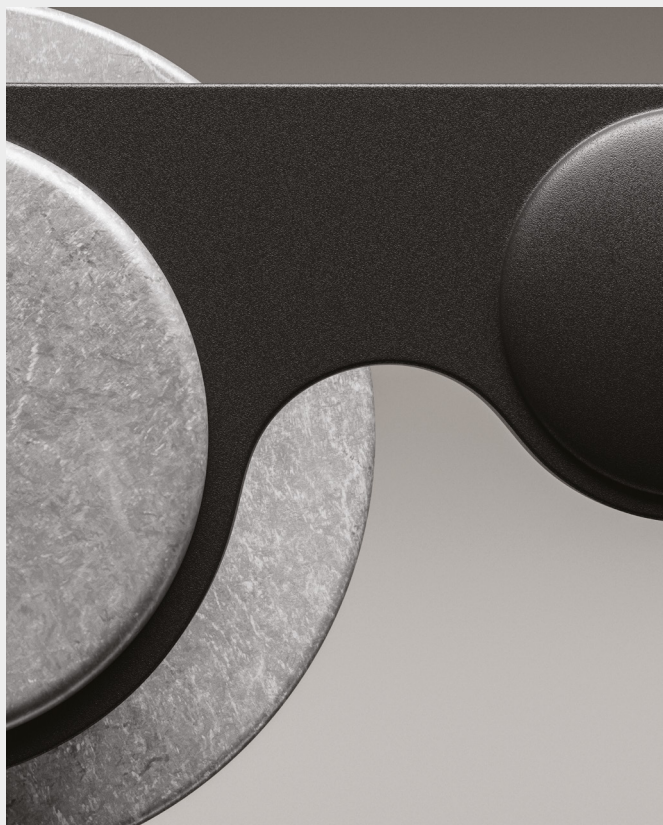


L FSB

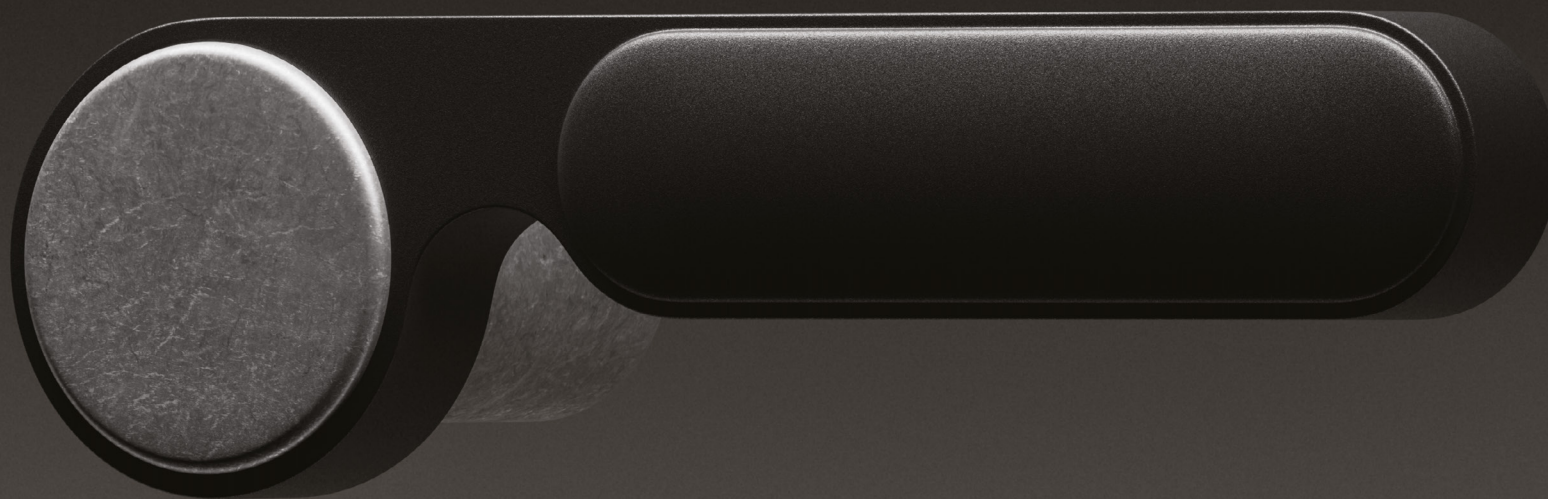
FSB 1138
1986 | 2026

rgs
rams grau schwarz



If you know, you know.

