

## FICTITIONAL OBJECTS

Step 1: Brainstorming objects w/ meaning (personal or attentive)

OBJECT

Pillow Pet



DESCRIPTION

- stuffed animal + pillow
- emphasizes cuteness + comfort, allows someone to sleep easily
- made of plush fabric, purple, stuffed w/ polyester
- soft rectangular cushion with a body, head, tail, horn (unicorn)
- factory + mass produced
- object typically kept in bedroom
- audience: kids
- two purposes: pillow and stuffed animal → strap underneath lets you fold pillow into pet
  - ↳ more firm structure as a pet
- "whimsical", bright, friendly face, feels "animat"

CONNECTION

- personal meaning → first stuffed animal I had owned since I was 4
- hasn't able to sleep without it
- still need it everywhere I go
- sense of security, nostalgia
- reminds me of childhood
- offers relaxation, softness + snail is comforting
- always end my day w/ my head on this pillow
- overall brings me happiness

Apple Watch



Tea Kettle  
(electric)



- small square screen, black when off
- gold wristband is interchangeable, metal w/ magnet strap
- body is steel, glass screen
- 2 buttons: digital "crown" (rotates + scrolls) and additional side button
- interface: can tap screen to turn it on
- mass produced using industrial processes, electrical device
- not just a watch to tell time → mini computer/phone
- experiences: productivity, healthy lifestyle, status, convenience
- casual + professional wear, not distinguished for one or the other
- fitness audience

- balance b/w technology + personal wellness
- personal motivator: "competing rings"
- offers me assurance that I'm always connected digitally
- attracted to sleek + minimalist design that can perform several functions
- got as a gift for my 16th birthday, lost it and then later my mom gave me back b/c she knew how often I use it
- wear it everyday, wrist often feels loose without it

- rounded vessel, spout, handle, lid
- glass to see liquid, has markings for measurement
- metal top, button to push to open lid, water filter underneath
- manufacturing processes: molding, casting, polishing
- digital screen to control temperature, type of tea or liquid needed to boil
- fully electric
- easiest way to heat water, no need to monitor
- quiet compared to whistling kettles
- encountered in kitchens mostly, appliances
- mostly for tea but also just to heat water
- ritual, daily experience (starting morning w/ tea)

- recognizable form is attractive
- every design aspect is intentional
- different models have aesthetic appeals (rustic v. modern)
- interesting how rapid the transformation from old to hot is
- comforting in how the heat of the kettle warms you through its association with tea
- though different models/types have been used in my family (only tea drinkers), it is always there + used multiple times a day
- act of making chai tea was something I had to do everyday for my parents, went from despising to loving it
- Chai in Indian households is social, ritualistic, evoking activity that brings comfort + continuity
- use of a kettle modernizes + speeds up this activity which is practical in families like mine
- not commonly used in India over stove-top since kettle acts as an alternative. Uncommon



## PICKING DESIGN IDEA: PROS + CONS

PILLOW  
PET

### DESIGN PROS

- dual purpose → good to rethink function
- unique form is interesting visually
- strong emotional meaning

### DESIGN CONS

- hard to prototype w/ paper
- very textured
- hard to repurpose in a symbolic way

APPLE  
WATCH

- recognizable + iconic, easy audience understanding
- multifunctional
- easy prototype due to geometric design
- ties to modern life
- different material use can be creative

- new function is hard since it's multifunctional
- less emotional/personal connection
- redesign overlap

KETTLE

- iconic + recognizable silhouette
- easy to prototype
- r/rn connection
- Strong symbolic meaning
- clear redesign/reflection paths

- current function is very simple
- curved form hard to capture
- less modern compared to apple watch

## Step 2: Full Idea Brainstorm, Research, Proposal

- want to focus on the chai making aspect of the kettle
- idea proposal: Spice-infusing kettle with insertable spice chips
- Spice "tokens": ginger, cardamom, clove, cinnamon
- kettle boils → automatically infuses water w/ tokens
- flap/coin slot in kettle base, insert whichever chips you want
- emphasizing making chai as a modern experience since it is so traditional

FUNCTIONAL PURPOSE

- convenience vs tradition w/ more modern element
- transforms plain water to chai infusion w/ chosen spices
- multiple functions: heating, spice rack, infusion into one system
- playful interaction provides engagement

EXPERIENCES AFFORDED

- personalization: choose spices
  - creativity
  - convenience
- ↓ modern experiences, however those who value labor of chai making + that experience are excluded

USABILITY

- anyone can use
- accessibility emphasized w/ simple chip slots + minimal effort required
- everyone CAN use it, but value is tied to chai traditions or those who are familiar w/ the flavor

VALUES MATERIALIZED

- real: tradition, hospitality, cultural identity, convenience, connection, modern experience
- fictional: playful, magical, spice chips can express some mood (ginger = warmth, cardamom = nostalgia, etc.)

