



Sneaker Design 101

@ Centennial
Academy





What do you see? Think? and Wonder?



Introduction

This elementary/middle school level shoe design course is centered around "design thinking".

This introduces students to the process of creative problem-solving. Students explore the world of footwear by learning about various types of shoes, materials, and basic design principles. They are encouraged to think like designers by identifying problems, brainstorming ideas, creating prototypes, and testing their designs.

Through hands-on activities and projects, students develop empathy, critical thinking, and innovation skills while designing shoes that are not only stylish but also functional and comfortable. This course fosters a holistic approach to design, teaching young minds to tackle challenges in a thoughtful and imaginative way.





Project overview

Scholars will learn the history of sneaker culture, and the ways it came to grow into a global phenomenon. Next, we will focus on "Design Thinking" and the functionality of various sneaker styles.

There are also many types of textiles and materials that can be used in creating the sneaker of your choosing. Scholars will have the chance to create small prototypes made of Model Magic Clay, and have the opportunity to 3-d print their prototypes.

The final step of the project will award the best designs to be produced and worn for all to see!



Objectives



1

EMPATHIZE,
DEFINE &
UNDERSTAND

2

IDEATE,
PROTOTYPE &
EXPLORE



3

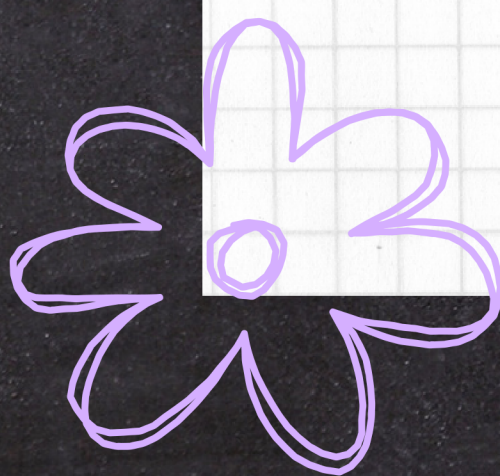
TEST,
IMPLEMENT &
MATERIALIZE

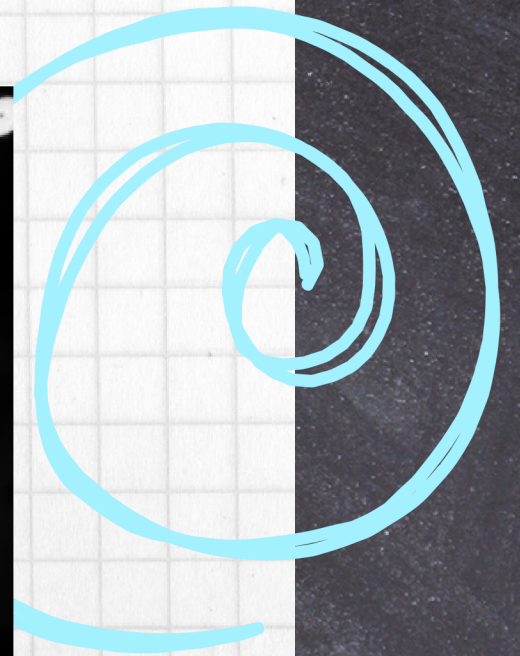
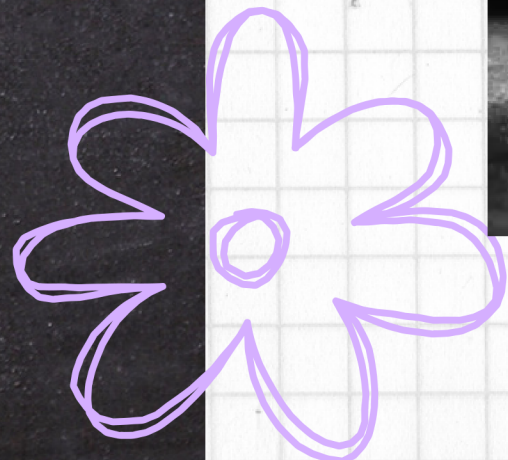