Handle Programme



Brakel, fall 1986. FSB had gathered the architects and designers of the moment to ask an almost impertinent question: Is it even possible to create new forms anymore? Dieter Rams designed a handle that would, from then on, enrich the FSB portfolio with its distinctive clarity. The old brochure stated its ambition plainly. It would set, in the general chaos of forms, a simple

and (precisely because it is simple) clearly visible sign. FSB took it into the range, of course. One thing, though. Over time, the aging characteristics of the thermoplastic, which was part of the handle, no longer met East Westphalian quality and sustainability standards. In 2005 the handle quietly left the catalog. It is a particular kind of loss, the disappearance of an

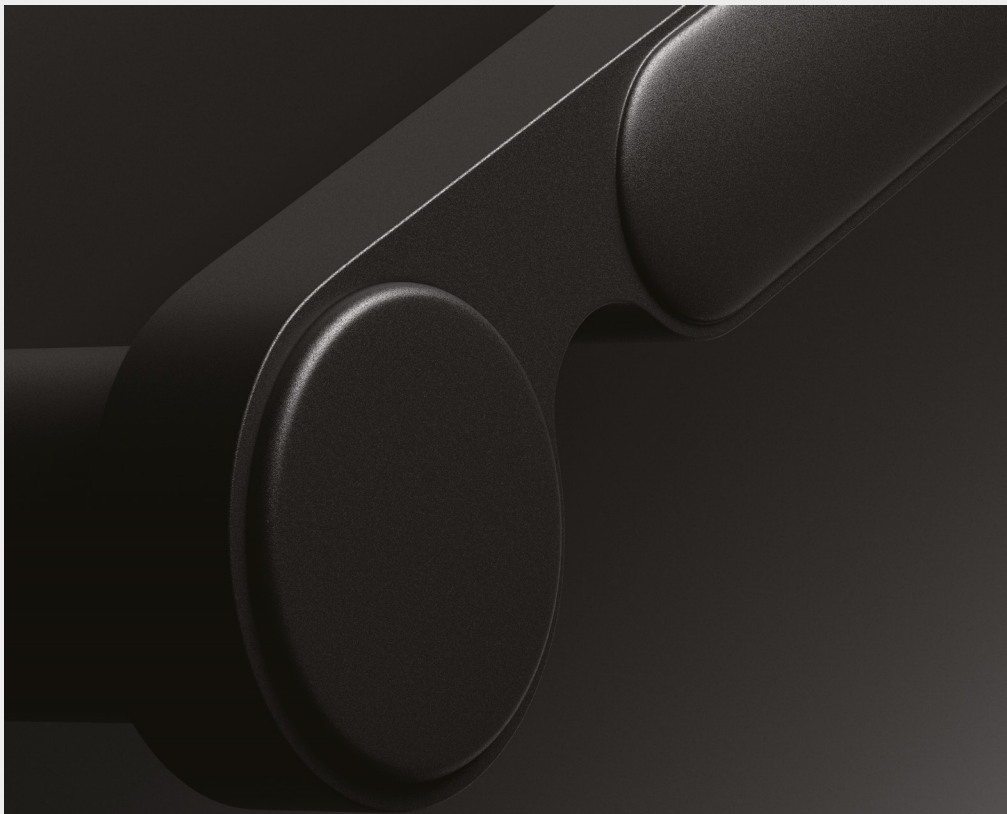
object that was just right and that almost no one had noticed. Those who knew, knew. The collectors noticed. Prices on the secondary market climbed, and the handle lived on in archives, in drawers, and in the hands of those who didn't want to let go. The design was right – the material had to be reconsidered. So Brakel reconsidered the material, and nothing else.

Aluminum throughout: the neck and cap in Aluminum Pure, left untreated, aging with the hand rather than against it; the grip blasted and anodized black. Two versions, both agreed with Dieter Rams: the original gray black, its Aluminum Pure neck and cap silver against the anodized-black grip; and, new to the relaunch, an all-black reading that Rams released

himself. As close to the original as possible. And this is perhaps the quiet argument in favor of this handle. The eye reads a single clear sign; the hand, closing around it, finds the sign was true: the round neck that names the turning point, the index-finger hollow, the grip that fills the palm. A building is something you see; a handle is the one place where you touch it.

