

# Designing garden furniture that is suitable for a balcony

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Topic: designing garden furniture

Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen is a company that is specialised in the sale of garden furniture. Consumers use garden furniture to enjoy their times in the outdoor area. The company has a very broad and diverse collection to satisfy the wishes of almost every customer. However, there are many consumers not blessed with a large garden, but only a small balcony. There is often little room on a balcony and many people find it very difficult to find suitable garden furniture. The aim of this assignment was therefore to develop garden furniture, which can be used by Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen to better meet the wishes of the consumer with a balcony. The following research question had been drawn up for this: "With which garden furniture, suitable for a balcony, can Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen extend its current collection to better address consumers with a balcony?"

In the analysis phase was firstly identified who the target group is and what limitations they experience. By analysing this in combination with the context, it was possible to determine which aspects are needed for the new furniture to be suitable on a balcony. There were also other aspects determined for the new product based on an analysis of the current collection, the current market, the use of materials and the current product development at Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen. Besides the founded aspects, the analysis phase also showed that the current collection actually meets the needs of the target group already, but this is not yet clearly communicated to them. So there were also improvements needed in the area of the presentation of the furniture.

The aspects concluded from the analysis phase were used in the idea phase to create new ideas. These created ideas were very diverse and each based on different aspects and so wishes of the target group. Therefore, it could be concluded that not just one garden furniture would be suitable to expand the collection with, but that many more designs were suitable. To be able to make a choice out of these ideas, more requirements were added. Such as the wish of Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen to base the new product on one of the existing garden furniture in the current collection. So, after evaluation and the setup of a list of requirements, three ideas have been proposed as concepts. Ultimately, two concepts have been worked out further.

The first concept concerns the idea of a multifunctional and modular loungeset. It is based on one of the biggest wishes of the target group, namely a loungeset that is suitable for a balcony. The modules can be positioned in several setups. Among others a loveseat, adjustable lounger, chaise longue and double or triple lounge sofa can be created. This multifunctional property makes the furniture very suitable for a balcony.

The second concept is a folding table. This concept owes its suitability to the fact that it can be attached to the balustrade. This was also a popular demand of the target group. The table saves a lot of space because of the folding function and it also has a multifunctional property. Some parts can be used as ice buckets or as planters, to be able to create a piece of garden on the balcony.

From the analysis phase was also concluded that addressing the target group can not only be improved by expanding the collection, but also by the way of presenting the garden furniture. So eventually in the last part of this assignment improvements were suggested to better present the garden furniture to the target group. This consisted of improvements for the presentation of the

balcony settings in the showroom, but also for the presentations on the website of Kees Smit Tuinmeubelen. The new designed garden furniture has been incorporated in these proposals.