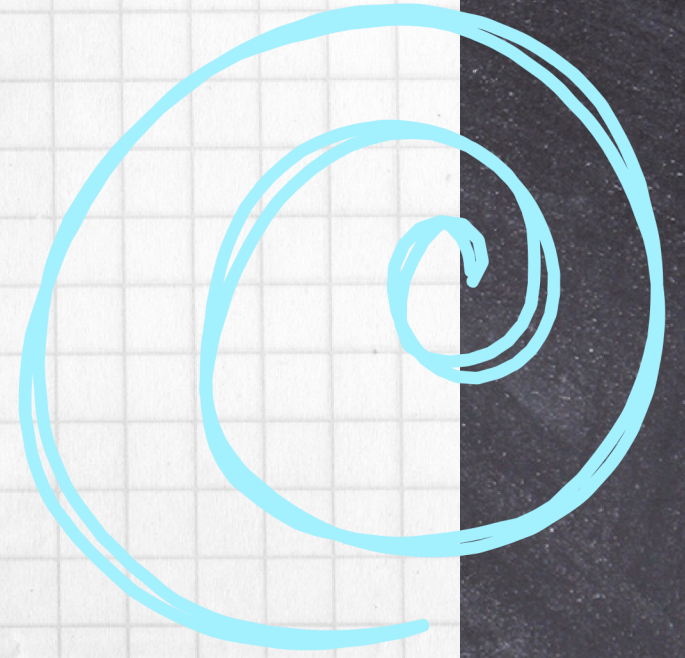
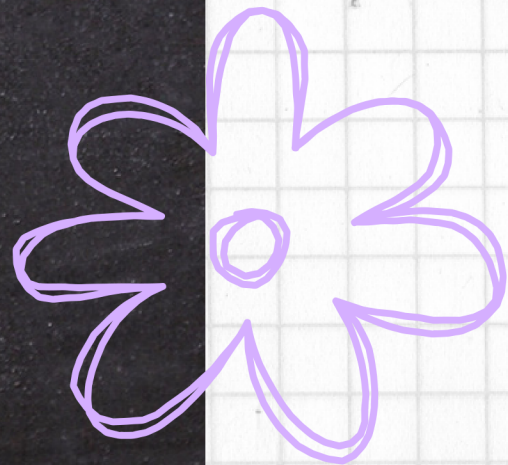
Sneaker Culture History

It started in the 1970s, when NBA scouts were turning their attention to street basketball players, and street style was coming into focus as a result. Breakdancing and hip-hop were budding forms of art. It was a moment undoubtedly driven by Black culture in America.

"All of this intertwining of basketball, hip-hop and sneakers really started in the 1970s, and it's also there that Black culture is infusing sneakers with a desirable sense of cool that starts to get capitalized on by companies like Puma, Adidas and Nike."



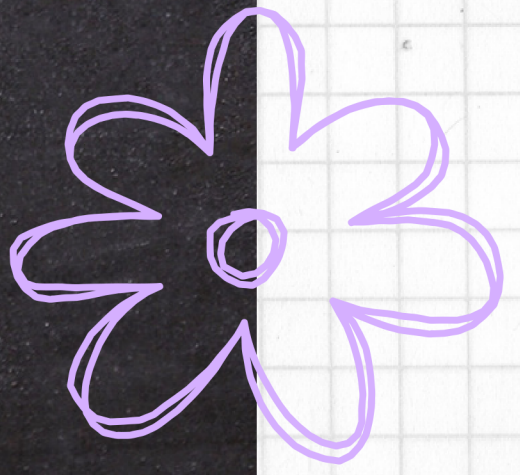


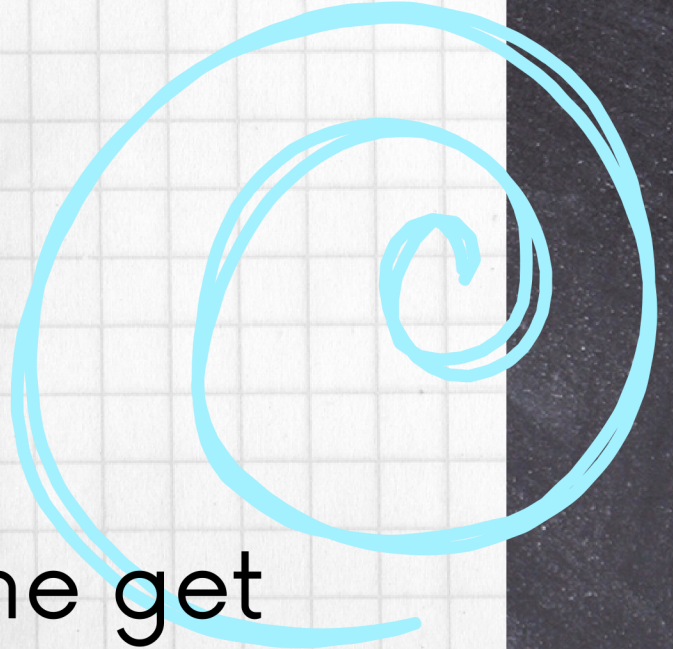





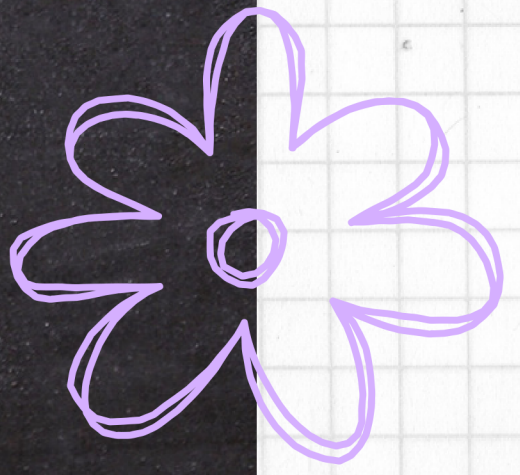
You might immediately assume that Michael Jordan started it all with his iconic Air Jordans.