FSB 1138.
Door and window handle.
Aluminum.

Designed in Brakel in 1986.
Relaunched in 2026.



“Simple is better than complicated, easy better than difficult, and the obvious better than the constructed.”

Dieter Rams



As close to the original as possible.



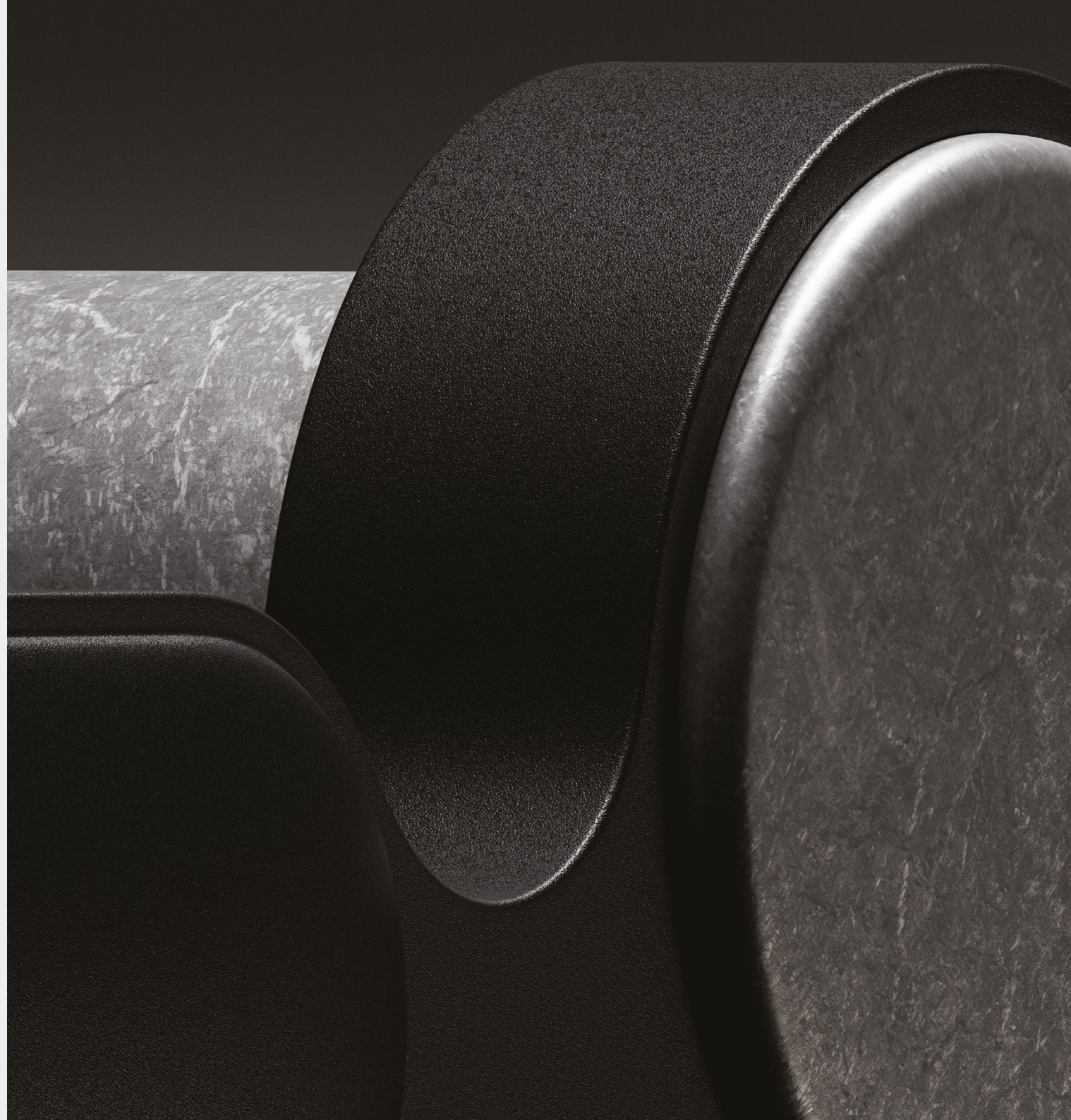
rams grau schwarz

The initials rgs stand for rams, gray, schwarz (black). Where the original combined aluminum and thermoplastic, robust metal for the working parts, and synthetic material for the grip, the new version 1138 is now entirely aluminum. The material changed, but the conviction did not. It is the silvery gray of Aluminum Pure that makes it so distinctive.

