables and the importance of a "K" or "Z" sound," writes Hollister. Then silence.

"What else you got?" Woodell finally asked.

Woodell didn't like "Nike." He also didn't like "Peregrine or "Bengal." But he discussed all the options with Knight.

Knight did not like "Nike" either.

Writer and Olympian Kenny Moore explains what happened next.

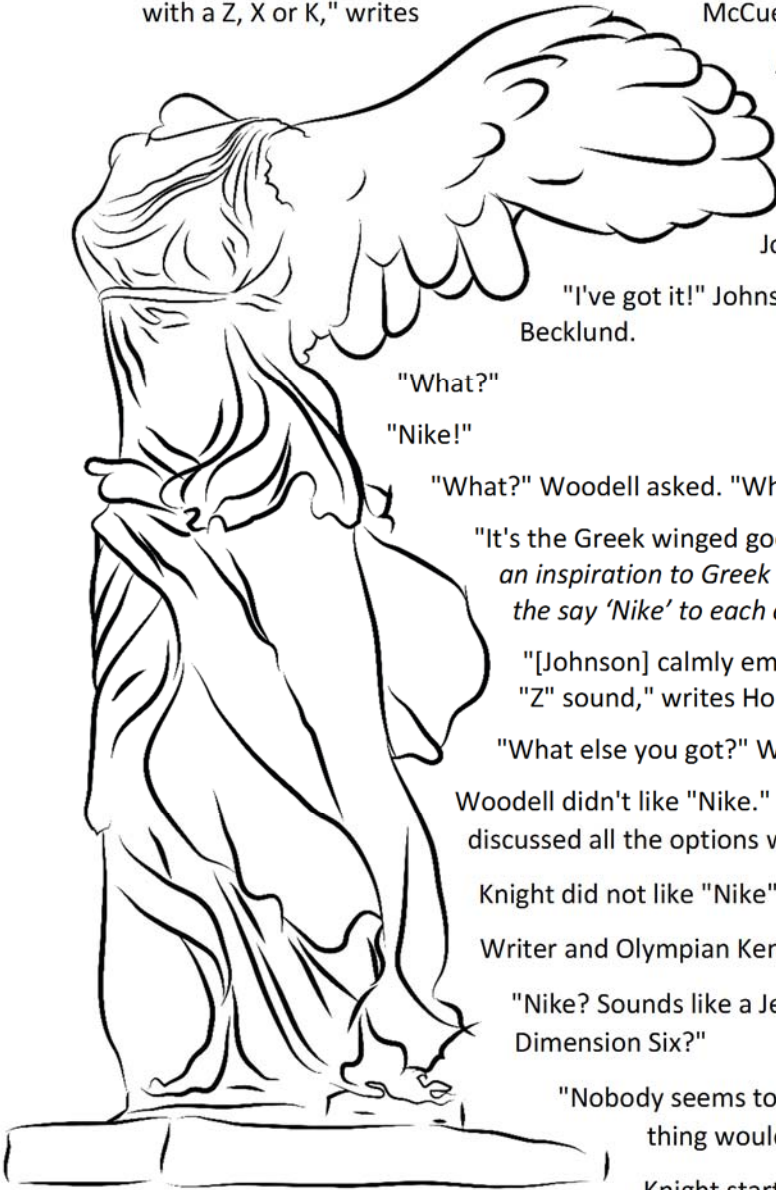
"Nike? Sounds like a Jeff deal to me," Knight said. "What happened to Dimension Six?"

"Nobody seems to like that one but you," Woodell said. "This Nike thing would fit the shoes."

Knight started typing. They had a 9 a.m. deadline with the

factory.

"Which did you pick?" asked Woodell.



"I guess we'll go with the Nike thing for a while," Knight said. "I don't like any of them, but I guess that's the best of the bunch."

On June 18, 1971, the first Nike shoe went on sale.

Catchy, creative, and... sticky?

As a future-but-not-yet hugely successful startup, you want a business name that grabs the attention of all who hear it and holds on with a death grip. This may seem a silly and frivolous task, but it may be the most important decision you make.

The name of your business has a tremendous impact on how customers and investors view you and your product!

How can you come up with the perfect catchy name for your new venture? First by brainstorming and making sure your name is:

- Original
- Future-proof
- User-friendly
- Available (in some form)
- Lovable

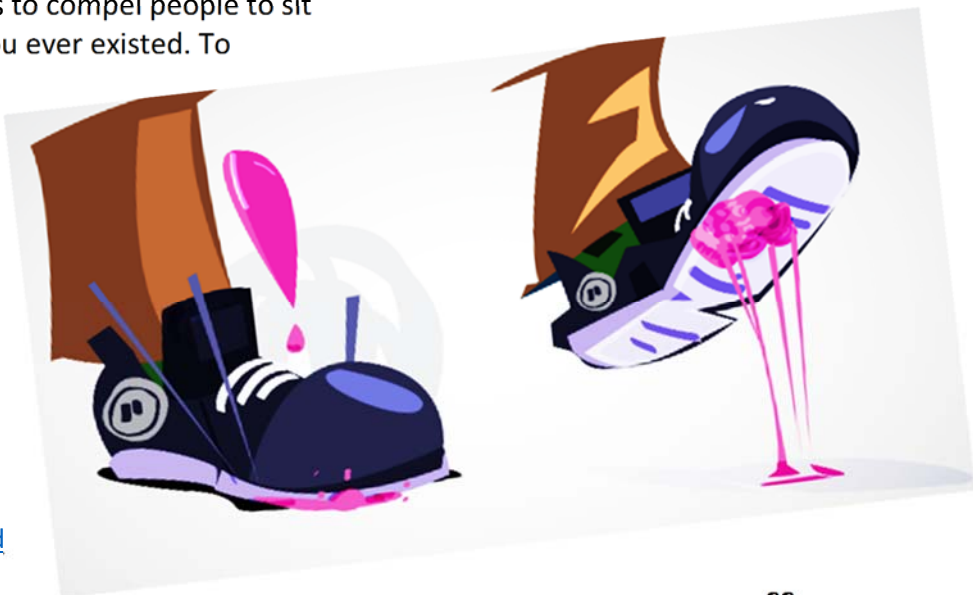
You ready? Let's delve into these qualities and look at tips to get through the business name creation process.

Being original can be scary (and hard) to do, but it's essential when naming your business — don't be afraid to stand out from the crowd! In the trade, this memorability is called "stickiness." You want to 'stick' in people's minds!

As a new startup, your name needs to compel people to sit up and take notice rather than forget you ever existed. To generate a boatload of options to work with, don't edit yourself too much during the brainstorming process — it's all about a free flow of ideas and imagination. Even if they seem silly or crazy at first. Just write it all down!

Not sure where to start?

- **Explore keywords.** Twinword has an awesome [free keyword](#)



[tool](#) that can help you find inspiration for your name. If you type a keyword related to your business into its search field, it'll give you a graph of all of the other words related to it. Fire away!

- **Consult books.** Use a hard copy of a dictionary for inspiration, or even one of your favourite novels. Flip through the pages and write down words that resonate with you, even if they're not directly related to your business.
- **Play it up.** Another way to achieve originality is with some deliciously fun wordplay. Have a look at these examples of companies with clever titles and think about what you could come up with for your brand. It's a good idea starter! Examples: **Melon Cauli** (fruit and vegetable store), **Sole Man** (shoe repairs), **Spoon Me** (frozen yogurt brand), and **Sensibill** (receipt management software).

Don't Box Yourself In

One thing you don't want to do is create a name that sabotages your future expansion plans or limits your reach. Let's say, for instance, that you want to start a company that makes pain-free women's shoes, but you think you'll eventually try to crack the male market or develop an itch-free sweater line. Having a name like Fabulous Hurt-Free High High-Heels by Fiona wouldn't

be helpful. Or, if you're in a geographic location, but you'd like to expand restricting your name to the name of your town might be a little limiting later on.

One way to future-proof your name — and get out of the restrictive “this is the one product we make or one thing we offer” headspace — is to think about your company's story, values, and unique elements as you brainstorm.

- **Get reflective.** How would you describe your company to others? What are you trying to accomplish? What feelings do you want to evoke in your customers? What adjectives come to mind when you think about your business? What do you do differently? Grab a piece of paper and a pen and start writing it all down.
- **Give a clue.** Try to adopt a business name that provides some information about what your business does. Calling your landscaping business "Lawn and Order" is appropriate, but the same name would not do well for a handyman business. Your business name should match your business in order to remind customers what services you provide. If you're a service-based business, having your service offering in the name can be helpful as a suffix (e.g. Scaling Upward Design).
- **Keep it simple.** A business name shouldn't be a mashup of words trying to accomplish too many things — it needs to feel good and evoke positive emotions and associations in you and your future customers.

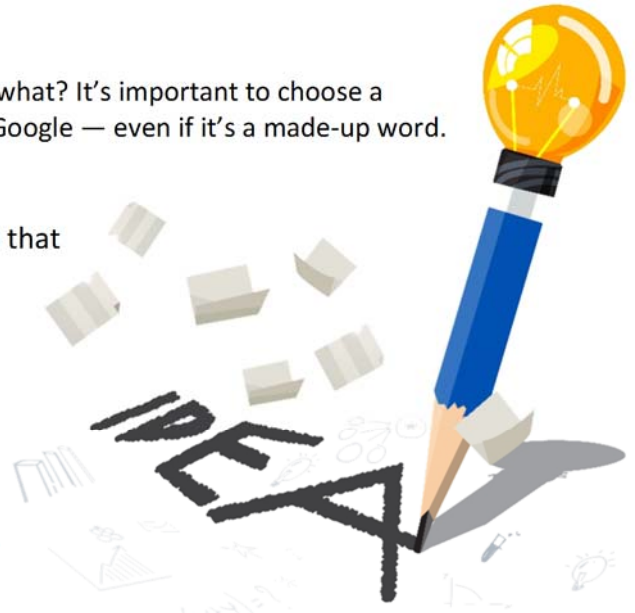


Make it user-friendly

You have a first-round list of original name ideas — now what? It's important to choose a name that's easy to say, spell, remember, and type into Google — even if it's a made-up word. Avoid unusual spellings!