It's not entirely wrong – the brand was the beginning of sneaker culture's ascent to the top. Before there was Jordan, there was a lesser known player named Walt Frazier of the New York Knicks. He collaborated with Puma to make a shoe that came in buttery suede and rich colors.





The Puma's were advertised right from the get go as something you could wear to play basketball or as a form of fashion. Frazier was known as a well-dressed celebrity and helped bring fashion and sportswear together.

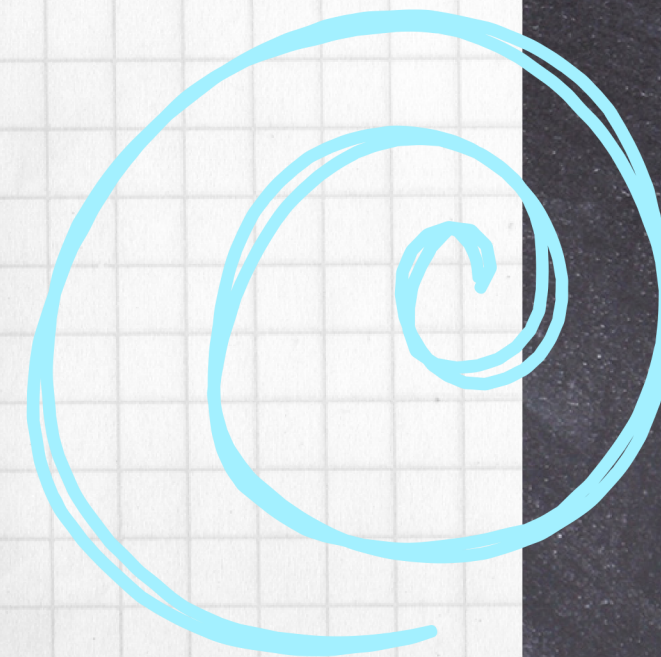


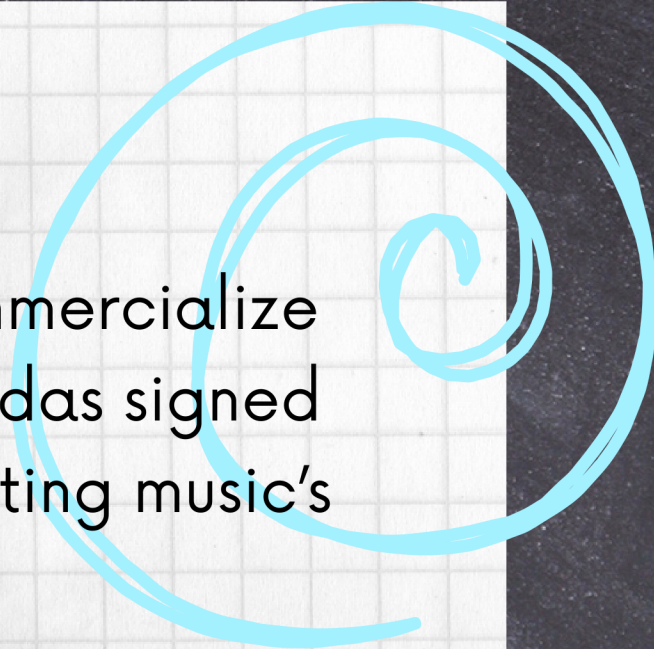

Clyde

Walt "Clyde" Frazier

Clydes. The essence of cool.
Inspired by basketball legend Walt Frazier, these suedes let you play it cool, both on and off the court. And the choice of color combinations is virtually endless.


PUMA
Our word for quality.





By the 80s, the culture behind sneakers started to further commercialize worldwide. Nike signed with Michael Jordan in 1985, and Adidas signed with the hip-hop group Run-DMC in the same decade, cementing music's relationship with basketball footwear.

It was around this time that the concept of exclusivity in sneakers came to be. Young people wanted to find ways to stand out, so they started to look for "dead stock," Semmelhack says. That means they went to shoe stores searching for older, more obscure sneakers in warehouses and backrooms that might have never sold in an attempt to find something no one else was wearing.

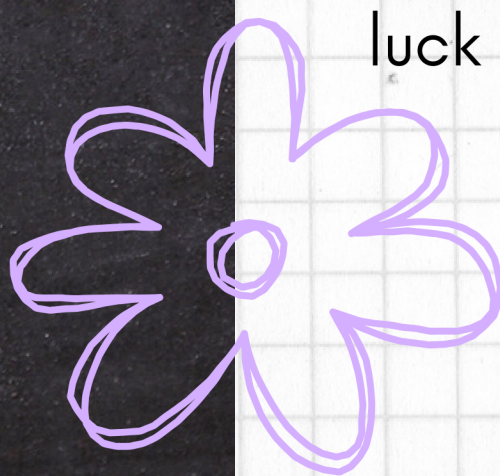


Shops began to offer rare and in-demand sneakers by the 90s, and the advent of the internet meant entrepreneurial individuals were beginning to make a business out of reselling shoes.

