Hugo Alvar Henrik Aalto was a Finnish architect and designer, as well as a sculptor and painter. His work includes architecture, furniture, textiles and glassware.

[**Born**](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+born&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgzIHnxC7fq6-QblBhZZYdrKVfkFqfkFOKpAqKs7Ps0rKL8rT-zVt0Wnnmr5LN1ZOcHURkd_0bkMNAJvEzENAAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CLQBEOgTKAEwFA)**:**February 3, 1898, [Kuortane, Finland](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=kuortane+finland&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgx4HnxC7fq6-QblBhRIniGGcVJVrriWWnWylX5CaX5CTCqSKivPzrJLyi_IuX9llv7E_4_XDK-nXIwS6n9bw1EUCAEmhHz1LAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CLUBEJsTKAIwFA)

[**Died**](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+died&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgw4HnxC7fq6-QblBhZZ8drKVfkFqfkFOqn5KanJqYnFqSnxBalFxfp5VSmZqiq8260mZmmk1-85rsMhYBWjenn9UBQAe9yqpSQAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CLkBEOgTKAEwFQ)**:**May 11, 1976, [Helsinki, Finland](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=helsinki&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgxkHnxC7fq6-QblBhRIHiGGcnZGnJZ-dbKVfkJpfkJOqn5KanJpYnJoSX5BaVJyfZ5WSmZpiqWX3XeTZzWtXTgln1ryLy5s7g2sWAKWwsoJTAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CLoBEJsTKAIwFQ)

[**Education**](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+education&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgwYHnxC7fq6-QblBhZZ0drKVfkFqfkFOKpAqKs7Ps0pNKU1OLMnMz7u-Xjd9Ns9thl7PJ9E1e_Yeib7bkgIAmaajbEUAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CL4BEOgTKAEwFg)**:**[Helsinki University of Technology](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=aalto+university+school+of+science+and+technology&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgxEHnxC7fq6-QblBhRIHiJGeZZCmJZ2dbKVfkJpfkJMKpIqK8_OsUlNKkxNLMvPzlLmvMn6vfG0yg8c14E7eRyX7-9ObAG1-gNlPAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CL8BEJsTKAIwFg) (1916–1921)

[**Books**](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+books&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgzoHnxC7fq6-QblBhZZUdrKVflJ-frZ-YmlJRn6RFYhdrJCfl1NpNac3-EDOrEDNlxult-nPyfRqe38QALs6XBxEAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CMMBEOgTKAEwFw)**:**[Alvar Aalto](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+through+the+eyes+of+shigeru+ban&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgzEHnxC7fq6-QblBhRIXiJFUWFxSlKYllZ1spZ-Un5-tn1hakpFfZAViFyvk5-VUduaU33nVbnsx0eKdXuC0h4u6pvp_AACZG7AwUAAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CMQBEJsTKAIwFw), more

[**Spouse**](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=alvar+aalto+spouse&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgyoHnxC7fq6-QblBhZZEdrKVfkFqfkFOKpAqKs7PsyouyC8tTk1oNui53fK1YKJvkspW4bfR6gbr5wAA_UhKWEIAAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CM8BEOgTKAEwGA)**:**[Elissa Aalto](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=elissa+aalto&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgwEHnxC7fq6-QblBhRIniGGRlhZfoCWRnWylX5CaX5CTCqSKivPzrIoL8kuLUycuK79YE8jrf_7EnlvPfU9sYYiavxIArhqtJk0AAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CNABEJsTKAIwGA) (m. 1952–1976), [Aino Aalto](https://www.google.co.in/search?biw=1366&bih=600&q=aalto&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAGOovnz8BQMDgwEHnxC7fq6-QblBhRIniGFumGdmpiWRnWylX5CaX5CTCqSKivPzrIoL8kuLU5-vsa_Y8-5LgrL1W1n2R0I6h0q_JwEAfoQ6M00AAAA&sa=X&ei=bJ6IU-iNEY-hugTs6IGACA&ved=0CNEBEJsTKAMwGA) (m. 1925–1949)