Many people aren't great spellers! Choosing a name that helps people find you quickly can put you ahead of the game. And remember: if customers *can't* find you, they'll end up finding someone else!

- **Impose creative constraints.** As you get deeper into brainstorming, limit yourself to coming up with names with only one word or two syllables. The shorter the better — it'll help you focus on coming up with punchier name ideas. Other constraints to try? Coming up with only alliterative names (hello, Squarespace and PayPal), or only ones that begin with verbs (e.g. Dropbox, Shopify).
- **Test in different mediums.** To see how your name ideas look and sound, put them into a logo design sketch, say them out loud in a conversation (or to yourself in the mirror), and draft them in an email signature. Making your ideas feel real will help you determine if they connect!
- **Get feedback.** Ask your classmates, your friends, your teacher or family members to weigh in on your name ideas. If you say a name and they immediately look confused or barrage you with questions, you may want to rethink its user-friendliness.



Do a Little Digging

Once you have a business name idea (or a few) that you're happy with, it's time to do some digging. For SEO and legitimacy purposes, you want the name in your website URL, so check if it's available in .com form.

If not, you can choose from about a hundred options from .net to .co.uk to .tv — but again, a .com URL can give your



business an air of legitimacy and bring in more traffic.

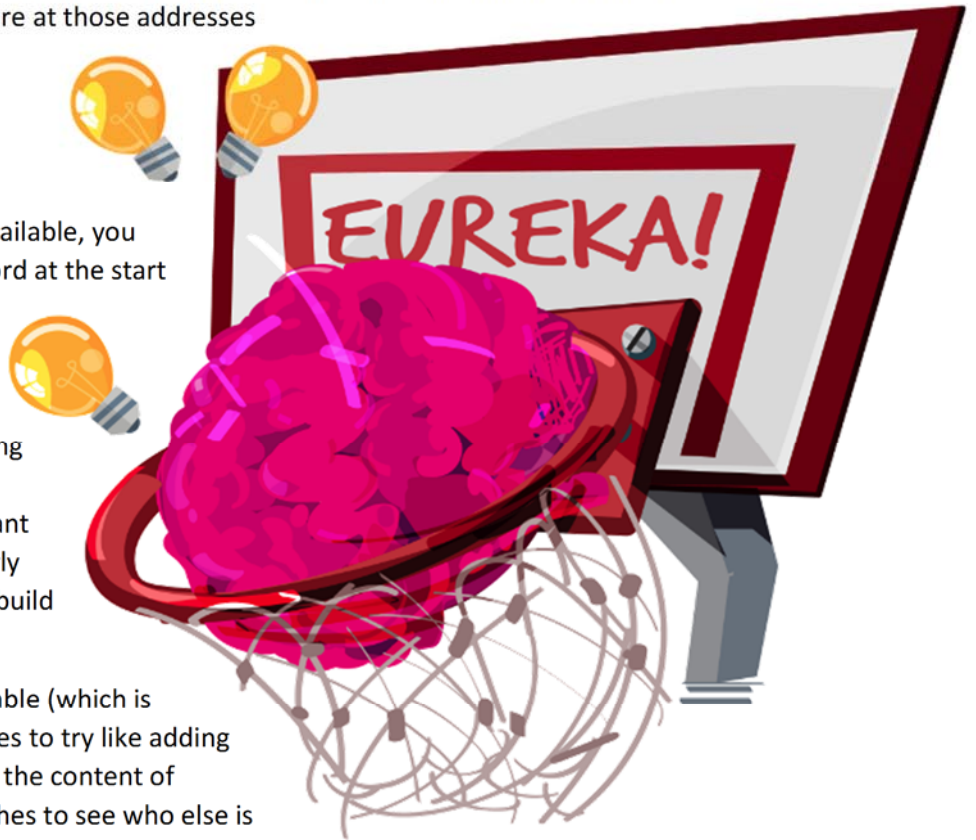
The good news? Being creative will pay dividends because the more original your name, the more likely it is to be available as a web address.

Check it. [GoDaddy](#) is a go-to tool for checking domain availability and letting you see your .com alternatives. Type your ideas in, hold your breath, and see if the names are taken (we hope not!). If they are, see what businesses or pages are at those addresses and take note. You can also do a trademark search — here are the resources for the [U.S.](#), [Canada](#), and the [U.K.](#)

Don't give up. If the domain is unavailable, you still have options. You can add a word at the start or end of your name — popular ones include “app,” “get,” and “hello.”

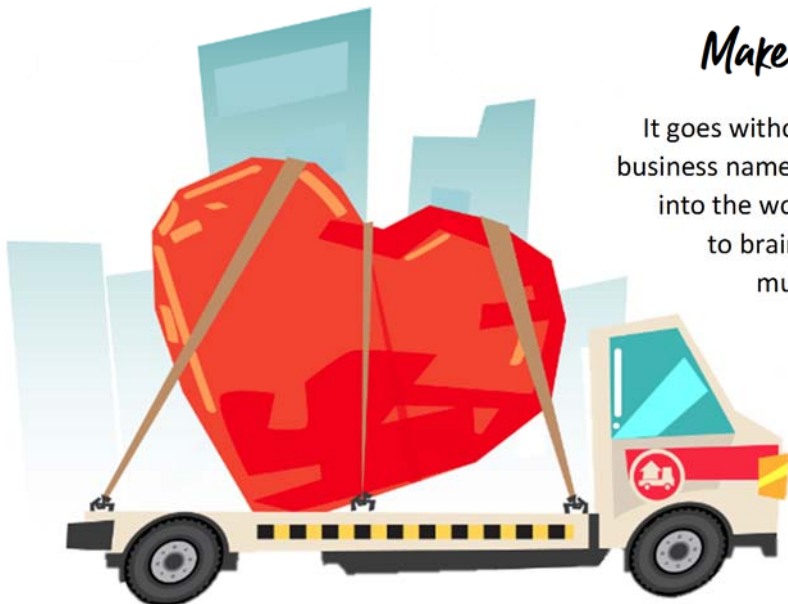
Look at social handles. After checking the domain name, take a look at [Namechk](#) to see if the name you want is taken in social handles, particularly on the channels you plan to use to build your business.

If the exact handle name is unavailable (which is very likely), there are some easy fixes to try like adding a word or underscore. Again, check the content of handles that come up in your searches to see who else is using the name.



Make sure you LOVE it

It goes without saying that you have to love your new business name and feel confident about putting it out into the world. So that's why it's always a great idea to brainstorm plenty of ideas and take the time to mull them over before settling on a winner!



Tag! You're It!

Do any of the following phrases sound familiar? Can students recognize the companies just from these few little words?

- Just Do It! [Nike]
- Open Happiness! [Coca-Cola]
- Impossible is Nothing [Adidas]
- Enjoy Better [Time Warner Cable]
- I'm Lovin' It! [McDonalds]
- Have it Your Way! [Burger King]
- Can you hear me now? [Verizon]
- Go Further [Ford]
- I Will What I Want [Under Armour]
- Think Different [Apple]
- Everyday Moments [American Express]
- 15 minutes could save you 15% or more on car insurance [Geico]
- You're in good hands [Allstate]
- Everyday Low Price [Walmart]

Were there any that they didn't recognize? What made some 'stickier' than others in their brains?

Brand slogans: Can't live with 'em. Can't live without 'em.

Every brand operating in the consumer marketplace today has a brand slogan, with varying degrees of emotional connection. The best brand slogans capture the spirit behind the brand – Their Big Why boiled down to a few words.

Think of it as a headline for your business. A quick-shot at getting someone more interested. The tagline's job is to get attention and make people want to learn more!

These brand slogans are both concise and creative, conveying some quality that gets to the heart of the brand. The best slogans activate an emotional stimulus within the brain, where neuroscientists estimate that 95% of human decisions are made, resulting in an emotional bond between brand and consumer.

Here's the 3-step process for creating a tagline or brand slogan.

Step 1.) Dump out your entire business in a few sentences.

Step 2.) Trim it down.

Step 3.) Trim it down to one short sentence.

Let's look at an example

:

Tagline Example:

Step 1.) Dump out your entire business in a few sentences:

“We create tools that go onto any webpage that help promote and share your website to get more traffic through several tools: Share buttons, Welcome Mats, Pop Up email collects, and more. We make these tools really easy to use.”

Step 2.) Trim it down:

“Tools that go onto your webpage to help promote and share your website to get more traffic.”

Step 3.) Trim it down to one short sentence:

“Tools to Grow Your Website’s Traffic.”

Another Tagline Example:

Step 1.) Dump out your entire business in a few sentences:

“It’s really cheap to host a WordPress site, but when something goes wrong, your host will be no where to be found. Also, WordPress gets hacked if you don’t upgrade it or choose poorly designed plugins.”

Step 2.) Trim it down:

“WPengine makes hosting a website on WordPress super easy. We’re like the perfect website host.”

Step 3.) Trim it down to one short sentence:

“WordPress hosting, perfected.”⁴

Thinking out Loud

Perhaps we decided we wanted our shoe company, Phoenix, to have a tagline. And our business is based on the idea that we’re totally going to change how running is done, from scratch. We’re remaking running shoes, getting rid of all old ideas, and beginning again with awesome new ideas. Our tagline could be something like. *Running. Reborn.*

PHOENIX

Running. Reborn.