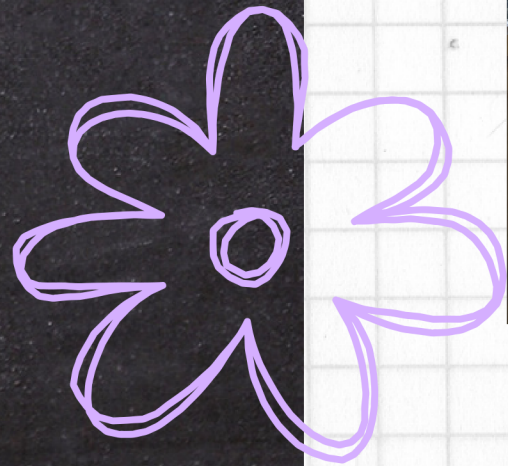


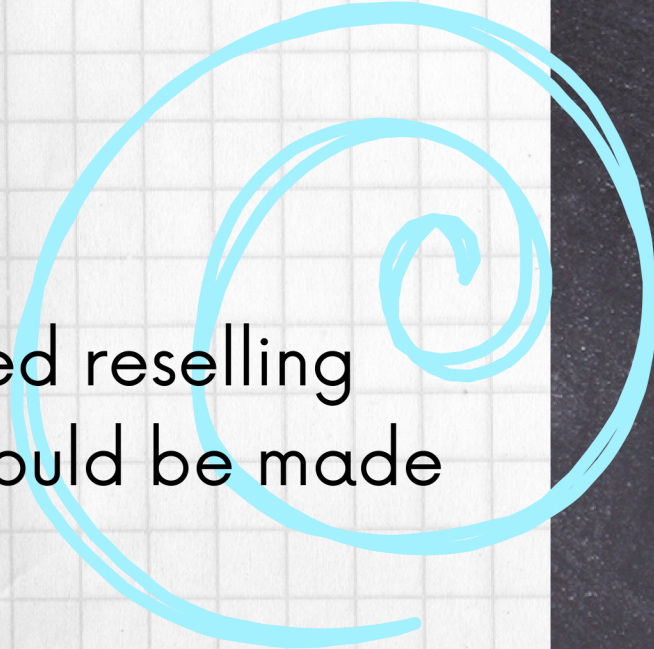
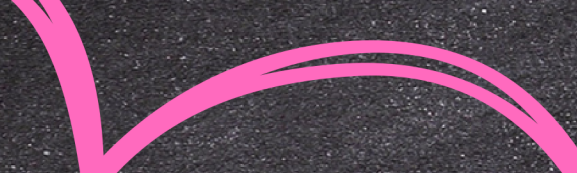
2010 is when sneaker e-commerce really started to take off, and it all had to do with the launch of Instagram and social media's emphasis on images.

"Instagram in particular started to change the communication dynamics away from blogs and toward people taking photos of their shoes and styling them. Now it wasn't just the media outlets showing shoes, it became more of a community. Prior to that ... the hardcore aficionado nerds were on text forums, but as soon as Facebook and Instagram got rolling, it went to a wider audience.

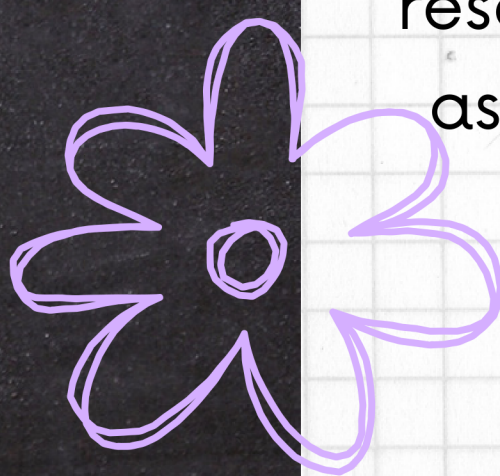


Still, there weren't many options for buying limited-run sneakers. You could try your luck on eBay auctions or you could travel to legendary brick-and-mortar shoes stores like Flight Club in New York and Los Angeles.