**ugo Alvar Henrik Aalto** (3 February 1898 – 11 May 1976) was a Finnish architect and designer, as well as a sculptor and painter.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Chilvers-1) His work includes architecture, furniture, [textiles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textiles) and [glassware](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glassware). Aalto's early career runs in parallel with the rapid economic growth and industrialization of Finland during the first half of the twentieth century and many of his clients were industrialists; among these were the [Ahlström-Gullichsen family](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahlstr%C3%B6m-Gullichsen_family" \o "Ahlström-Gullichsen family).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Ahlstr.C3.B6m-2) The span of his career, from the 1920s to the 1970s, is reflected in the styles of his work, ranging from [Nordic Classicism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nordic_Classicism) of the early work, to a rational [International Style](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_style_(architecture)) Modernism during the 1930s to a more organic modernist style from the 1940s onwards. His furniture designs were considered [Scandinavian Modern](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Scandinavian_Modern&action=edit&redlink=1).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Boy-3) What is typical for his entire career, however, is a concern for design as a [Gesamtkunstwerk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gesamtkunstwerk" \o "Gesamtkunstwerk), a *total work of art*; whereby he – together with his first wife [Aino Aalto](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aino_Aalto" \o "Aino Aalto) – would design not just the building, but give special treatments to the interior surfaces and design furniture, lamps, and furnishings and glassware. The Alvar Aalto Museum, designed by Aalto himself, is located in what is regarded as his home city[Jyväskylä](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jyv%C3%A4skyl%C3%A4).[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-4)

Awards[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alvar_Aalto&action=edit&section=9" \o "Edit section: Awards)]

Aalto's awards included the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture from the [Royal Institute of British Architects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Institute_of_British_Architects) (1957) and the [Gold Medal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AIA_Gold_Medal) from the [American Institute of Architects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Institute_of_Architects)(1963). He was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the [American Academy of Arts and Sciences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Academy_of_Arts_and_Sciences) in 1957.[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-AAAS-27) He also was a member of the [Academy of Finland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academy_of_Finland), and was its president from 1963 to 1968. From 1925 to 1956 he was a member of the [Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congr%C3%A8s_International_d%27Architecture_Moderne" \o "Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne).[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-EB-8)

## Furniture career[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alvar_Aalto&action=edit&section=8" \o "Edit section: Furniture career)]

Whereas Aalto was famous for his architecture, his furniture designs were well thought of and are still popular today. He studied [Josef Hoffmann](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josef_Hoffmann) and the [Wiener Werkstätte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiener_Werkst%C3%A4tte), and for a period of time, worked under [Eliel Saarinen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliel_Saarinen" \o "Eliel Saarinen).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Boy-3) He also gained inspiration from [Gebrüder Thonet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gebr%C3%BCder_Thonet" \o "Gebrüder Thonet).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Boy-3) During the late 1920s and 1930s he, working closely with Aino Aalto, also focused a lot of his energy on furniture design, partly due to the decision to design much of the individual furniture pieces and lamps for the Paimio Sanatorium. Of particular significance was the experimentation in bent plywood chairs, most notably the so-called Paimio chair, which had been designed for the sitting tuberculosis patient. The Aaltos, together with visual arts promoter Maire Gullichsen and art historian Nils-Gustav Hahl founded the [Artek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artek_(company)" \o "Artek (company)) company in 1935,[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto" \l "cite_note-Brown-11) ostensibly to sell Aalto products, but also other imported products.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-26) He became the first furniture designer to use the cantilever principle in chair design using wood.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto#cite_note-Boy-3)

### Furniture and glassware[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alvar_Aalto&action=edit&section=12" \o "Edit section: Furniture and glassware)]

**Chairs**

* 1932: [Paimio Chair](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paimio_Chair" \o "Paimio Chair)
* 1933: Three-legged stacking Stool 60
* 1933: Four-legged Stool E60
* 1935-6: Armchair 404 (a/k/a/ Zebra Tank Chair)
* 1939: Armchair 406

**Lamps**

* 1954: Floor lamp A805
* 1959: Floor lamp A810

**Vases**

* 1936: [Aalto Vase](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Savoy_Vase)

Quotes[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alvar_Aalto&action=edit&section=13" \o "Edit section: Quotes)]

* "God created paper for the purpose of drawing architecture on it. Everything else is at least for me an abuse of paper." Alvar Aalto, *Sketches*, 1978, 104.
* "We should work for simple, good, undecorated things" and he continues, "but things which are in harmony with the human being and organically suited to the little man in the street." Alvar Aalto, speech in London 1957.