Your turn! Don't stress too much. Just have fun with it!

Your tagline will unlikely be your biggest driver of business. You’ve probably never gone to McDonald’s or chose your insurance company or vehicle you buy solely based on “they had a better tagline.” The only job of your tagline is to get attention and make your customer want to read/research more! Have fun with it.

⁴ <https://kopywritingcourse.com/how-to-create-a-great-tagline/>

35 Dollar Design

(Show the students a swoosh symbol. Do they know the brand? What is that symbol called?)

The Nike Swoosh: It is one of the most recognizable logos in the world. You might imagine that an image so iconic would have been designed by an important advertising or branding firm that was paid millions to come up with the advertising scheme. But you'd be wrong.

"Now that we had a name, we had to have a trademark for the side of the shoe." All they needed was a "stripe"—the industry term for a shoe logo—to go with their new brand

"It was 1971, and Ford had spent \$2 million getting a trademark. We didn't have \$2 million, so I went by the graphic arts department at Portland State, and there was a woman there, Carolyn Davidson, saying, 'I don't know how I'm going to get enough money for the dress for this prom,'" Phil says. "And I said, 'I have a job for you.'

Phil Knight was adamant that his company's new logo be a simple design that was fluid and conveyed motion and speed. Plus, it could not look similar to the three stripes of Adidas.

Over the next few weeks Davidson came up a few options. She worked by sketching potential logos out by hand on tissue paper and laying them over a drawing of a shoe.

One of the choices she presented to Knight was the now-iconic Swoosh, a check mark shape that is fluid and indicates movement and speed.

[Swoosh is a sound that we hear when something zips past quickly by our side. Swoosh stands for fast sound, speed, and motion.] The image also resembles a wing and hinted at the brand name, Nike, named after the Greek goddess of victory.

When she first showed her final designs to Mr. Knight and two other Nike executives in 1971, they weren't immediately blown away by the swoosh. 'What else you got?' they asked.

Over the next few minutes, they decided that was the best one, and they decided to move ahead with it immediately, without even giving Ms. Davidson the time to 'clean up the design' she



had asked for since they had a plant in Mexico ready to start production. Phil paid her \$2 an hour, and she charged 17 and a half hours. So, her paycheck was \$35. [Ms. Davidson continued to design for the company for the next four years before striking out on her own.]

Knight launched his athletic shoe brand with the swoosh (despite initially saying "Well, I don't love it, but maybe it will grow on me."), and it has since become one of the most famous athletic shoe and gear brands of all time. Today, Nike employs 30,000 people worldwide and had more than \$19 billion in sales last year.

When Nike went public in 1980, Phil says he gave the creator of the swoosh around hundred shares of stock, which she has held onto and they have grown into about 8000 shares of stock. These shares are now worth upwards of \$1 million. "She's doing okay," he says.

The original Nike 'Swoosh' logo wasn't black as we see it today. When first released, the design was displayed in a variety of colors in order to stand out on the track from other shoe manufacturers. [Though with the original lowercase font design they did have a lot of people ask, "Who's Mike?" Nike primarily used the red and white color palette on its logo for much of its history. The red is meant to exemplify passion, energy and joy, while the white color represents nobility, charm and purity.



Until 1994, the official corporate logo for Nike featured the name "NIKE" in Futura Bold, all-caps font, cradled within the Swoosh. In 1995, Nike began using the stand-alone Swoosh as its corporate logo as a form of debranding, and continues to use it that way today, while also using a simple black color palette for the Swoosh.



LOGO! Let's Go!

Once you have a business name (and the glimmer of an idea of what your brand is all about) you can start building your brand!

Logo design is one of the most common skills you need in the graphic design industry. A logo is the first impression of any brand and it needs to look professional to build brand awareness.

Before you design a logo, you must understand what a logo is, what it represents and what it is supposed to do. A logo is not just a mark. A logo shows who you are. A company has a logo not only so that you can easily identify their product, but also so that you'll know something about their company at a glance. Even if there are no words, a good logo should communicate to its audience through the use of shape, fonts, color, and / or images. A picture's worth a thousand words, right?

Marketers plant the seeds of brand recognition in very young children, in the hopes that the seeds will grow into lifetime relationships. Brand loyalties and logo recognition can be established as early as age two, and by the time children head off to school most can recognize hundreds of logos.

A logo is for inspiring trust, recognition and admiration for a company or product and it is our job as designers to create a logo that will do its job.

Tell Me Somethin'

Good!

Have students interview each other as though they were a logo designer who is talking to a company about a design they want. Use questions such as the following.



Tell me about your company

- What is the name of your company (This is the name that will be used in your logo design)
- Do you have a company tagline or slogan that could be used as part of the logo?
- What product(s) or service(s) do you sell?
- Who are your competitors?
- What makes you different you from your competitors?
- Is there a unique story behind your business?
- Are there any inspiring visuals associated with your business?
- Where do you see your business/service in 5 years' time?
- What does your audience care about?
- What does your audience want?
- How does your audience learn about your product, organization or service?
- Why should your audience choose you over the competition?
- What words do you want your audience to associate with your company?
- Generally, what logos or brands do you think will appeal to your audience and why?
- What companies' logos do you like? What do you like about them?
- Your design preference likes/dislikes or expectations: Ex. Do you like bold designs.
- What colors do you think best represent your company? Why those colors?

Seek inspiration (not imitation)

Look for examples of students' favorite products and companies. Discuss the types of colors that are used to represent different brands.

Rather than saying, 'I like the color red, so therefore, it should be in my logo,' demonstrate to students how to really think about *why* the color red is important to *your* business. Your logo should be a representation of *you*.

Do you expect the perfect logo design to pop up, fully formed, in your mind? If you do, you could be in for a very very long wait.

Instead, it's up to you to seek out logo design inspiration. If you let a wide variety of ideas collide inside your brain, gradually they should coalesce into the logo you're looking for. The trick is knowing where to look for inspiration in the first place.



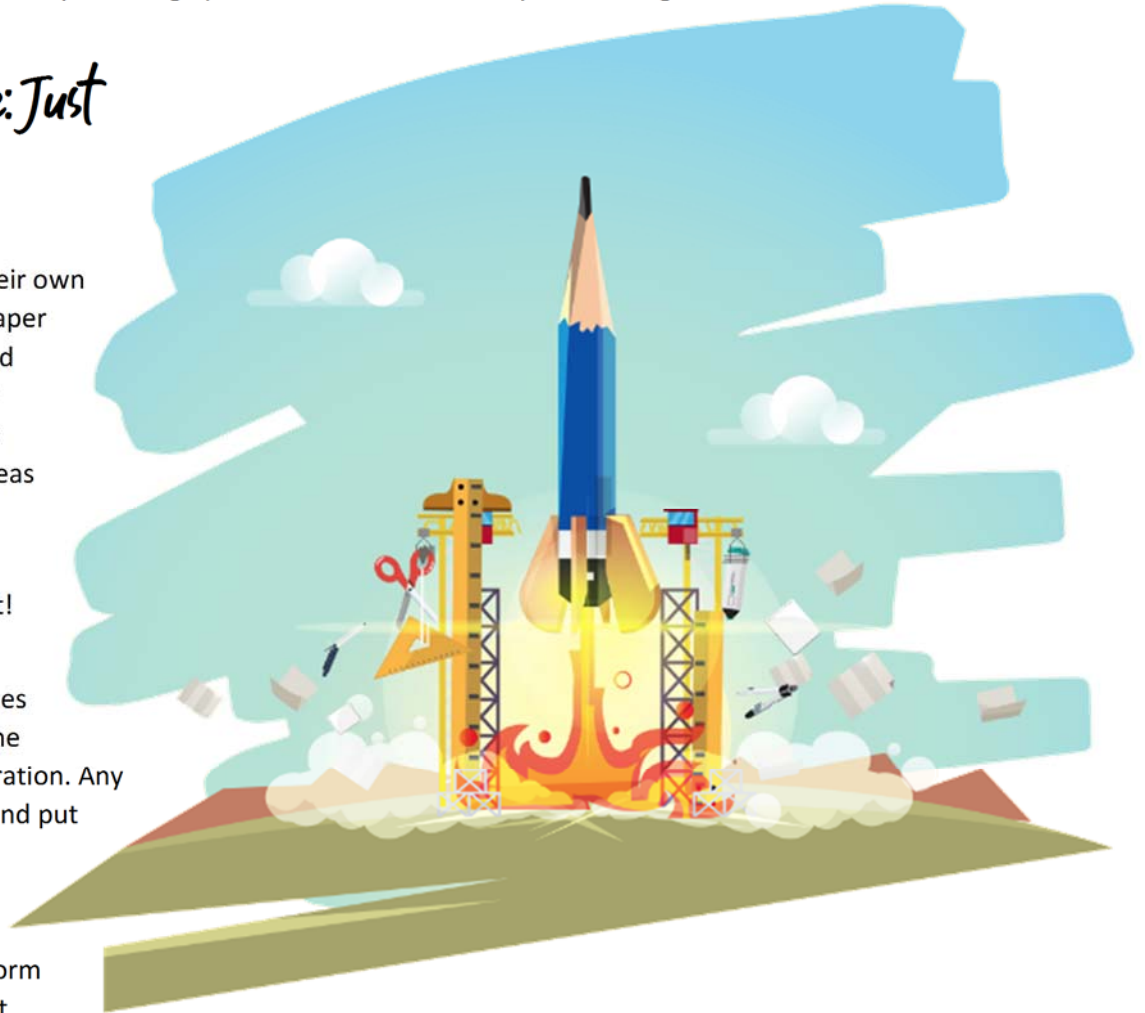
Whenever you see something (anything!) that stands out or appeals to you, for whatever reason, file that thought. Let it inform your design process and contribute as your new logo starts to evolve.