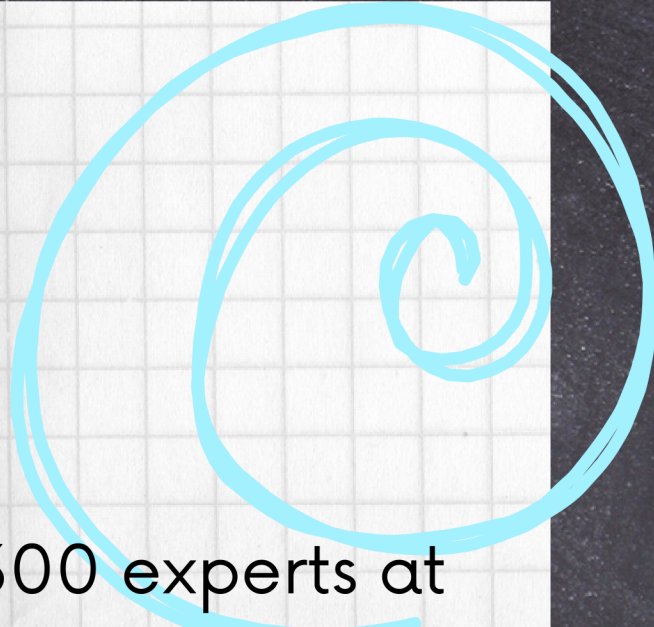





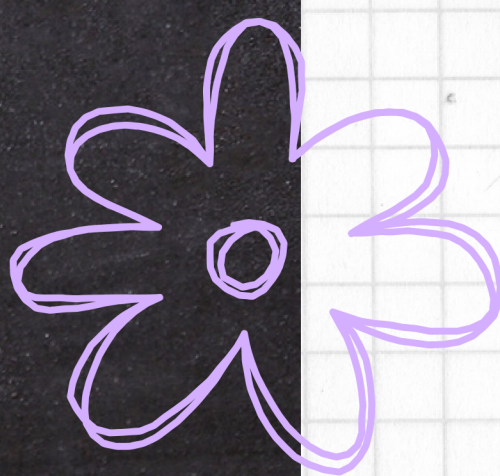
When venture capital money started flowing to dedicated reselling platforms in the mid-2010s, there was a belief big money could be made by facilitating the sale of rare shoes.



One of those companies is Detroit-based StockX. Since its launch in 2016, StockX has become one of the biggest reselling websites in the world with more than 37 million trades facilitated and hundreds of millions of site visits per year. Greg Schwartz, chief operating officer and co-founder of the company, says StockX's goal is to bring a sense of confidence into the reselling market. Many people involved in sneakers look at their purchase as an investment, and Schwartz wanted people to be able to trust what they were buying.



StockX sought to build that trust through a robust team of 300 experts at authentication centres around the world (including one in the Toronto area) who verify that each item is real. The company authenticates 1 million products monthly (they also sell non-sneaker items like sports memorabilia and other forms of streetwear), and in 2022 alone they've rejected nearly 300,000 products, which equates to US\$80-million dollars worth of goods.

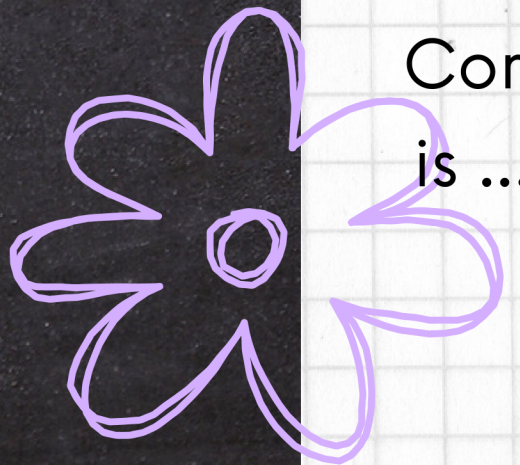




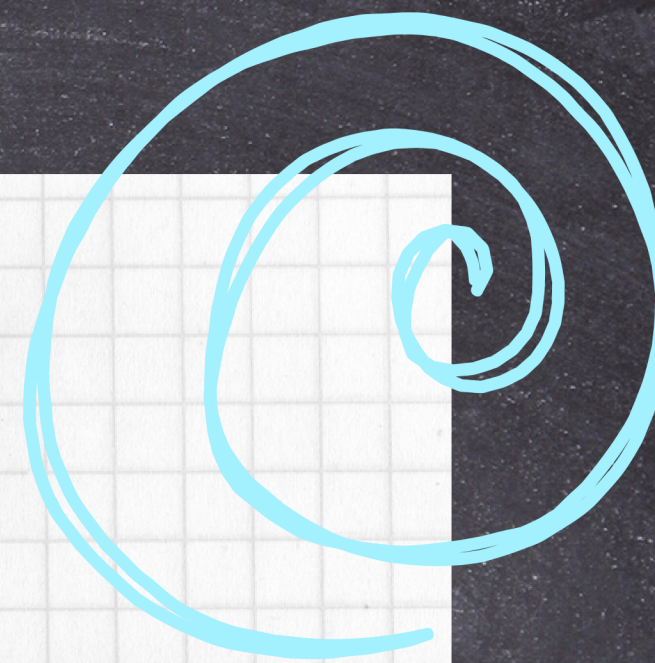
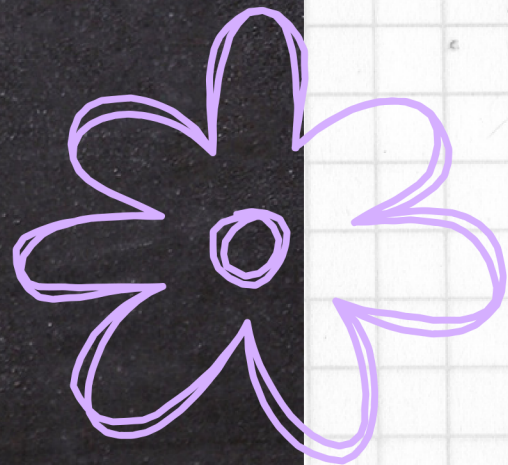
What's in it for the shoe brands themselves?

