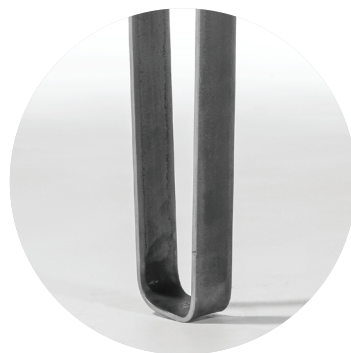
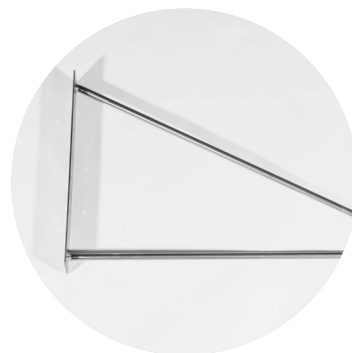




TAKE A STAND

Hairpin legs are adaptable, affordable, and require only a drill to install. Find out how to add style to modern-day projects with these midcentury staples (and where to buy them).

PROJECTS **CATHY KRAMER** PHOTOGRAPHS **JAY WILDE** WORDS **KELLY ROBERSON**





HISTORY LESSON! CONFRONTED WITH A LACK OF MATERIALS DURING THE 1940S, DESIGNER HENRY P. GLASS TOOK A HUNDREDS-YEAR-OLD BEAUTY IMPLEMENT—THE HAIRPIN—AND TRANSFORMED IT INTO A MINIMALIST SUPPORT FOR TABLES AND CHAIRS.



PINNED PERFECTION

The sleek style of hairpin legs is a diversion from the engineering artistry that enables them to bear heavy loads. This weighty wine storage unit—a reclaimed mail sorting station refreshed with spray paint—perches atop four slender supports.

For a pop of color, paint hairpin legs in a bold accent—here, an arresting turquoise. Finish with clear polyurethane.

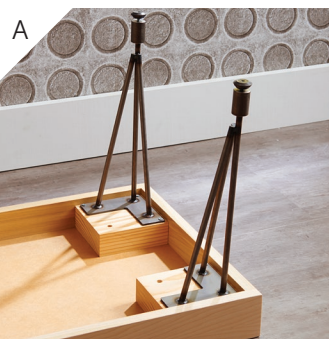
Cost: Four 12-inch legs, \$16 each; hairpinlegs.com

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT B-12 Hairpin Leg, starting at \$27–\$49; hairpinlegsforless.com. Hairpin Leg, \$14–\$18 (raw steel), \$20–\$30 (stainless); hairpinlegs.com. Solid Copper Hairpin Legs (set of four), \$156–\$315; railis.etsy.com. Galaxy Hairpin Leg, starting at \$25–\$40; hairpinlegsforless.com. Paperclip Hairpin Leg, starting at \$99–\$150; hairpinlegsforless.com. Four Quarter Leg, \$28–\$29; hairpinlegs.com. Venus Hairpin Leg, starting at \$17–\$24; hairpinlegsforless.com. Three Rod Hairpin Leg, \$21–\$28 (raw steel), \$30–\$35 (stainless); hairpinlegs.com. 24 Karat Gold Hairpin Legs, starting at \$250–\$275; hairpinlegsforless.com.



FINISH STRONG

RAW STEEL LEGS WILL RUST IF LEFT UNTREATED. PAINT THE LEGS, OR SEAL THEM WITH CLEAR POLYURETHANE OR WAX TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE STEEL. STAINLESS-STEEL LEGS WON'T RUST, BUT COST MORE.



STYLE CRED

There's no bulk to hairpin legs—that's part of their cleverness—and the supports can be even slimmer when the column numbers increase. These three-rod legs also feature leveling feet that compensate for any unevenness in the floor. For this bench, cut a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick piece of medium-density fiberboard (MDF) to 18×48 inches for the seat. Also from $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick MDF, cut the side aprons—two at $2\frac{1}{4}$ ×49 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches and two at $2\frac{1}{4}$ ×16 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Screw the aprons to the seat. Cut maple veneer to cover each of the sides and the seat; adhere using wood glue and apply a coat of clear polyurethane. To attach legs, install 5×5×2-inch wood blocks on the underside corners of the bench. Screw the legs to the blocks (A).
Cost: Four 16-inch-long legs with leveling foot, \$28.50 each; *hairpinlegs.com*

WHAT'S YOUR TYPE? HAIRPIN LEGS
COME IN A VARIETY OF SHAPES (CIRCULAR, FLATTENED),
CONSTRUCTIONS (SOME WITH MORE THAN TWO RODS),
AS WELL AS A RANGE OF LENGTHS AND WIDTHS.