Discovery Phase: Just Doodle It!

Every designer has their own design process, but paper and pen is the first and best place to start for most. You can quickly sketch and explore ideas with no limitations.

Work quickly and roughly. Just doodle it!

These sketches are (normally) for your eyes only, and purely for the purpose of idea generation. Any idea that comes to mind put on paper! Even if it seems bad at the time, as sometimes even a bad idea can form an interesting concept.



Putting every idea down on paper frees your mind to think of further ideas, so oftentimes the faster the sketches, the quicker the next idea starts to form.

You may well end up with a page of pointless scribbles, but somewhere in the disjointed mess of lines you might spot something that fires up that essential spark of inspiration.

Pro Tip! Keep it Simple!

Keep it simple. This can't be said too many times.

The best logos are ones that speak for themselves. (Think of ones like the Recycle, Reuse, Reduce logo. Three little simple arrows! But it says a lot.) Often, people think that something simple means it's not creative...when in fact, it's the complete opposite! It's easy to keep adding things on to your logo... it's difficult to have something simple that represents you perfectly!



Ask a friend

Once you have some ideas worked up, take them to a friend who has absolutely no connection to the project, and see what they think. Ask them what the logo says to them. Often someone's untainted opinion can be just what you need to fire up your imagination.

Testing, Testing...

Test it out like Carolyn Davidson did. Draw your logo on tissue paper and hold it up against a shoe, like your duct tape shoe. Does it look good?

You've really got it together!

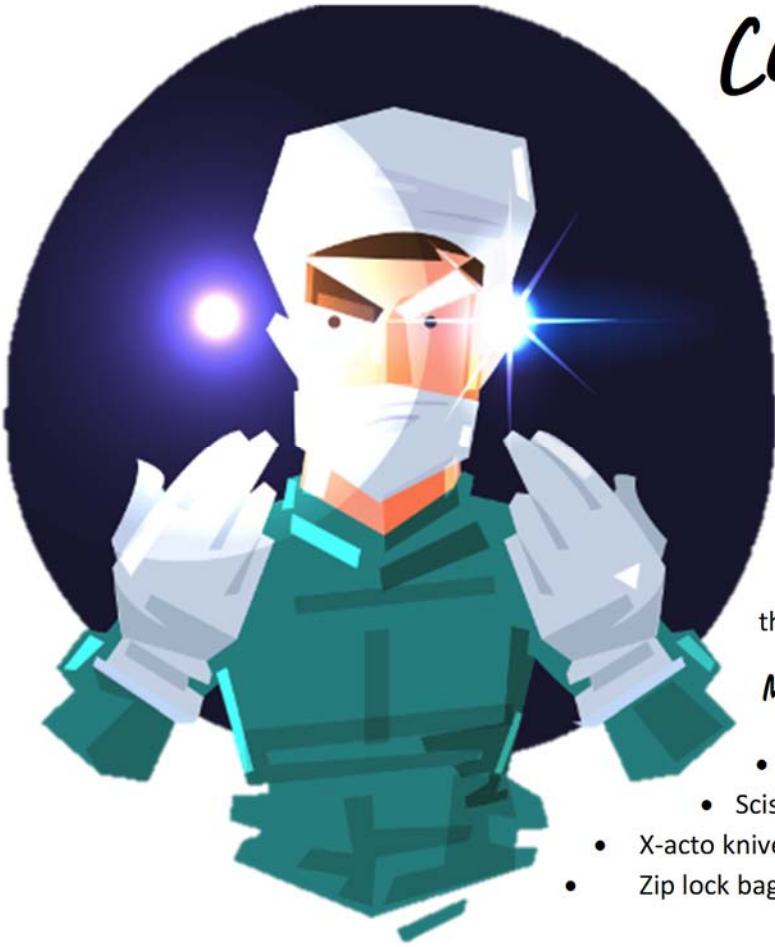
When students have settled on a final design have them present it. Have them explain their logo. Describe how the different parts of your logo (colors, shapes, symbols, images, font, text, etc.) represent different aspects of the concept they are trying to communicate.



PHOENIX

Running. Reborn.

Constructive Deconstruction



Before constructing their own shoes have (older) students examine and carefully take apart pairs of inexpensive shoes.

Learn shoe deconstruction tips and techniques by taking apart shoes to see how they go together and remember to preserve important pieces that will help them later on in the process! Especially if they want to recreate particular shoe patterns.

Materials:

- Inexpensive shoes from thrift stores
- Scissors
- X-acto knives (only to be used by adults)
- Zip lock bags—to collect parts

So, What's the BIG Idea?

Remember how we talked about passion? Let's meet someone who has a passion for footwear. A man who recently spent six months [making a gold-plated shoe for LeBron](#) to commemorate LeBron's 30K point milestone.

The Shoe Surgeon

Dominic Chambrone, aka The Shoe Surgeon is a renowned sneaker customizer, designer, and craftsman who started his journey on perfecting handmade sneakers over 17 years ago in his garage. "The love for sneakers really started during freshman year of high school, but even before that, a love for making things and being crafty started at a very young age. [I was] building LEGOs, forts in my backyard out of wood, hammer and nails — this was at, like, age 10."

He realized when he a freshman in high school that, "you could feel good just by wearing a pair of shoes and not having to say anything."

"By junior year, all my friends had the same shoes, and it just wasn't special anymore. That's when I picked up an airbrush to an all white pair of Air Force Ones [and gave it] a camouflage print. I went to school the next day and people flipped. Instantly I knew I could get a reaction out of something I



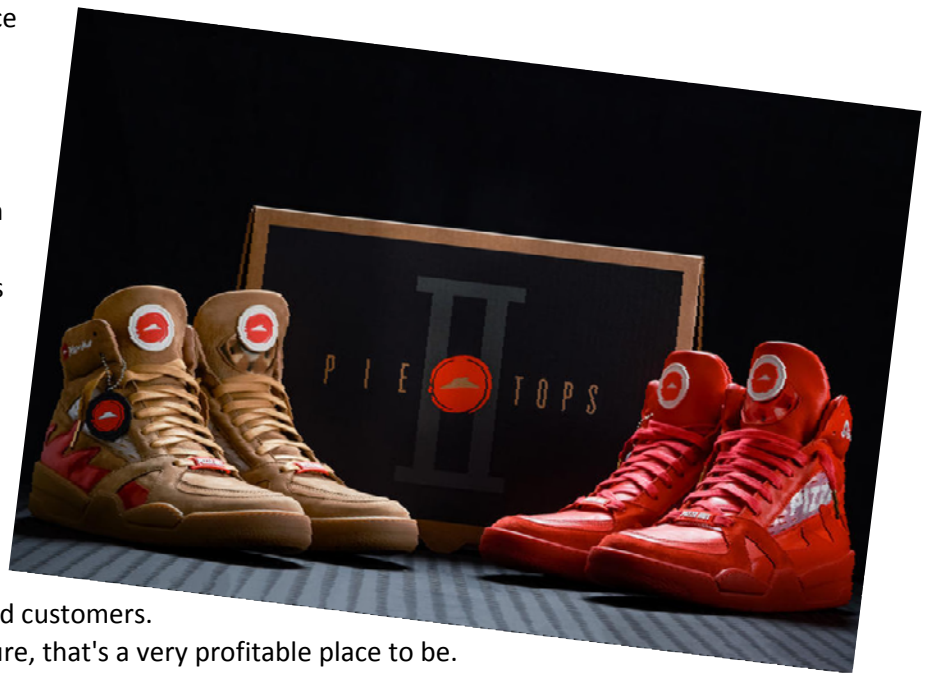
created versus getting something early that eventually everyone else would have.”⁵

Today, Dominic is one of the most well-known creators in the custom sneaker world. What began as a humble shoemaking hobby has turned into a full-time career.

The Shoe Surgeon continues to push creative boundaries by combining old-school cobbling with new age approaches to design and manufacturing — creating unique, handcrafted pieces for his clients.

“What are we doing?” We’re taking things apart and making them better.

Chambrone’s carved out a unique space for himself in the current sneaker industry. He’s not a trained designer, putting in years at a place like Nike, Adidas, or Puma before doing his own designs. (Nor was he ever interested in becoming a designer at those institutions, he tells interviewers). He’s not a retailer, either—but you can buy his shoes for \$3,500. And while he works directly with brands like those on projects, he’s not a full-time collaborator, either. So what, exactly, is the Shoe Surgeon?



One answer: Chambrone is a value-adding middleman between brands and customers.

And in, our current sneaker-crazy culture, that's a very profitable place to be.

He built his career doing the unthinkable: taking the hottest new sneakers and ripping them apart piece by piece.

Chambrone’s career is a weird symptom of today’s sneaker culture. Even though the hot shoes aren’t available to everyone, anyone following along knows the hot shoe of the moment.

He followed his passion and the business is working: there are people knocking down the door to get his custom sneakers, he works with sneaker brands as well as companies like [Pizza Hut](#) and [Ruffles](#), sells things on his e-comm shop like “[leather scrap mystery boxes](#)” for \$100—and makes his own sneakers. And then there are the classes, which he started teaching in 2016. Classes where people pay \$3,000 to learn how to make a shoe and many fly in from around the world to do it.

⁵ <http://thesource.com/2018/05/25/source-exclusive-the-shoe-surgeon-shoe-school-dominic-chambrone-interview/>

Watch & Learn More of His Story to Inspire Your Students!

