



Press release

12 June 2024
Älmhult, Sweden

Space key on display at IKEA Museum

After 22 days in outer space, the IKEA Allen key will soon be landing in Älmhult. On 14 June, ESA astronaut Marcus Wandt will be coming to IKEA Museum to hand over the well-travelled tool.

Astronaut Marcus Wandt decided to take an IKEA Allen key with him when he went to the International Space Station, ISS. The IKEA Allen key was with him on launch on 18 January, and when the capsule returned to Earth off the Florida coast on 9 February.

By tradition, the astronauts on the ISS bring a few objects linked to themselves and their homeland in their luggage. Marcus Wandt knew that he wanted something from IKEA to represent Sweden in outer space.

“IKEA is like a little island of Sweden in virtually any country you visit. So I wanted to bring something with me that symbolises IKEA, and create another little Swedish island in outer space. And for me, the most distinctive symbol, apart from the yellow and blue logo, is the Allen key. My father also grew up in Älmhult, so I spent a lot of time there at my grandparents’ house when I was growing up.”

Over the years, the Allen key has also become a clear symbol for flatpacks, which also have a link to the ISS. Just like at IKEA, all the furniture is sent up in flatpacks and assembled on site – and a certain Allen key is one of the tools that’s used.

IKEA did not invent the Allen key, but the brand could see its huge potential back in the 1960s. A small tool with immense power that can be used to screw together an entire piece of furniture. The Allen key and the flatpacks are what makes it possible to keep prices down without compromising on design, quality or function. And of course IKEA has always relished the challenge of furnishing small spaces – the brand has previously taken inspiration from space travel and space stations, where limited space has had to be optimised as far as possible.

IKEA Museum opened in 2016 and features the exhibition The Story of IKEA – Past, Present & Future. IKEA Museum is located in the original building of the first IKEA store, which opened in 1958 in Älmhult, Sweden. IKEA Museum features a main exhibition divided into four sections: Our Roots, Democratic Design, Hej Ingvar! and IKEA Through the Ages. The museum also includes several temporary exhibitions, as well as a restaurant and a shop.



Museum

“We think it’s great that Marcus Wandt has highlighted the link between flatpicks and small space living, by taking an IKEA Allen key with him into outer space,” says Sofia Lögdberg, Archive & Collection Manager at IKEA Museum.

On 14 June, the Allen key will land at IKEA Museum in Älmhult, Sweden, where Marcus Wandt will personally hand over the well-travelled tool along with a certificate. The space key will then become part of the museum’s permanent exhibition.

“IKEA Museum is based on stories of people, products, evolution, interactions and events. The Allen key holds a vital place in the story of IKEA, and this particular one has a very special story to tell,” says Sofia Lögdberg.

Allen key in space

When: Friday 14 June 14:00–15:00

Where: IKEA Museum, [Ikeagatan 5, Älmhult](#)

How: Fika and conversation with ESA astronaut Marcus Wandt and Emelie Knoester, Manager Home Furnishing Areas, IKEA of Sweden

In January 2024, Marcus Wandt became the third Swede in space when he travelled to the International Space Station, ISS, to conduct research into weightlessness. The trip was a collaboration between the Swedish National Space Agency, the European Space Agency (ESA), American space companies Axiom Space and Space X, and NASA – the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

The European Space Agency (ESA) is Europe’s gateway to space. Its mission is to shape the development of Europe’s space capability and ensure that investment in space continues to deliver benefits to the citizens of Europe and the world.

[European Space Agency \(esa.int\)](https://www.esa.int)

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