AESTHETIC FACTOR

- modern sleek design for modern experience
- some more traditional patterns from India to highlight cultural element
- spice chips w/ vibrant colors, corresponding to different flavor profiles
- aesthetic factor reinforces functionality + conversation piece

### HISTORY

- past: cast iron, copper, stainless steel, Bakelite plastic, ceramic and glass
- ↳ some for more decorative use, some more functional
- must consider key things
  - ↳ no water can escape
  - ↳ water pressure
  - ↳ high temps
- stainless steel more durable + eco-friendly
- alloys used to heat liquid; plastic for insulation

## OBJECT ATTRIBUTES GRID

<u>Audience</u> :	families and individuals who prepare chai as part of a daily ritual, but value time savings + convenience
<u>Form</u> :	Modern kettle design with coin slots to insert spice chips
<u>Material</u> :	Stainless steel bottom w/ patterned traditional design, glass body for viewing, reusable colored spice plastic chips, plastic colored handle, simple electric panel on top to control power, warm color tones
<u>Appeal</u> :	Sleek but cultural design, fun customization, convenience of only having to insert chips as spires
<u>Purpose</u> :	Transforming plain water into a warm personalized spice drink, all while reducing time and effort of making chai
<u>Message</u> :	Convenience and tradition can coexist while providing convenience to a ritualistic process
<u>Location</u> :	Kept in kitchen and can be used as a conversation piece over ritual of chai making
<u>Usability</u> :	Intuitive design where user can insert chips, press a button to boil, and get infused tea in a convenient matter
<u>Technique</u> :	Paper prototype with a cylindrical body (clear plastic sheet), solid bottom + top foundation, flap slots at top, and pushable power control button/switch

## Written Proposal

The redesigned object is a **Spice-Infusing Kettle** that elevates the chai ritual by blending **convenience, personalization, and cultural symbolism**. Rather than simply boiling water, this kettle allows users to insert *spice tokens* that play a key role in making chai into slots. When a button is pushed to boil water, it automatically infuses the selected spices and create a personalized chai. A coin-slit mechanism at the top of the kettle allows you to insert any chosen spice tokens, emphasizing the personalization of only choosing tokens that you want used. This reduces the time consuming and tedious nature of having to measure out specific ingredients and filtering the beverage.

Kettle designs originated in the Victorian Era with kettles used to heat large amounts of water, but teakettles serving as a smaller, more decorative object that often had a small oil burner to maintain the heat of the water so that when the water was added to the teapot it was hot. Specific materials of kettle have changed from cast iron, copper, stainless steel, Bakelite plastic, ceramic, and glass, all for different aesthetic and functional purposes. Through the evolution of its design, kettles have always had to contain water without the water escaping through, yet strong enough so that the water pressure does not break the container. Most importantly, it must withstand high temperatures. Environmental analysis has also shown that stainless steel kettles have stronger durability and lower impact than plastic models. Kettles often use alloys like Nichrome to heat liquid and use plastic on lids and handles for insulation.

This fictional object merges multiple functions (boiler + spices + infusion system) into one. The playful interaction of choosing and inserting tokens provokes wonder and customization. Users can gain experiences of personalization, creativity, while staying convenient. However, those who deeply value the labor and hands-on process of traditional chai-making may feel excluded. Real values stay consistent with traditional chai making, like tradition, hospitality, cultural identity, and connection. However, some added real values with the redesign include modernization of a loved ritual and convenience. Fictional values include expression and a more playful magic tone. The aesthetic factor of a sleek and minimal design with traditional Indian pattern accents reinforces function while also inviting conversation about ritual and transformation. The design also has a collection of spice chips with vibrant warm tones that correspond to differing flavor profiles.

This object will be designed for individuals who make chai routinely but want more customization (as opposed to a pre-made spiced mix) and convenience. It will take the form of a modern and sleek kettle body, like electric kettles, with visible coin-slots for spice chips. The stainless-steel top and bottom has traditional patterned motifs, a glass body for viewing, reusable plastic chips, a colored plastic handles and a power button. The purpose is to transform plain water into a warm, individualized spiced chai, while reducing time and effort overall. It emphasizes convenience and tradition coexisting in a ritualistic process. The object will exist primarily in kitchens so it can act as a conversation piece in households.

## **References**

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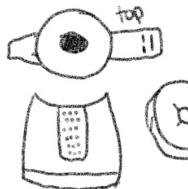
## Images



Current Object (No redesign)