- [How to Make a 10,000 Pair of Shoes from Scratch: The Shoe Surgeon](#)
- [The Shoe Surgeon x Adidas Originals Stan Smith Sneaker Making Class](#)
- [Source Exclusive: The Shoe Surgeon Schools Us On Custom Kicks, Designing Sneakers for Drake and Teaching a New Era of Shoemakers](#)

A piece of me...consumer creators

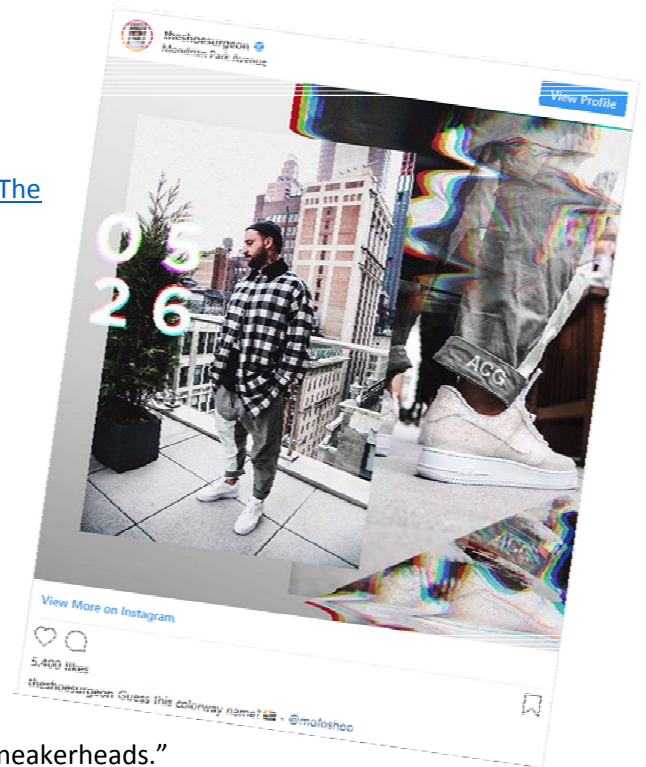
Sneaker customization is a growing trend, one that appeals both to the fashion sense and the collector-mindedness of those shoe fanatics sometimes known as “sneakerheads.”

Sneaker customization is a growing trend, one that appeals both to the fashion sense and the collector-mindedness of those shoe fanatics sometimes known as “sneakerheads.”

"While customization is not new by any means, the idea of a consumer playing creator is a new riff on customization. Looks like Nike is investing to enable quick execution [with pop-up limited events where they make you a customized pair in under an hour], which will be the litmus test to teens 'designing' their own shoe. The Maker Movement will likely launch new companies into the customization space."

Nike is not the only shoe brand trying out next-gen shoe design and manufacturing technology. Companies like REEBOK, Vans, Toms, MYSWEAR, and Alive Shoes, among many others are all in on customization. [Alive shoes allows you to not only create and design your own sneaker, but you can customize a logo for the sneaker and the packaging. Additionally, you can choose to design your own unique sneaker for yourself, or you can design the sneaker and buy in bulk to resell your design.]

Adidas, for instance, after piloting its first automated Speedfactory in 2015 in



Germany, began opening the automated production facilities throughout the U.S. Speedfactories, staffed mostly by robots, are capable of producing around 50,000 shoes per year, and are able to quickly shift gears to create shoes made out of custom materials and react to new design trends.

And Under Armour has been innovating in the area of design customization with its UA Icon platform. UA Icon allows site visitors to choose the style of different shoe parts, as well as upload custom images to be printed as a shoe's graphic. The platform is a customer-facing adaptation of the one Under Armour has long used to let B2B customers, like colleges, design team uniforms.

Customers will pay for customization that adds measurable value and as technology advances we'll be seeing more and more of it. This provides even more incentive for retailers to know who their customers are and what they're looking for. After all, the athletes who just like to buy Nike running shoes may have little or no interest in customization. But for retailers with cult-like followers like 'sneakerheads,' it may be a 'must.'

Design Beyond Your Imagination

Data informed design. Technology [like that found in Nike's NSRL: Nike Sports Research Lab], helps designers have the data they need to understand how athletes like LeBron James move during a game] and can give us a great head-start. But a head-start is a rough draft. We know data can't dream. That's where designers come in. The job of the designer of tomorrow is to take that head-start, take that information and then imbue on top of that their intellect, their imagination, their heart and their hand.

Watch & explore how the design process works:

[Nike Vision: Evolution of Design](#)

[Inside the Design Process of LeBron's Nike Air Zoom Generation](#)

[Behind the Design: Return of the 1](#): In 1987, the Air Max 1 changed the world of footwear forever.

Designed by Tinker Hatfield, the icon made the invisible, visible with the arrival of visible Air Max cushioning. Through the years as the debut Air Max captured the hearts of many, the design was upgraded and slightly altered to elevate comfort while meeting the needs of everyday casual wear. As the changes and upgrades continued, Air



Max connoisseurs across the globe began to yearn for the “Golden Era” shape and build that took over the late ‘90s and early 2000s. Watch as the Nike Sportswear design team takes us through the process behind the design of the newly crafted Air Max 1 Anniversary.

Tinker Hatfield—Storyteller through Shoes

Tinker is a living legend with a long history of amazing design innovations. Sneakers, and the entire athletic industry along with it, would be pretty boring were it not for the inventive imagination, relentless drive towards improved performance, and raw aesthetic talents of Tinker Hatfield. He’s the guy who said, “Let’s make the interior workings of the sneaker visible,” which led to the iconic AirMax, or more recently, “Let’s build a shoe with self-tying laces,” which lead to, well, self-tying shoes.

Oft nicknamed “The Architect,” (Since he was an athlete who got a degree in Architecture and was originally hired to design things like Nike’s buildings and retail stores, not shoes.) Tinker is more than just an artist that draws up shoes — he’s gone on to become the architect of Nike’s brand look now four decades. The mind behind the original Air Max lineup, the creator behind the entire Cross Training category as we know it, and of course, unmistakably, the equal-parts counterpart to Michael Jordan in creating the Air Jordan series’ most iconic models, Hatfield is undeniably the footwear industry’s most accomplished visionary. [He also designed Michael Keaton’s BatBoot and the shoes in Back to the Future.]

Hatfield's shoes clearly look great, but what separates them from the competition is how they combine breakthrough technology with a winning narrative. For example, the Air Max 1 was inspired by the inside-out design of Pompidou Center in Paris. The Air Jordan V took its cues from World War II fighter planes. The Air Jordan XI (Tinker's personal favorite, actually) started with a simple request from Michael Jordan to put patent leather on basketball shoes. It might be Nike's top-level technology that makes people think they'll run faster, jump higher, and look cooler, but it's Hatfield's acute understanding of his audience, and alignment with their emotion, that keeps him at the top of his game.

[Tinker Hatfield: Turning Imagination into Reality](#)

[Tinker Hatfield: TedEX Portland](#)

What did we learn?

Designers and engineers ask questions and explore ideas like:

- How can we take things that we might not think about as shoe materials and bring them in to create new forms and new ideas?
- What makes them say, “I’m uncomfortable,” and how do you address it?



- If it doesn't help the user...get rid of it!
- Is it better than it was before?
- If every little detail matters what can we change? [If you reduce the frame weight by a gram, in a marathon that equates to 58lbs]
- What happens if...?
- Is there a narrative, a story, that's being told? [ex. In the video eyewear as a 'superhero mask']

What else did students learn and observe? Write their thoughts down on the board.

If possible, have a local entrepreneur come in and talk about their experience designing and marketing a product.



Cobbling something together

It's time to take your big idea from dream to reality while creating a unique, handcrafted pair of wearable art.

The most important step in any project is the design phase. Think about the type of shoes you want to make and do some sketches.

As you sketch and brainstorm, think about the following:

- What is your brand?
- Who is your audience?
- Is it solving a problem (e.g. create a line of shoes for kids with a tracking device in it for anxious parents? Donate a shoe to those in need? Raise funds for a cause with every purchase?) or simply to look amazingly cool?
- What story are you trying to tell?
- What style of shoe do you want to do?
- What colors do you want in the shoes?
- Where will you include your logo and/or company name?
- What is the name of your shoe?
- How much would you sell it for?
- How much time do you think it will take you to make a full pair?

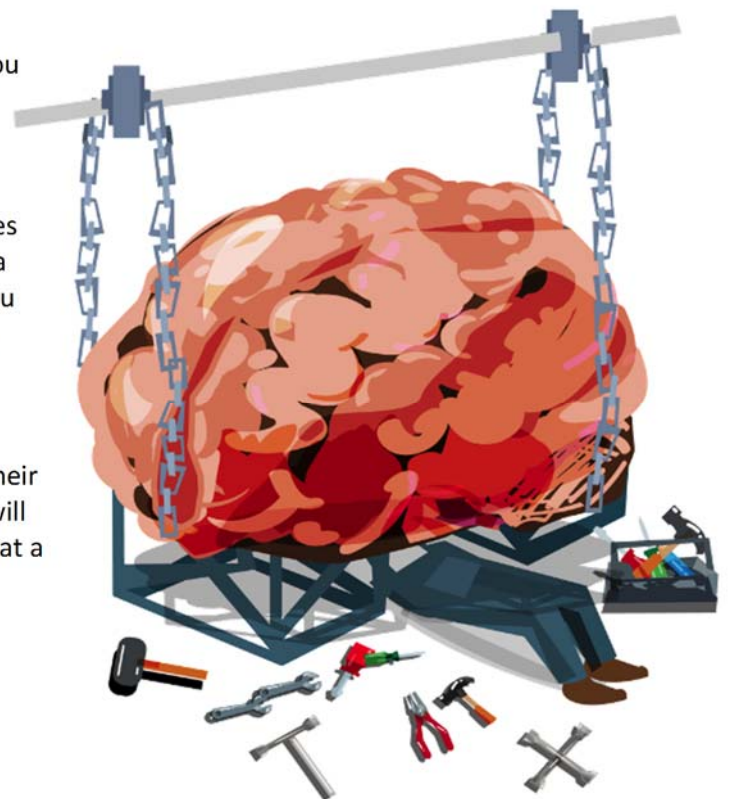
Different perspectives:

During this process students will have to sometimes think like a producer and at other times think like a consumer. When creating and selling your shoe you will need to think not only about how to make the best product, but what consumer needs and expectations are.