A handle is not a fashion item, but one of the things a building is made of. The new rgs is built to last. Aluminum throughout, recyclable in one piece; the neck and cap are left untreated, with nothing the metal will later have to lose.

The lever stands upright at 0°. That is the FSB ASL® bearing with holding spring. Not visible, but felt immediately when a hand closes around it. No droop, no fatigue. The grip stays where it was set. Rams' seventh Principle for Good Design was Langlebigkeit¹, and the most honest form of sustainability is durability.

¹Langlebigkeit: endurance; the seventh of Rams' 10 Principles for Good Design.



How postmodernism arrived in the Westphalian province and made the handle a design object

In the fall of 1986, FSB Franz Schneider Brakel invited ten internationally renowned architects and designers, and some twenty members of the international press, to a Türklinkenworkshop¹ in Brakel, East Westphalia.

The brief was to gather and weigh up new ideas for the door handle of the future. Rather more than that happened, and several of the designs went into production and founded the practice FSB still calls Autoren-design².

The invitation was accepted. Peter Eisenman came from New York, Shoji Hayashi from Tokyo, Hans Hollein from Vienna, Alessandro Mendini from Milan, Mario Botta from Ticino, and Dieter Rams from Kronberg im Taunus, with his student Angelika Knoop. Hans-Ullrich Bitsch and Petr Tučný came too; Arata Isozaki sent his drawings by post. Only three designs were added to the FSB product range: Hans Hollein's "lady's shoe," Mario Botta's "brushstroke," and Alessandro Mendini's redesign of the Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer handle. With Dieter Rams, after the workshop, FSB went on to develop a whole product collection with three handles, a knob, door buffers,

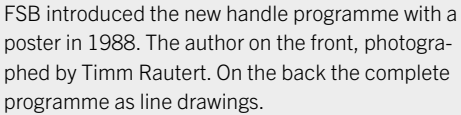
pull handles for entrance doors, furniture handles, and a privacy bolt.

The workshop designs became, fittingly, door-openers for FSB among a new generation of architects, and they served the range for some two decades. Mendini's "Omaggio a Gropius" is still made today as FSB 1102, in aluminum, stainless steel, and bronze. The workshop founded the much-discussed Autorendesign that FSB has continued with the likes of Jasper Morrison, David Chipperfield, and lately Foster + Partners. With FSB 1138 we are going full circle and introducing the iconic design by Dieter Rams back into our product range, 40 years after it was designed.



Participants of the FSB Design Workshop
From left to right:
Angelika Knoop, Shoji Hayashi, Dieter Rams, Alessandro Mendini, Hans-Ullrich Bitsch, Mario Botta, Jürgen Werner Braun (FSB), Hans Hollein, Peter Eisenman, Petr Tučný.

¹Design Workshop
²Autorendesign: a design credited to a named author, as a building is to its architect; the principle FSB founded at the 1986 workshop. In: FSB Edition Bd. 2, Türklinkenworkshop in Brakel, Walther König, 1987.



FSB Archive



1

¹The original FSB 1138 rgs designed by Dieter Rams (detail)

²Refinement of the FSB 1138 rgs with Jürgen Werner Braun and Dieter Rams 1987 in Kronberg

³The original FSB 1138 rgs designed by Dieter Rams

⁴Dieter Rams explaining.
FSB Design Workshop 1986



2



3



4

Images and Photography

S. 1, 4–11 Images:
Haw-lin Services

S. 12–13 Image:
Timm Rautert, FSB Archive

S. 14–15 Images:
Historical Campaign Poster 1988,
FSB Archive; photography of
Dieter Rams: Timm Rautert

S. 16–17 Images:
Timm Rautert, FSB Archive

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