LIFT OFF

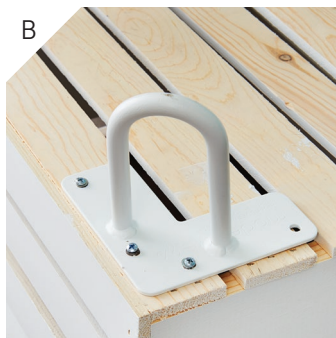
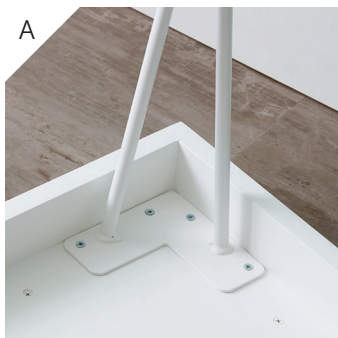
Hairpin legs elevate the ordinary when attached to purchased crates and a DIY tabletop. To build the table, cut 18×48-inch and 14½×44½-inch pieces from ¾-inch-thick MDF. Cut four more pieces from the MDF—two 14½×3 inches, two 46×3 inches—for an apron. Secure

the apron pieces to the smaller rectangle, butting the edges. The base should measure 46×16 inches once assembled. Center and attach the tabletop by screwing up from the bottom. Attach the hairpin legs to the inside corners of the apron (A). Prime and spray-paint the entire piece; let dry and seal with clear polyurethane.

To make the storage pieces, simply spray-paint purchased crates and legs, let dry, seal with clear polyurethane, and attach the legs (B).

Cost: Four 28-inch-long, ½-inch-wide twisted hairpin legs, \$21 each (table). Eight 4-inch-long, ½-inch-wide hairpin legs, \$14 each (crate);

modernlegs.com



WEIGHTY MATTER

IF HAIRPIN LEGS ARE GOING TO SUPPORT SOMETHING THAT'S TALL OR HEAVY, THEY NEED TO BE AT LEAST ½ INCH THICK. CONSULT MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS.



UP, UP, UP & AWAY

With a narrow profile and varying heights, hairpin legs make stacked shelves a time-smart way to boost storage. This unit relies on only eight legs, thanks to a cantilevered structure that's secured to the wall with slim L brackets.

To create the bottom shelves, join two 48×6×1-inch cedar planks with mending plates.

The third shelf is a single 48×6×1-inch plank, and the top one is a 36×6×1-inch plank. Stain shelves to desired color; let dry. Fasten a leg to the front corner of each shelf. Attach the bottom shelf to the wall first, driving L brackets into studs. Stack and repeat with remaining shelves.

Cost: Two 16-inch-tall square bar legs, \$18 each; six 10-inch-tall square bar legs, \$16.50 each; modernlegs.com





RETRO REDO

A staple of midcentury modern design—think Case Study furniture—the hairpin leg hasn't been immune to reinvention. The essential hairpin has been recast, with flat columns or inventive curves and angles. Three such legs—with tips bent to an interesting 90 degrees—turn a shapely cross section of a tree trunk into a live-edge table that looks like it was purchased from a high-end retailer. (If you don't have access to a fallen tree and a chain saw, search eBay or Craigslist for live-edge tree slices.) Apply a coat of clear polyurethane to the wood slice and the legs; let dry. Space the legs equidistant from each other on the underside of the tabletop when installing.
Cost: Three 14-inch-long, ½-inch-wide legs, \$18.50 each; modernlegs.com

FOR RESOURCES SEE PAGE 110.

GREAT LEGS!

Check out some of our favorite hairpin options and where to get them.

①

HAIRPINLEGS.COM

Find a great selection of classic shapes in a variety of sizes made from both raw and stainless steel.

②

MODERNLEGS.COM

Handmade from steel upon your order, these legs come in unique shapes, including a twist and flattened tip style.

③

HAIRPINLEGSFORLESS.COM

This is the go-to source for legs in punchy colors, 24 karat gold, and brass. They also offer hairpin-style pedestal bases for dining and accent tables.

④

RAILIS.ETSY.COM

We dig copper, and this shop has it! Choose from a variety of sizes.