




Lynn Conway

**electrical engineer &
computer scientist**



www.anewpipeline.org



Lynn Conway came up with a design system—or a set of rules—that allowed anyone to easily design a microchip. She then built what can be considered the first e-commerce site so that students in universities around the country could get physical copies of the microchips they designed using her method!

Fun facts:

- When she pitched the e-commerce site idea to her company, they thought it was too risky and didn't want to try it! Luckily, she pushed it through, and it was a huge success!
- After going public with her story of being a transgender woman in tech in 2000, she's become a great transgender activist!



Integrated Circuits

Until integrated circuits--or microchips-- were invented, computers took up entire rooms! When it was discovered that a computer's circuits could all be integrated into a single silicon chip, suddenly computers went from the size of a room to something that could sit on a desk--and we keep getting better at fitting more circuits in a smaller space! The number of circuits we can fit in a microchip roughly doubles every two years (this is sometimes referred to as Moore's law), which has allowed computers to get smaller and more powerful over time. Today, powerful microchips can be found in almost everything, from kitchen appliances to medical devices to children's toys. Just imagine all of the things you use every day that involve electronics--they all work thanks to the microchip!

Explore this topic

Learn more about Lynn Conway and circuits with these resources:

Videos

1. [Trans Activism Oral History Project - Lynn Conway Clip](#)
2. [60 Seconds DIY Paper Circuit Tutorial](#) by Fawn Qiu
3. A New Pipeline's [Simple LED Circuits with Microbits](#)

Activities

1. [Microbit](#)
2. [Adafruit's Circuit Playground](#)
3. [Chibitronics](#)
4. [Paper Circuit tutorials](#) from Makerspaces.com



Reading

1. Lynn Conway's auto-biographic writing (includes details about her early life, career, and thoughts on her transition)
2. Lynn Conway's thoughts on her career
3. Lynn Conway's personal website
4. IBM Apologizes For Firing Computer Pioneer For Being Transgender...52 Years Later
5. Oral History of Lynn Conway 2014 Computer History Museum Fellow