Optional: When they have designed and created their shoe (and completed their design package), they will have an opportunity to sell it (for pretend money) at a "Makerfaire."

Materials:

- Masking Tape
- Scissors



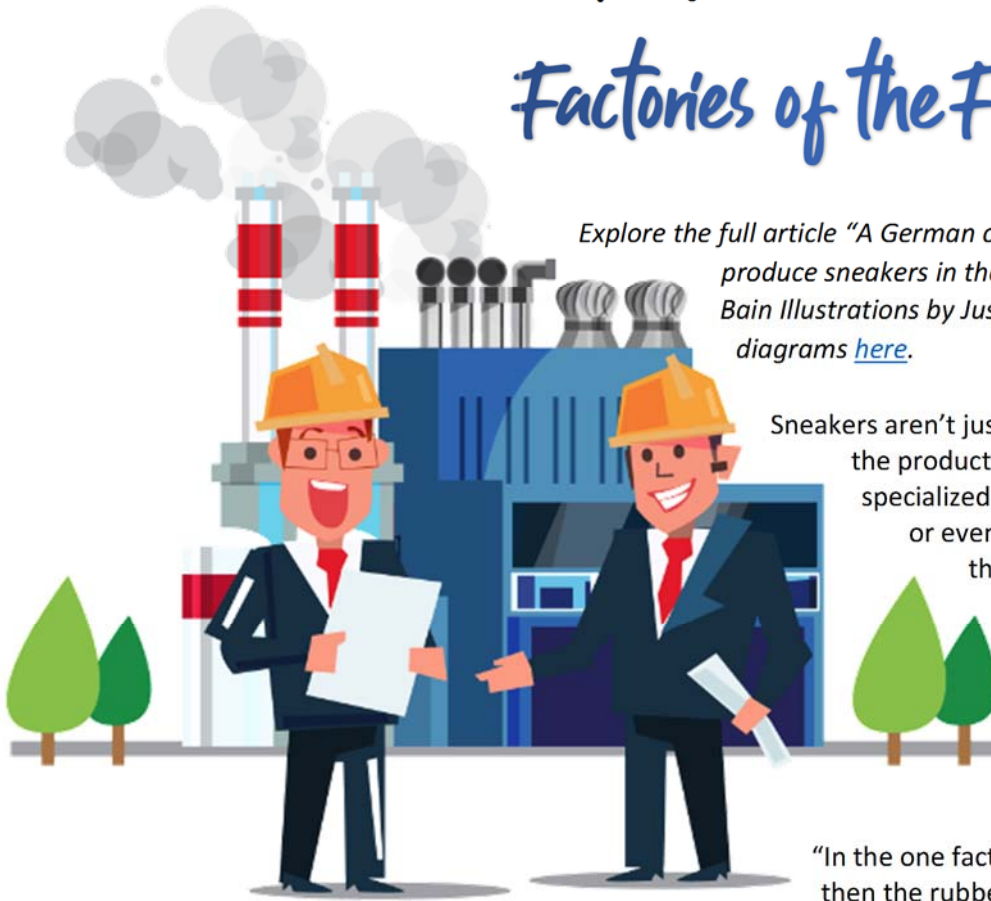
- X-acto or utility knives (used only by instructors to assist students)
- Duct tape in appropriate colors
- Optional: Other kinds of specialty tapes (ex. Finger tape, washi tape, seam stick basting tapes, textured scrapbooking tapes (ex. Burlap texture, or Duck Texture crafting tapes)
- Newspaper
- Cardboard
- Other support and construction materials as available, ex. Sponges, bubble wrap, Styrofoam, memory foam, cardboard or other materials such as leathers, textiles, cork, embroidery floss, sequins, and/or other unique materials students wish to incorporate
- Sewing needles (if students wish to incorporate embroidery floss or ribbon, etc.)
- Measuring devices
- Student patterns and foot measurements
- Student shoe designs
- Scissors
- Optional: eyelets A fancy eyelet tool will cost you \$20, but you can packs of eyelets often come with simpler tools that do the same thing.

Using what they learned from making their first shoe have students (individuals or teams) will now construct their company's prototype design and complete a PAIR of shoes.

As students work, discuss the following

Factories of the Future

Explore the full article "A German company built a "Speedfactory" to produce sneakers in the most efficient way" By Marc Bain Illustrations by Justine Shirin and illustrative diagrams [here](#).



Sneakers aren't just made in one factory. They're the product of a sprawling network of specialized suppliers, often in different cities or even different countries that make the various components assembled into an athletic shoe. Just one part, such as the outsole, could have criss-crossed large stretches of Asia before becoming part of the sneaker you bought.

"In the one factory you create your rubber, and then the rubber is formed into a certain shape.

The midsole is created. In another place, the midsole and the bottom are combined," explains Ulrich Steindorf, senior director of manufacturing at Adidas.

From start to finish, it can take 60 days to make a shoe using this conventional process. Humans still do much of the stitching, gluing, and other labor-intensive processes by hand. Even once the shoe is ready, it takes another 60 days to ship it from Asia, where most sneakers are made, to stores in Western Europe or the US.

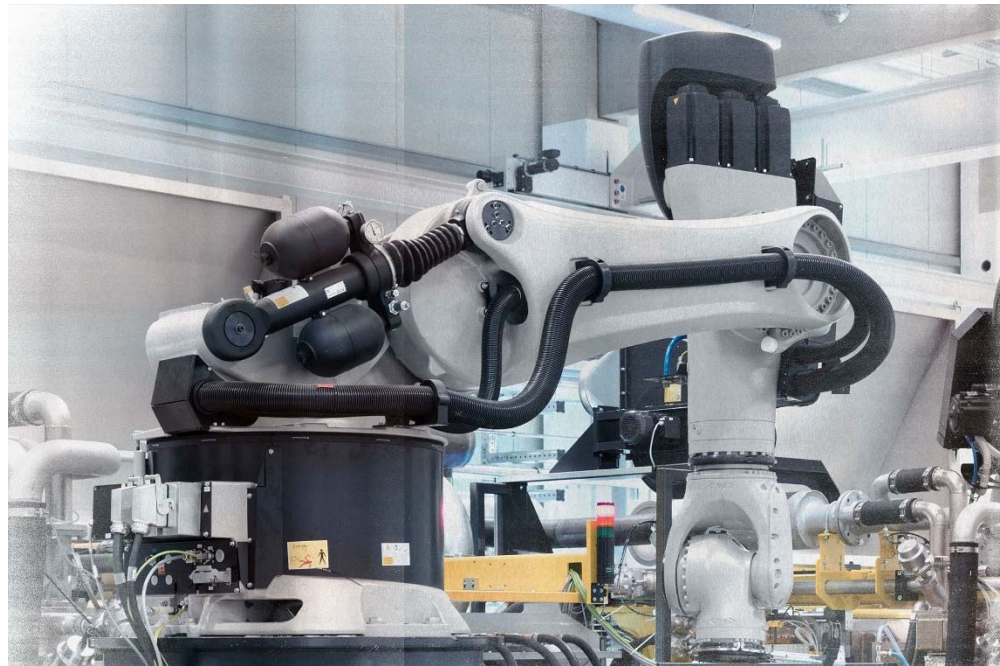
A couple of years ago, the top minds at Adidas decided this clunky, inefficient model was too limiting. "That's why we looked into the technologies available and decided, 'Hey, if we want to be faster and more flexible in doing what our athletes want and need, then we have to rethink the way we make products,'" says Gerd Manz, the head of technology innovation within Adidas' Future team, which looks ahead three to seven years to set the company's course.

The innovations Adidas has since put in place largely converge in the Speedfactory. It's a pioneering concept that concentrates the sneaker-production process in a single space, and in the market where the shoes are sold. At Adidas' Speedfactory in Ansbach, Germany, robots do most of the work. Compared to the months it can take to make a sneaker in the traditional supply chain, Speedfactory completes production in a matter of days.

The new factories are just one piece of a bigger shift. For roughly 40 years, sneaker manufacturing had gone largely unchanged. But now experts believe the industry has reached an inflection point, spurred by the spread of e-commerce and social media, which have sped up fashion cycles and taught shoppers to expect instant access to a constant stream of new products.

Adidas is testing different ideas as it works to make its operations faster and more flexible to meet the demands of this new era. It's integrating practically every major trend transforming supply chains today, including 3D printing, customization at a mass scale, near-sourcing, and the digitization of its operations.

Just the idea to build a factory in Germany was a bold move for Adidas. Sneaker brands generally handle the design, marketing, and a share of the sales, but leave the actual manufacturing to someone else. That someone else is almost always in Asia, since labor costs are low and there's now a massive infrastructure set up, particularly in China. Adidas sourced 97% of its footwear from Asia in 2016, according to the most recent numbers available from the company, and that's where the bulk of production will stay for the foreseeable future.