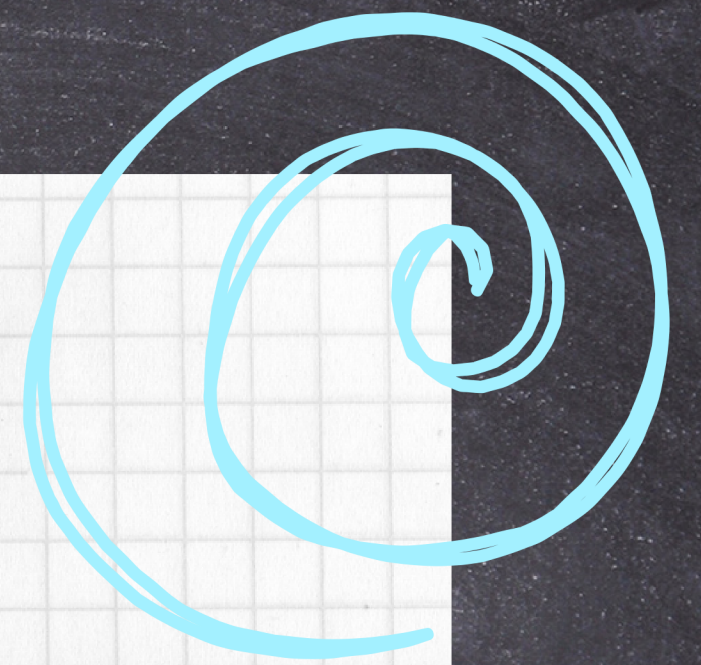
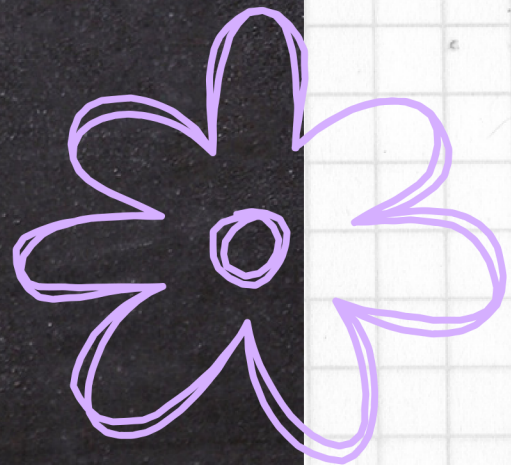
On one hand, Wood says you could argue there's no benefit. After all, Nike or Adidas will sell their sneakers for around \$200, only for resellers to make obscene profits.

There are two ways that shoe companies benefit from this system. The first is that the frenzy created from limited quantities of shoes is a fantastic form of marketing.



Companies might only be selling these for 200 dollars each or whatever it is ... but it's doing a lot of advertising work for that company that initiated the shoe.





