

Steelcase Series® M: Simple, Smart, Sustainable Seating for a Changing World

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Change continues to be a constant in the world of work. Alongside a growing focus on wellbeing and sustainability, AI is rapidly reshaping how people work. Organizations are moving beyond reactive updates toward future-ready design strategies. Longevity, simplicity, and versatility matter more than ever, and the new Steelcase Series® M seating family was designed with this reality in mind.

Research shows that AI frees up time for more creativity and innovation, and collaboration is more dynamic than ever. As roles and behaviors change, the workplace needs to evolve to keep up. A flexible office seating family that works across nearly all spaces and applications, Series® M balances thoughtful design, adaptability and sustainability to support people and organizations today, while staying relevant for years to come.

A Chair Designed for Any Space and Built to Last

Created to adapt as work evolves, Series® M offers maximum flexibility. It can serve as a side chair, visitor chair, conference chair, classroom chair or collaborative seating, supporting focus areas, social zones and hybrid settings.

The collection brings together a cohesive family of seating options with a single, refined design language. A broad range of materials, bases, textures and colors allows the chair to be tailored to different environments, without compromising consistency. Lead Industrial Designer Penghao Shan explains how this versatility is intentional.

“Its modular design can adapt to lots of different spaces. In hybrid collaboration areas, swivel bases support movement and flexibility. In work cafes, the round tube frame offers visual simplicity and an elegant aesthetic. And in education settings, features like stackability, tablets, and casters make it easy to rearrange spaces to support active learning.”

PENGHAO SHAN, INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER

The modular structure of Series® M allows shells, bases and upholstery to be swapped as work patterns change or as parts wear out, eliminating the need to replace the entire chair. Upholstery is engineered without glue or staples, extending the chair’s life and making it easier to repair and refresh. A click-based assembly system allows the chair to be assembled in under two minutes without tools. While demonstrating how seamlessly the chair can be assembled and disassembled, Penghao notes, “The idea is simple. But in practice, it’s very hard to achieve.”

The Complex Process Behind a Simple Design

Although Series® M appears effortless, achieving that simplicity required years of exploration and refinement. From the beginning, the team set out to design a chair that could stand the test of time, both aesthetically and functionally, while supporting ambitious sustainability goals.

Translating that vision into a three-dimensional form meant extensive experimentation and prototyping, involving close collaboration across Steelcase teams in Munich and Sarrebourg. The teams worked together to devise new manufacturing processes that produced the chair without glue or staples, requiring innovation across the entire value chain. “We couldn’t rely on familiar processes,” Penghao says. “Rethinking every step is what ultimately made the design work.”

Supporting How People Work Today and Tomorrow

Series® M is designed to evolve alongside changing needs, protecting long-term investment while reducing environmental impact. Instead of replacing seating as work patterns shift, organizations can update components, refresh materials and reconfigure spaces over time. Series® M reflects a broader shift in how design defines beauty and value.

“We’ve been trained to see certain things as beautiful. But designing for the future — designing sustainably — means rethinking what beauty is and what details really matter.”

PENGHAO SHAN, INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER

As AI, sustainability, and other forces continue to change how work happens, Series® M offers the flexibility and longevity organizations need to support people in a more adaptive, human-centered workplace.