One of the robots in the Ansbach Speedfactory. (Adidas)

Speedfactory is almost a complete reversal of that standard. Adidas still has to import raw materials, and outsource certain processes, such as knitting the textile for the upper. Otherwise, all the work happens in Adidas' factory, right in Germany and now the US, where it recently opened a Speedfactory in Atlanta. Adidas also says processes that aren't currently part of the setup, like knitting the fabric for the upper, or 3D printing midsoles, could be easily integrated. It makes Adidas dramatically faster and more flexible in producing shoes.

"Right now it takes 18 months from concept to retail for a product to get to market, if everything goes well—and it never goes well," he explains. "And what we have seen over the last few years is the fashion cycles are really compressing. I use performance basketball as an example of this. [It] took off really at the beginning of 2012, and the trend was over by the middle of 2015. If you think about it, in an industry where the fashion cycles only last three years, and where it takes 18 months to bring product from concept to retail, those two things are really in opposition to each other."

Speedfactories should help Adidas to adapt to this shortened cycle in ways that will matter even if they aren't churning out tens of millions of sneakers a year. First, they let Adidas create and test new products quickly. (That's also where 3D printing helps: It lets Adidas simply print soles for prototypes and eliminate tooling, the costly and time-consuming step of building the metal mold used to make soles in conventional sneaker making.) Second, they will soon allow Adidas to respond quickly to the way people are shopping in the markets where Speedfactories are located.

SUPPLY CHAIN DATA POINT **NO 238**

By 2020, adidas plans to deliver 50% of its products – from inception to store shelves – within **45 days**.

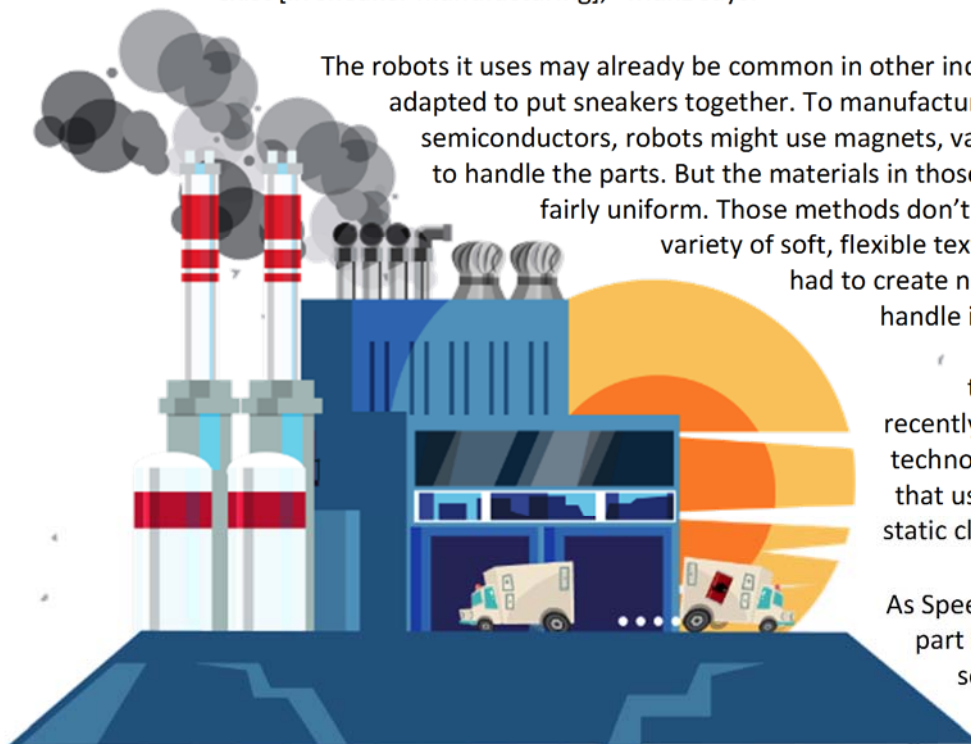


Source: adidas Investor Day, 2015

The infographic features a yellow background with a large, stylized number '45' in the center. To the left of the '45' is a small icon of a factory, and to the right is an icon of a store. A dashed line connects the factory icon to the store icon, passing through the '45'. The text 'By 2020, adidas plans to deliver 50% of its products – from inception to store shelves – within 45 days.' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the top right, it says 'SUPPLY CHAIN DATA POINT NO 238'. At the bottom left, it says 'Source: adidas Investor Day, 2015'.

Just as important, the Speedfactories will soon be able to rapidly replenish stores in Western Europe and the US. That ability would let Adidas restock styles or sizes in just weeks or days, rather than months. It could also mean Adidas wouldn't need to produce a huge volume of inventory up front and sink money into stock without certainty that it will sell.

A sneaker in Speedfactory comes together so simply that it can be tough to understand why no one tried the concept before. But Adidas had to work hard to make it a reality. "A lot of these processes don't exist [in sneaker manufacturing]," Manz says.



The robots it uses may already be common in other industries, but they had to be adapted to put sneakers together. To manufacture cars, electronics, or semiconductors, robots might use magnets, vacuums, or mechanical pinchers to handle the parts. But the materials in those industries tend to be rigid or fairly uniform. Those methods don't work well when dealing with a variety of soft, flexible textiles. Adidas and its partners had to create new ways for the machines to handle its materials and solve other basic problems. (Faced with the same challenge, Nike recently started installing robotic technology at some contract factories that use electro-adhesion—basically static cling—to handle sneaker parts.)

As Speedfactory cranks away, each part it makes is tagged with a scannable QR code. During quality control checks, if there's a problem, they can

trace the part back to the machine that made it, and know what the settings were on the machine. As Speedfactory makes more and more shoes, Adidas will be able to continuously refine its processes, reducing the waste from parts that aren't up to standard and ensure that it's making a better final product.

Nobody else in the industry is doing anything like this. Footwear and clothing brands frequently have their suppliers embed RFID tags in finished goods so that if they spot defects they know the factory responsible. But doing it at the component level is the sort of practice you see in high-tech industries, such as semiconductors. No other brand has so fully embraced automation either, or digitally replicated a factory to optimize for it. "Adidas is at the cutting edge,".

Automation has advantages beyond speed; it offers mechanized accuracy too. In the average footwear factory in China, the sole and upper are joined with glue by hand which can be messy, takes time, and can be imprecise. Adidas also avoids using glue wherever possible and prefers fusing pieces when it can.

Because so much of the work is automated, Adidas needs fewer workers than you would find in many sneaker factories in Asia. There are 160 employees at the Ansbach location. At factories in China and Vietnam, it's common for footwear factories to have more than 500 workers, or even well over 1,000.

The Ansbach employees also tend to be workers of a very different sort. The job profiles Adidas and Oechsler used for hiring were common in other industries, such as automotive manufacturing, where automation is common, but new to the sneaker world.

Adidas has said it plans to get 50% of its sales from "speed-enabled" products by 2020. Eventually, Adidas's goal is to be able to make individually tailored shoes, where 3D printing may be indispensable again. If Adidas doesn't have to build the tooling for a sole, it suddenly becomes feasible to customize a sneaker to a customer's foot. The sneaker would be expensive, and not likely a mass-market product. But for athletes with specific needs, it could be worth the cost.

In other words, making a better product today is less about whatever the hot new cushioning material of the moment is, and more about having the entire business set up to quickly identify what customers want, and get it to them fast.⁶



⁶ <https://classic.qz.com/perfect-company-2/1145012/a-german-company-built-a-speedfactory-to-produce-sneakers-in-the-most-efficient-way/>

What's Hiding in Your Shoe?

To be successful in business it is important to have creative ideas, good communication skills, and a solid understanding of financial matters. In marketing your shoe, what are some questions you'd need to think about?

Unit
Price

Show students examples of unit price in different forms, like

cost per item, per volume, per weight. Without explaining how to do it, have students devise their own ways of figuring out the best buy by comparing similar products with different unit costs. This can be done as a whole class, in pairs, or individually.

Thinking about Product Costs

To get the class thinking about what goes into making a product, show them a common, simply designed product (e.g., a shoe) and ask:

What do you think has to be considered when deciding how much this product costs?

Explore [The Life of Nike Shoe' Supply Chain](#)

Examples of questions the group could explore:

- What goes into making a product? (This could go as far back as the cotton farmers who grow the cotton for the cloth or the ranch where the cow grew that later became the leather!)
- How is the cost of making a product determined?
- How long did it take to make it?
- How many people did the company have to pay to make it?
- How can the cost of making a product be reduced?
- How is the selling price of a product determined?
- Does selling price depend on where it's being sold? (Ex. Are products higher in cities or rural areas?)
- How much are consumers willing to pay for the product?
- How far did it have to be shipped?
- Etc.

With these questions and others like them, it's not important for students to actually know how the product was made or priced, but rather for them to think about what considerations might go into the process of deciding its cost.

What's Demand?



This is also a good time to introduce the idea of demand for products and target markets. Demand describes a consumer's desire and willingness to pay for a specific product. A target market is a particular group of consumers at which a product is aimed.

Successful products meet a demand in their target market.

To further explore the Big Idea "Design can be responsive to identified needs," you could give students some examples of products designed to meet specific needs, such as the introduction of laptop computers to meet a need for people to be able to bring their computers to places, rather than just having desktops. Another example would be the creation of driverless cars to meet the needs of an increasingly busy and mobile society.

How Low Can You Go?

In discussing selling price, you could introduce the concept of optimal pricing. The optimal price of your product is the one that will maximize your profit. If a product is priced too low, consumers may think it's "cheap." If it's priced too high, nobody will buy it. So, setting a price is not just about how much it costs to make a product, but also about how much consumers will pay and how the product compares to other similar products.

