After getting my own personal 3D printer, this novelty chess set idea was the first major project I decided to undertake. <br> <br>

                            My vision for the chess set was for it to be portable with embedded storage for the pieces. This would prevent the pieces from needing to be kept in a separate compartment like most other portable chess sets I had researched. Additionally, I wanted it to be entirely 3D printed as an added constraint to test how far I could push the designs. <br> <br>

                            Having played my fair share of online chess, I thought why not simply have physical 2D tokens for the pieces that are stored in their starting positions. With this in mind set out to make the whole board fold up to store and transport the set like a pop-up book.

The tools I used for the CAD/CAM of this project are as follows: Autodesk Inventor for CAD, Inkscape to design the piece icons, Cura for slicing and my Ender 3 3D printer for part production. I started by designing the board squares and figuring out how I would make them fit together.

                        Since I would be using white and black PLA for the different square colors, they all needed to be individual parts. <br> <br>

                        Firstly, to join the squares together I thought a fun solution would be to use buckles. This would also allow for non-permanent joining of different board squares in case I wanted to change something or reprint a part. To achieve the folding function, I used double jointed hinges to allow

                        for a perfectly flat fold of the board on top of itself. Additionally, I added half circle cavities between some of the squares just below the top surface to allow for the insertion of small neodymium magnets. While the magnets are not 3D printed, it felt like the most elegant solution to prevent the board sections from swinging apart during transportation. The final functional element was making the storage cavities for the chess pieces. I originally designed the pieces to have circular bases but quickly changed them to square to maximize the space used. This allowed for better sized icons.

Playing off of the pop-up book inspiration I thought it would be unique if the pieces themselves folded out into 2.5D projections of the icons. With this in mind I designed a three-part mechanism that allowed for the piece icon to fold flat for storage and up during play. <br> <br>

The pieces consist of standard base and lever parts with a unique icon part. The lever arm rotates at the bottom of the base allowing for the sliding joints of the icon to flip the piece out into playing position.

Using a 3D printing layer height of 0.16mm the final prototype was constructed. The total part count for the completed board was 196 individually printed parts. Following standard chess square sizing, the board squares are 5cm wide. Each board square is 1cm thick. When unfolded this results in board dimensions of 40cm X 40cm X 1cm. When folded the dimensions are 20cm X 20cm X 4cm. The chess pieces assemblies are 3.74cm wide and 0.3cm thick. When unfolded into play position the pieces height from the board surface is ~3cm.