LIL PENNY POSITIVE

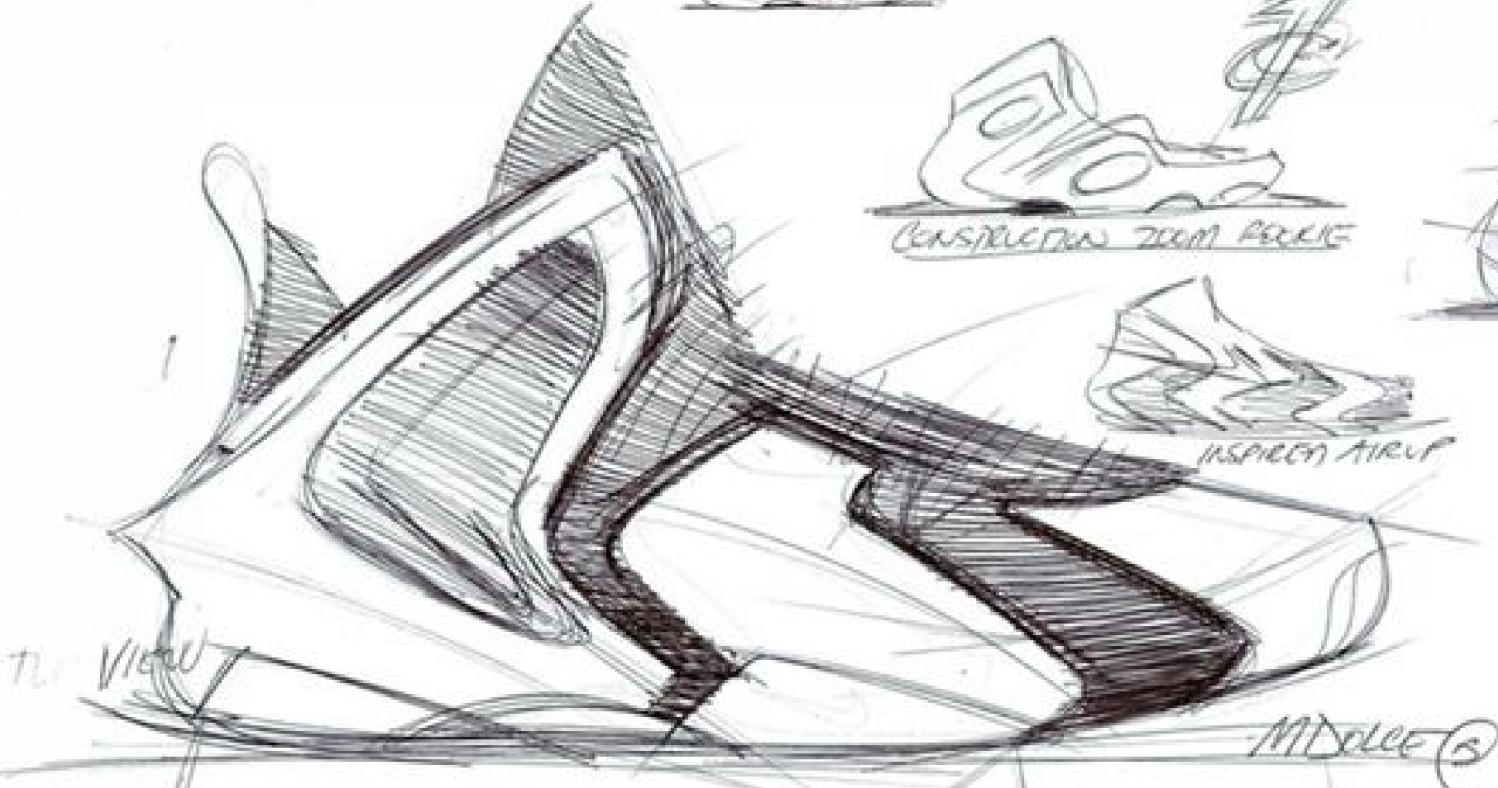


CONSTRUCTION ZOOM POSITIVE



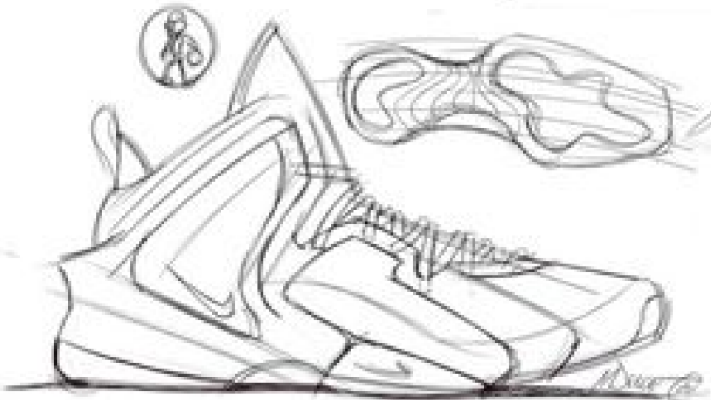
INSPIRED AIR UP

LIL PENNY POSITIVE

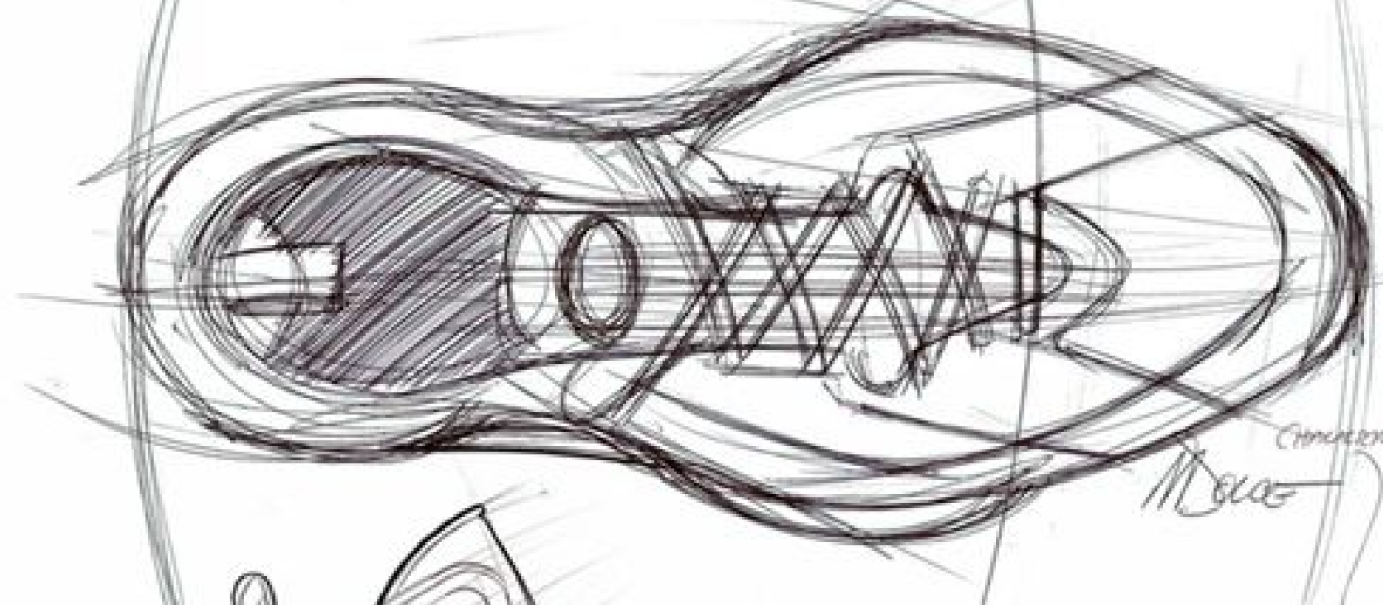


TV VIEW

MIDDLE 6



