



# The Evolution of Useful Things: How Everyday Artifacts-From Forks and Pins to Paper Clips and Zippers-Came to be as They are

*Henry Petroski*

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## **The Evolution of Useful Things: How Everyday Artifacts-From Forks and Pins to Paper Clips and Zippers-Came to be as They are** Henry Petroski

How did the table fork acquire a fourth tine? What advantage does the Phillips-head screw have over its single-grooved predecessor? Why does the paper clip look the way it does? What makes Scotch tape Scotch?

In this delightful book Henry, Petroski takes a microscopic look at artifacts that most of us count on but rarely contemplate, including such icons of the everyday as pins, Post-its, and fast-food "clamshell" containers. At the same time, he offers a convincing new theory of technological innovation as a response to the perceived failures of existing products—suggesting that irritation, and not necessity, is the mother of invention.

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