



Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad dies aged 91

Company says man who founded firm in 1943 aged 91 died peacefully at home in Sweden.

The company said Kamprad, whom it described as “one of the greatest entrepreneurs of the 20th century”, had “peacefully passed away at his home” on Saturday.

Born on March 30, 1926, in southern Sweden, Kamprad started off selling matches to neighbours at the age of five and soon diversified his inventory to include seeds, Christmas tree decorations, pencils and ball-point pens.

Kamprad founded Ikea in the 1940s at the age of 17, and built it into one of the world’s best-known retailers. The name was composed from his own initials and those of the places in the Swedish countryside where he grew up. He got the idea when he watched an employee taking the legs off a table to fit it into a customer’s car and realized that it could be developed to save money on transport, storage and sales space.

Known for its functional, flatpack furniture – such as Billy shelves and Malm chests of drawers – that has to be assembled by customers, Ikea became the world’s largest furniture chain, with 412 stores across 49 countries.

The Swedish prime minister, Stefan Löfven, said Kamprad was “a unique entrepreneur ... who made interior decorating accessible for the many, not just a few”.

Kamprad had not been involved in running Ikea since 1988, but had been acting as an adviser. In 2013 he stepped down from the board of Inter Ikea, and his youngest son became chairman.

He was forced to apologize for his time as a member of the New Swedish Movement, a nationalist, far-right group that supported fascist parties around Europe, in the 1940s.

His decision to live abroad, mainly in Switzerland, to avoid Sweden’s high income taxes was also widely criticized.

His sons -- Peter, Jonas and Mathias -- still sit on the boards of various IKEA entities, but the family is no longer at the helm.

Kamprad was estimated to have accumulated a fortune of 610bn Swedish kronor (£54bn) by 2016, according to Swedish media reports, which would make him one of the world’s richest people.

Kamprad was married twice. In 1973 he moved to Denmark, before seeking to lower his tax bill by moving to Switzerland. He returned to live in Sweden in 2014.

“He worked until the very end of his life, staying true to his own motto that most things remain to be done.” - the company said.

Task 1: How many tenses do you recognise in the text? Complete the chart:

Present Simple	Past Simple	Past Perfect	Conditionals	Passive
Kamprad dies aged 97				

Task 2: Change the sentences from passive to active voice:

The name was composed from his own initials:

.....

His decision to avoid Sweden's high income taxes was also widely criticized.

.....

Kamprad was estimated to have accumulated a fortune of 610bn Swedish kronor (£54bn) by 2016, according to Swedish media reports.

.....

Task 3: True or false?

1. At the age of five Kamprad was selling machines to neighbours.
2. He diversified his inventory two years later.
3. He founded IKEA at the age of seventy.
4. His first aim was to to save money on transport, storage and sales space.
5. Ikea became the world's largest furniture chain.
6. He didn't live in Sweden until his death.
7. Their children are still working for the company.