LIL PENNY POSITIVE

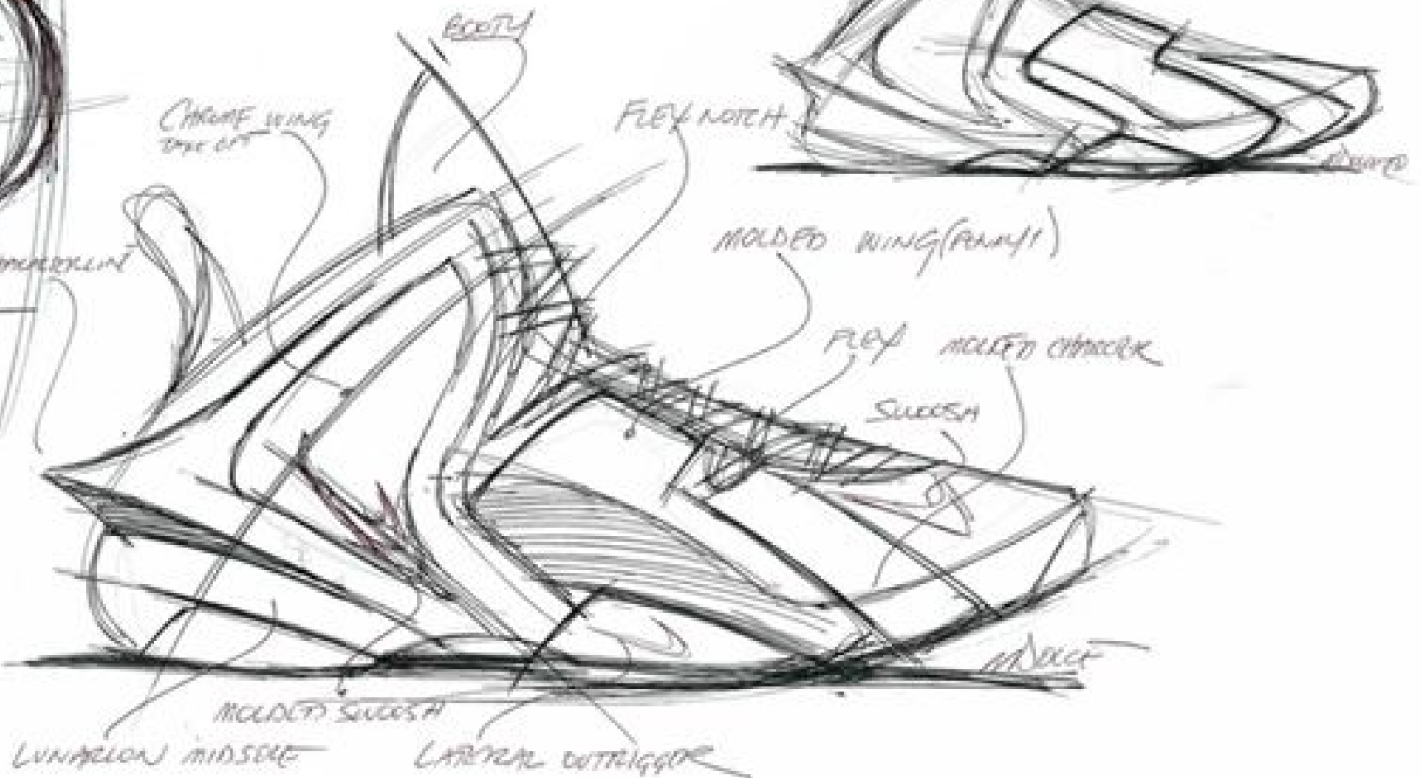


MIDDLE 6

CONSTRUCTION



MIDDLE 6



CHROME WING
TYPE 01

BOOTY

FLEX NOTCH

MOLDED WING (PANTS)

FLEX MOLDED CHOCK

SUOOSH

MOLDED SUOOSH

LUNARLON MIDSOLE

LATERAL OUTRIGGER