



Armchair model no. 31  
Alvar Aalto  
1930

Laminated birch bentwood frame. Plywood and laminated birch forming seat and back.

Ref. 1010412

Armchair model no. 31, designed in 1931/32 by Alvar Aalto.

The chair was first presented in the spring of 1932 when Aalto showed his proposal for the interior design of the Paimio Sanatorium. The common rooms of the sanatorium were furnished with cheerful coloured chairs, among others the armchair no.31. As the story goes, the shape of the chair was designed to assist the patients' breathing. In 1933, the model no. 31 was shown in London as part of the 'Wood Only' exhibition. Here, Aalto introduced new versions of the Paimio chairs, such as an upholstered version. Gaining international attention after the exhibition in London, the armchair was shown in the years to follow at several international exhibitions. One of which the Triennale di Milano, 1936.

Later, this chair has been referred to as model no. 42, or 'Small Paimio', referring to the Paimio Sanatorium where it was first used. There is no difference between model 31 and 42. However, the model 42 is still in production today by Artek, and the production of model 31 discontinued. The earliest production models of the no. 31 have sides (armrests) made out of beech, this later changed into birch.

Literature: Tuukkanen, Pirkko, Alvar Aalto: Designer, Vammala (Alvar Aalto Foundation) 2002.

p. 34/35: Detail of 'Cantilever Chair', 1932.  
p. 74-76: Information about Paimio Sanatorium  
p. 79: Armchair model no. 31 on show in 1933,  
'Wood Only' exhibition in London  
p. 166: Catalogue Oy. Huonekalu-ja-Rakennustyötehdas

Illustrated in Alvar Aalto Designer, Alvar Aalto  
Museum, p. 166.

Produced by Huonekalu-ja Rakennustyötehdas Oy  
Turku

H.65cm/25.6" W.60cm/23.6" D.66cm/26.0"  
Seat height 36cm/14.2" Arm height 52cm/20.5"



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