Pricing Your Product: Exploring "Profit"

We have already explored how the costs of products are set in relation to the price of materials and labor, and by understanding the demand for the product. But before deciding how much their product will cost, students should have a good



understanding of profit and what it's for. As a class, discuss:

- What does profit mean?
- Do you need a profit, and if so why?
- If you need a profit, how much is enough?
- What is a profit margin?

Profit is the net gain that a business makes (its income minus its expenses). Ultimately, profit is what allows our economy to grow and prosper, as profit can be:

- reinvested in development of new products and services
- spent on other products and services in a market economy
- taxed by governments, and then used to benefit society as a whole

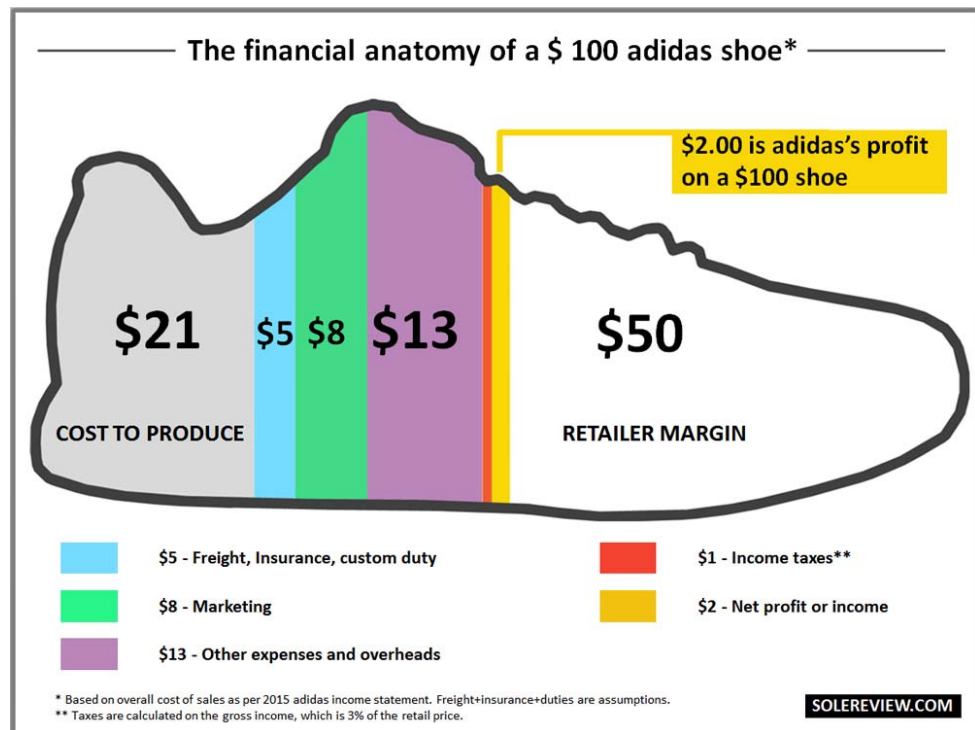
Without profit, a capitalist economy could not function. But while profit is important, it's not the only goal for some organizations. Here are some examples of organizations that don't see maximizing profit as their sole purpose:

Not-for-profit organizations — For example, when the Red Cross sells T-shirts or holiday cards, it is not doing so in order to make a profit that it will keep. The revenue from those products is used to pay for the services that the Red Cross provides.

A company that wants to “give back” to the community by donating a portion of its proceeds to charity — for example:

- Screamin Brothers, a frozen dairy-treat company started by Canadian youth who wanted to donate a portion of their profits to children's organizations
- Tom's shoes, a shoe and clothing company that donates a portion of its profits to international charities

A company that values “corporate social responsibility” — This means that it tries to be responsible to society by supporting a certain set of values or principles that may not be linked to profit maximization.



This may include companies that advertise their products as “fair trade” or “locally made” (although these labels can also be used as part of a marketing approach).

- A good example of a socially responsible company is Brash87, a line of hockey sticks made by former NHL player Donald Brashear, who wanted to make a high-quality affordable stick that wasn't too expensive for kids to afford. In his pitch on Dragon's Den, he explained how he sacrifices potentially higher profits in order to maintain his sticks' low prices.



• Pick a Price!

- Ask students to identify the rationale for choosing the price they did for their product. Any rationale is OK: they won't be judged on their value decisions, as long as they've thought their decision through.

Have students reflect on how they intend to use the potential profit from their product, and why.

Sell me Somethin' Good!

In our digital classrooms web pages remain popular projects for creative expression and content sharing. However, students and their peers are often faced with the same sense of immediacy for project development as any of the real-life businesses we've studied.

What if Blue Ribbon Sports existed today and they not only needed a new name, but also needed a new website by 9am? And an online business website lets you stay open and reach customers 24 hours a day!

Proper HTML coding is unquestionably a valuable skill for any student (and graphic designer) to learn, but it does take time and practice. So, what can they (and real businesses) do when they need something quick and professional-looking in no time flat?

Using a free drag & drop website designer (like Wix.com or one of the others mentioned below) create a professional website for your company!



You must include:

- Your company name
- Your company logo
- Shoe design sketches
- Photos of your completed pair of constructed shoes
- The name of your shoes
- Price of each pair
- Your passion and inspiration! (Are you giving back or sharing profits? Tell us about it.)
- Include the story of you/your shoe company!

Total Design Freedom

Free website creator tools that have ready-to-use design templates are getting better all the time. It makes building a website today easier than ever. A business website can literally be up and running in minutes. It's as easy as adding text and images and clicking "publish."

These online website creator tools are in no particular order and are some of the best on the Web today. They are advertised mostly with business owners in mind but they also work superbly as immersive classroom applications. With any one of these terrific tools your students can dive right in and begin designing and creating their own shoe business websites for free.



Website Creator Tools for Fast Results

All of these sites offer quality starter templates, easy drag-and-drop interfaces, and plenty of creative control for students. In addition to this, the HTML/CSS on any many of them is fully editable. That's great news for students working to refine their coding skills.

Enjoy exploring these website creator tools you and your students can use to build amazing sites for their shoe business in minutes.

WIX @ Wik.com

Wix is probably one of the best free website creator tools out there, if not the most popular. Start with a blank slate or choose from over 500 designer-made templates, some of which are just stunning. Each template has a drag-and-drop interface that is very

The logo for Wix.com, featuring the word "Wix" in a bold, dark blue font with a small orange dot above the "i", followed by ".com" in a lighter blue, sans-serif font.

easy to navigate. Templates are fully customizable and there is plenty of creative control to be had here. With the world's most innovative drag and drop website builder, you can customize anything you want. Create beautiful websites with video backgrounds, parallax, animation, and more—all without worrying about code.

Duda @ www.dudamobile.com

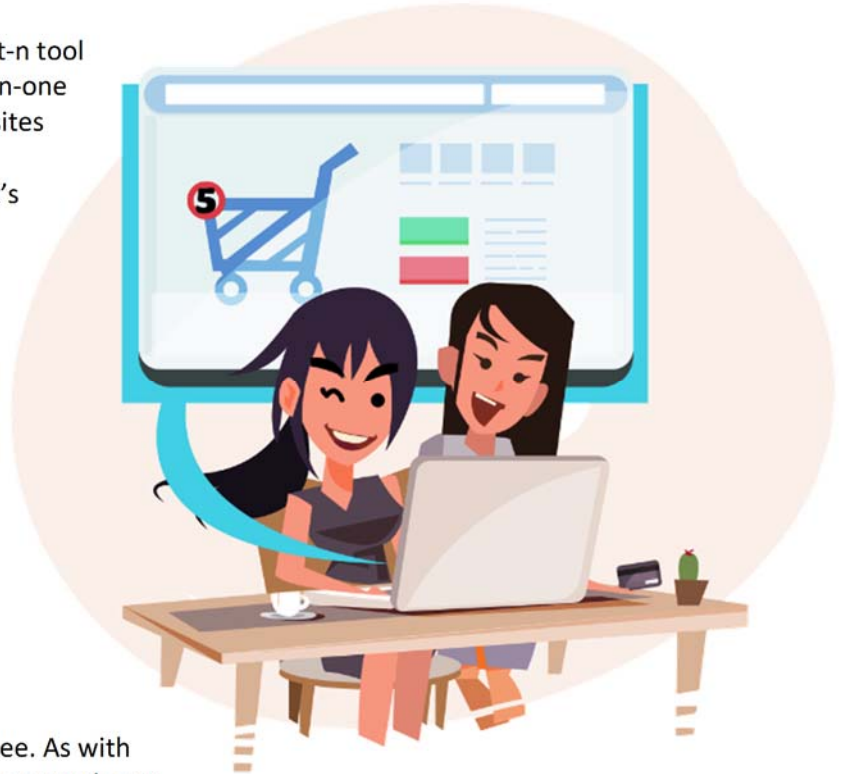
Duda is all about personalization. It has built-in tool that can allow you to create personal one-on-one experiences for users. It also lets you build sites that are specifically for mobile. It's another decked out drag-and-drop website tool that's easy to use and gives great results.

Weebly @ www.weebly.com

Weebly has over 100 different website themes to choose from here. Get fancy with widgets, social media and blogging tools, and much more. Weebly also lets you edit the HTML and CSS of any theme you choose. Learn all about Weebly's great features at their Help Center.

Yola @ yola.com

Yola websites are clean, beautiful, and ad-free. As with some of the other tools, you can create and customize an online store, and make use of drag-and-drop widgets for full interactivity. You can also keep a close eye on your site stats with their featured website reports.



Now, GO LIVE!

Share your students' website with us (and enter to win a Style Pack of duct tape) by sending a link to sparkedinnovations@gmail.com. We'll share your students' websites in our online Gallery!