

FAQs EFC – English

Question: When will the fibreglass seat shell be available?

Answer: From 1st of October onwards for selected premium dealers; 15th of February 2019 for all dealers in Europe & Middle East.

Question: Will the Eames Plastic Chair in polypropylene still be available?

Answer: Yes, both product families will be offered.

Question: What versions of the Fiberglass Chair will be sold?

Answer: The Fiberglass Chair will be launched in the side chair models DSW, DSX and DSR.

Question: Why is it not available with all bases?

Answer: The Fiberglass Chair targets the Home sector, which is why the focus is on home-style bases.

Question: Will there be an armchair version?

Answer: Yes, the prototype will be on show at the Milan Fair, and it will be launched during next year.

Question: How are the shells manufactured?

Answer: A completely new method was developed for the production of fibreglass seat shells. A so-called preform made of fibreglass matting is placed in an aluminium tool and saturated with polyester resin. After the hardening process, rough edges are smoothed and the shell undergoes thermal treatment.

Question: What is different from the old production process? How has it been improved?

Answer: The preform was previously created by 'flocking' a casting form with loose glass fibres. Then flat cuttings were systematically positioned on areas that needed extra reinforcement. This released tiny fragments of glass fibres into the air, which required employees to wear filter masks. This earlier procedure was called wet pressing, because the preforms were placed in an open tool and doused with resin. Then the tool was closed and the contents were pressed under great pressure and high temperatures so that the resin could penetrate every area of the preform. This open production method resulted in high levels of chemical emissions.

The new procedure instead uses fibreglass matting, and the resin components are processed in a closed system.

Question: What are the challenges of manufacturing with fibreglass?

Answer: First, with this closed production process it was extremely complicated to obtain an even, visible fibre texture without having exposed fibres on the surface. The second major challenge was achieving an optimal and stable shape for the preform.

Question: Why did the development process take so long?

Answer: A visible fibre texture is no longer demanded in modern-day industrial production procedures and had to be completely redeveloped – without returning to the hazardous methods of the past. Once the manufacturing process was developed, it was necessary to overcome different factors that affected the appearance. Visual flaws could only be eliminated in a step-by-step process: only one factor could be dealt with at a time, and the results had to be analysed before either repeating the step or moving on to the next issue.

Question: Why are shock mounts used for the EFC?

Answer: Shock mounts were used for all Fiberglass Chairs until production was discontinued in the 1990s. They are a structural feature of the design and add greater flexibility to the fibreglass shells, which are slightly more rigid than the Eames Plastic Chairs made of polypropylene.