



# The History of the Wishbone Chair: 5 Unexpected Facts About Hans Wegner's Iconic Seat

The Wishbone Chair, also known as CH24 by Danish designer Hans Wegner is a classic chair with a rich background. From its inspiration to creation, the chair is ripe with concepts that are alien to its time. Here are 5 unexpected facts you should know about one of the most beloved chairs in modern history.

## 1. It was inspired by Ming Dynasty China

The Wishbone Chair was inspired by Chinese Ming Dynasty chairs with their high and rounded backs and wide seats, which Wegner observed in portraits of Danish merchants. Thus with its roots coming from China, the chair carries similar design principles from the Far East with its subtle yet impactful lines.

It strays away from artificiality with its use of natural materials, the wooden frame, and the paper cord seat. It's an unpretentious chair with practical details like the Y-shaped back and the curved armrest that adds to a more comfortable sitting experience.

The inspiration is evident from the shape of the chair, which carries very similar details from traditional Chinese chairs in the Ming Dynasty. The piece is a timeless classic with versatile aesthetics. It can fit into a modern interior just as well as it can fit into a more rustic space. The Wishbone Chair is featured in some of the world's finest hotels and restaurants.

Reproductions of the Wishbone Chair remain true to the original design by Wegner and come in a lot of variations so you have the perfect piece to match your space. You can choose [light wood](#), [dark wood](#), [colourful](#) or [black](#) Wishbone Chairs, or you can even mix and match different varieties to fit your interior.

## 2. Wishbone Chair is its nickname

Carl Hansen & Søn commissioned Wegner in 1949 to create a high-quality chair that they can mass produce. Wegner submitted 4 chair designs, CH22, CH23, CH24, and CH25. All chairs went into production, but it was CH24 that gained the most commercial success.

CH24 was nicknamed the Wishbone Chair from its Y-shaped back support which looked like a wishbone from a chicken. The unique shape fulfills the functional demand of a comfortable chair as the Y-shaped back and bent backrest provides ample support to the back and the arms.

Wegner believed in the design principle that there should be no backside to a chair. Simply put, a chair has to have no angles that you don't want to present to an audience. Thus, the

Wishbone Chair's unique Y-shape was designed not only with comfort in mind but aesthetics as well. The lines on the wishbone with the curved backrest and tapered legs form a harmonious design structure that makes the Wishbone Chair captivating despite its simplicity. Chair 24 or CH24 is more commonly known now as the Wishbone Chair from its most iconic feature. It is also sometimes referred to as the Y Chair. A beautiful chair such as this deserves its own name and not just a number, and it's fortunate that the nickname stuck throughout the years.

### **3. The design was originally disliked**

Although a classic and beloved piece of today, the Wishbone Chair's design was not as popular with Carl Hansen & Søn when it was first presented by Wegner. They thought that it looked too much like garden furniture and that it was too complex to mass-produce.

Some processes involved in its production were outside the scope of Carl Hansen & Søn's factory at that time. The top bar had to be steam-bent by an outside factory and the back legs need to be turned by a sub-supplier. Despite the challenges, the Wishbone Chair went into production the following year along with the other chairs that Wegner designed.

The Wishbone Chair became one of their most successful chairs and continues to be in production 70 years or so later. The decision to trust Wegner's abilities as a designer and put the chair in mass production despite the initial doubt proved to be the smart choice.

Carl Hansen & Søn's first impression of the chair as a garden piece has since been discarded as the chair is consistently featured in home and establishment interiors. It is commonly used as a dining chair but is also used as a living room or a bedroom piece. The production still involves complex processes, but it continues to be one of the most reproduced chairs due to the unrivaled beauty of the final product.

### **4. The original height was increased**

The original height of the Wishbone Chair was increased by 2 cm to accommodate the height increase of the American and European population purchasing the chair. The chair in its original height dimension is still being sold in Asia. Today the most common height of reproduced Wishbone Chair is 76 cm.

This change in height reflects the chair's timelessness as it adapts to the changes that happen throughout the years since it was first produced. Another 70 years from now or more, the chair might be tweaked differently some more to adapt to the population.

Despite the slight changes, the Wishbone Chair remains true to the original design by Wegner. The important features such as the Y-shaped back, bent backrest, paper cord seat, and tapered legs will remain as the defining qualities to set the chair apart.

### **5. It's hugely popular in Japan**

The Wishbone Chair is continuously experiencing great international demand specifically in Asia and particularly in Japan. In fact, the Japanese market accounts for more than a quarter of the chair's annual production.

The chair is a popular fixture in some of Japan's finest establishments. In fact, it appears in The National Art Center in Tokyo, Japan.

While light wood is the preferred choice in the Scandinavian market, dark wood is the popular choice for the Japanese market. The Wishbone Chair is still sold in its original height in Asia. It's no wonder that the design is big in Japan as the inspiration for the design came to Wegner upon seeing traditional chairs from Ming Dynasty China. Therefore, the line and design structure from the Far East is very familiar to the Japanese market.