Memorials[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Alvar_Aalto&action=edit&section=15" \o "Edit section: Memorials)]

Aalto has been commemorated in a number of ways:

* Alvar Aalto is the [eponym](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eponym) of the [Alvar Aalto Medal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alvar_Aalto_Medal" \o "Alvar Aalto Medal), now considered one of world architecture's most prestigious awards.
* Aalto was featured in the 50 mk note in the last series of the [Finnish markka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_markka) (before its replacement by the [Euro](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euro) in 2002).
* The centenary of Aalto's birth in 1998 was marked in Finland not only by several books and exhibitions but also by the promotion of specially bottled red and white Aalto Wine and a specially-designed cup-cake.
* In the year of his death, 1976, Aalto was commemorated on a Finnish postage stamp.
* [Aalto University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aalto_University), a new Finnish university (an amalgamation of [Helsinki University of Technology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_University_of_Technology), [Helsinki School of Economics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_School_of_Economics) and [TaiK](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Art_and_Design_Helsinki" \o "University of Art and Design Helsinki)) established in 2010, is named after Alvar Aalto.
* An Alvar Aallon katu (Alvar Aalto Street) can be found in three different Finnish cities: Jyväskylä, Oulu and Seinäjoki.
* Alvar Aalto (1898-1976), one of the founders of Artek, was born in Kuortane, Finland. Alvar Aalto is recognized today as one of the great masters of modern architecture. During his long and prolific career, Aalto’s work embraced almost all key public institutions - town halls, theatres, churches, libraries and universities - as well as standardized housing and private homes.
* Aalto’s architecture is distinctively Finnish. It is marked by a warm humanity and strong individuality. His buildings derive their special aesthetic character from their dynamic relationship with their natural surroundings, their human scale, superbly executed details, unique treatment of materials and ingenious use of lighting. Like all great art, however, Aalto’s architecture transcends national boundaries. His work is not the exclusive property of Finland: it forms a part of a common cultural heritage of European and worldwide significance.
* Alvar Aalto began designing furnishings as a natural and important extension of his architectural thinking. His first modern piece of furniture was created in 1931-32 for the Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Paimio, which proved to be his international breakthrough. Artek was set up in 1935 to market and sell Alvar and Aino Aalto's furniture, lamps and textiles, particularly on international markets where Artek focused its operations from the initial stages.
* Through the innovations in form and line that were born in his furniture designs, Alvar Aalto’s name has also become important in the history of design. In fact, Aalto first achieved fame in Continental Europe as a furniture designer, and only later on as an architect. His contribution to furniture design was among his foremost achievements in its own right, and it sowed the seed from which many of his architectural ideas sprang forth. Alvar Aalto’s furniture and lighting pieces form the basis of the Artek range.

**Born in 1898 Kuotane, Finland  
Died in 1976, Finland**

. studied Architecture between 1916-1921 at the Technical University of Helsinki,  
. opened his first architectural office in Jyväskylä in 1923,   
. married the designer, Aino Marsio in 1924,   
. experimented the bending of wood with Aino Marsio for five years,  
. established an experimental plywood workshop in Turku in 1929 with Otto Korhonen,  
. started to produce his innovative plywood chairs in the1930s, and create a new trend in use of plywood,  
. built Paimio Sanatorium in Turku in 1930s,  
. designed the Villa Mairea, one of the most admired buildigns of modern architecture with his  perception of organic links between people, nature and buildings,  
. founded Artek, a furniture design company in 1935 with his colleagues Harry and Marie Gullichsen,  
. his design philosophy was influenced by nature and organic materials, unlike other furniture of the same period with materials as tubular steel, which were quite modern at the time,   
. designed vases with curvilinear bases and straight sides for Savoy Restaurant – Turku in 1937 which produced in Iittala glass works,  
. with his innovative designs and natural forms he changed the course of design towards organic Modernism,   
. his ideas had a strong influence on designers of the period such as Charles and Ray Eames,  
. the beauty of his work is hidden in his design approach of Functionalism but with a strong connection to the organic relationship between man, nature and buildings. He coordinated those three components and created a synthesis of life in materialized form,  
. designed in very different scales, buildings, town plans, furniture, glassware, jewellery and other forms of art,  
. the city Jyväskylä is associated with his name, contains more of his buildings than any other city. 37 of his 70 designs for the city have been realized.

Member of Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne in 1928,  
Awarded with gold medal by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 1957.

**exhibitions:**