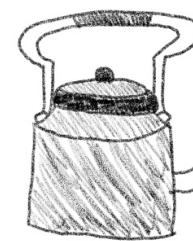
rough sketch



by parts



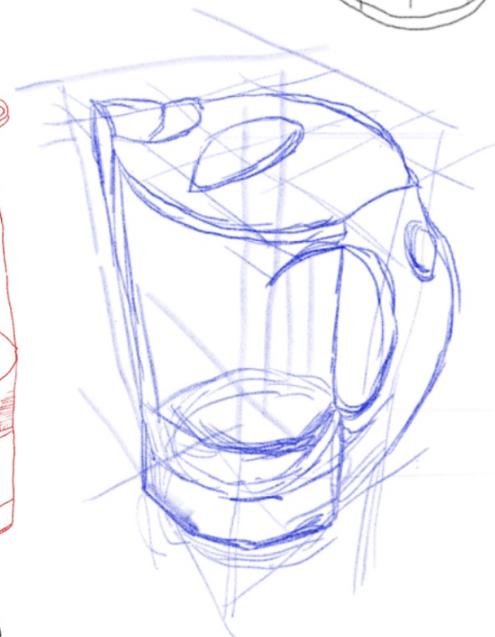
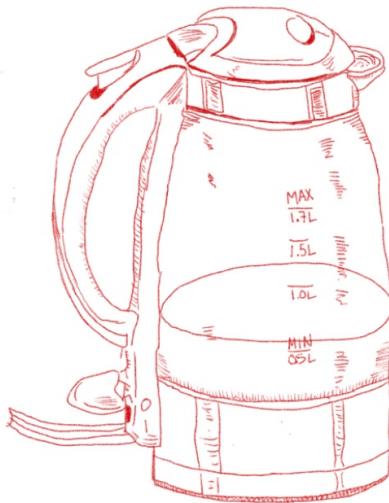
modern



traditional

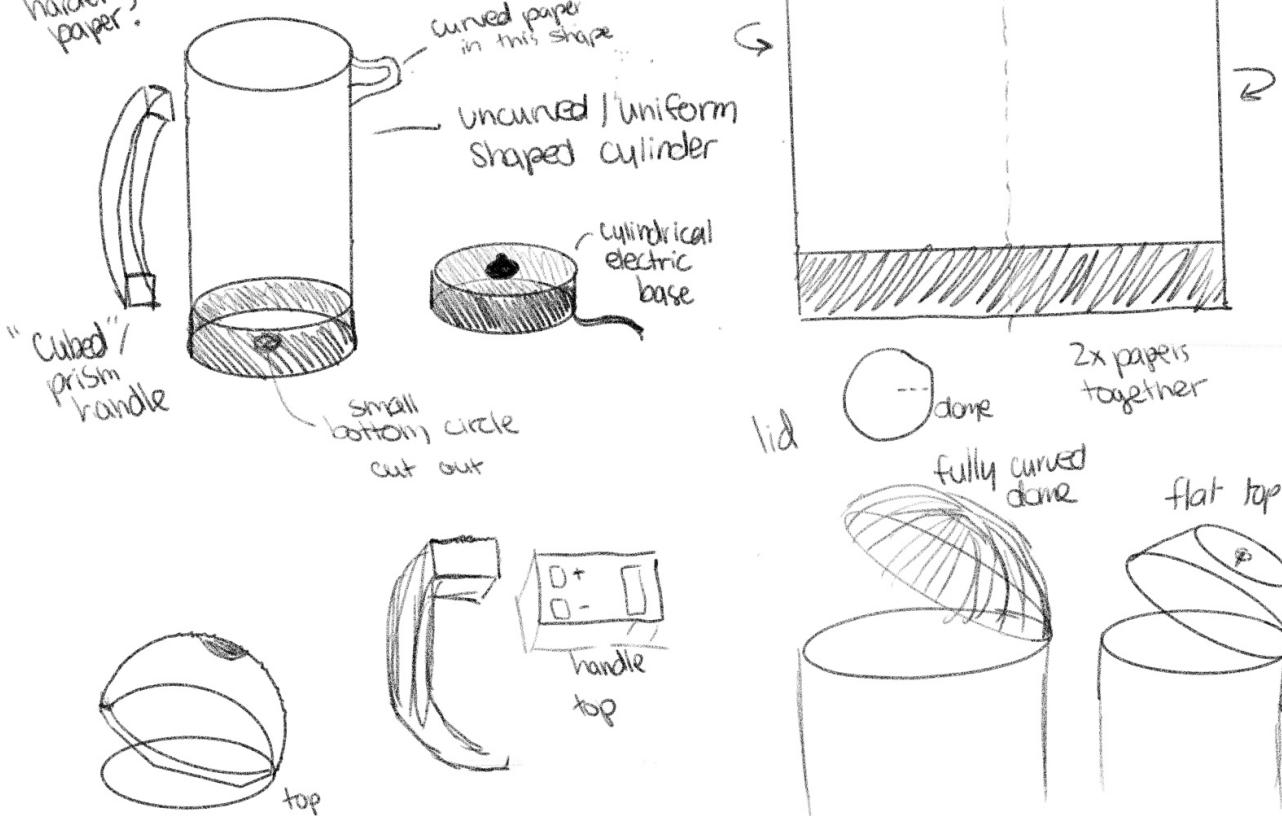


3D visuals



Paper prototype plan (not redesign version)

harder paper?



## Paper Prototype Images (No Redesign)



# Redesign - Spice Infused Kettle

