

# colnago c40 family-tree

a reasonably thorough chronological accounting of the genesis of colnago's lugged carbon frames and evolution from the C40 to the C60. also relevant for anyone that's interested in joining the family! this lineup represents colnago's flagship *production* carbon designs that are manufactured exclusively in Italy by colnago artisans. in the mid 2000s colnago introduced complementary 2nd-echelon carbon models that are made in Asia to colnago specifications – those offshore colnagos are NOT here. –wallymann–

**CarbiTubo** – introduced 1988-89. made famous by guys like Konyshov, Rominger, Riis, Fondriest, and Sørensen.

- distinctive dual-downtube carbon with aluminum lugs, based on the earlier all-aluminum “dual” manufactured for colnago by Alan. at some point before the C40 came along there were a couple “mono-tubo” frames spotted in the pro peloton – basically an Alan Record carbon with proper colnago markings in the lugs.

**C40 variants** – introduced 1993-94. made famous by iconic champions like Museeuw, Ballerini, Tafi, Bartoli, Dekker, and Bettini.

- mk-1 – “the original” with full carbon tube-and-lugs with the traditional rear triangle and constant-diameter downtube. the earliest mk-1s had round-profile down- and top-tubes, before adopting what became the standard diamond-shaped master tube profiles. mk-1s are generally found with a steel colnago Precisa fork, but can be found with a similar looking alloy colnago fork as were used in the CarbiTubo. mk-1s will also have traditional down-tube shifter bosses.
- mk-2 – continue with the traditional rear triangle, but introduced a tapered/flared downtube to stiffen up the BB. the chainstays were also beefed up – moved from a slim round profile to a taller oval profile, again to stiffen the BB. these also saw the introduction of the threaded shifter bosses integrated to the lower HT lug. at some point they moved to the Star carbon fork as an option, not sure if that was a late mk-1 or early mk-2 change – but came with the introduction of a threadless setup. note that you will often find C40s with a threadless steel Precisa, as well! eventually went exclusively to the Star fork.  
*note: colnago made several small running changes from year to year for these first 2 variants and i'm not sure that there was a really hard/fast cut from mk-1 to mk-2...it was almost constant evolution.*
- mk-3 – introduced the wishbone B-stay seatstay design. the chainstay/BB lug area was slightly reshaped, possibly to improve BB stiffness. also, at some point along the mk3-4 evolution they moved from an aluminum BB insert to a much more durable titanium insert.
- mk-4 – introduced the diamond-cutout HP-stay chainstay design and name-change to “C-40HP”. you may also find some that have a Force fork instead of the Star.
- mk-5 – went to 1.125” front-end spec and larger tube diameters in the main triangle...also known as the C50!!! ;-)

**C50 variants** – introduced 2003-04. made famous by guys like Freire and Popovych.

- mk-1 – as noted above, C40HP with 1.125” front-end spec and larger tube diameters in the main triangle. HP/B-stay rear triangle carried directly over from C40HP. introduced sloping top-tube option.
- mk-2 “superlight” – the mk-2 introduced high-modulus carbon and shorter lugs for a nominal weight reduction (revised lugs particularly noticeable @ the seat-cluster, but also at the head-tube and BB). the HP-stay chainstays were reshaped to be slimmer and more gracefully curved (the C40 HP-stays are bulky and almost square in cross-section, whereas the updated superlight C50 HP-stays are trimmer and more rounded in cross-section). during the transition to mk-2 configuration the C75 fork was introduced. the final examples were found with English-threaded BB inserts (still titanium, though). *note: there are a small number of “transitional” C50s that have been spotted that mixed mk1-mk2 lugs and chainstays*
- mk-2.5 – produced in relatively small numbers and known as the “C-50HM” to highlight use of high-modulus carbon that was introduced on the mk-2. this variant just has minor graphics tweaks – red in the “C50” and added “hm carbon fiber” lettering.

**Extreme-Power / Extreme-C** – introduced 2007. made famous by guys like Zabel, Petacchi, and Rasmussen.

- replaced master-profile main tubes with round-profiles. replaced the diamond-cutout HP-stay chainstays with 4-lobed chainstays. extreme-c was a climbing-specific variant with less beefy main-tubes to save weight for the wee little grimpeurs. bottom-bracket went from ITA to BSC, still in titanium though.

**EPS** – introduced 2009.

- replaced traditional headsets with integrated headsets, which also means the fork is a new design. here's also where colnago geometry shifted across-the-board as a result.
- at some point they regressed from the titanium BB insert back to aluminum.

**C59 / EPQ** – introduced 2011.

- the main-triangle tube diameters increased substantially. C59 used master-profiles and EPQ used round-profiles. some say the EPQ was created simply to use leftover EPS tube inventory.
- big changes to the rear triangle. lighter and more compliant Q-stay seatstay design introduced and the chainstays went from the leaf-profile to a beefier but simpler square cross-section. disc option introduced.

**C60** – introduced 2014.

- this is a ground-up rethink that maintains the full carbon tube-and-lug philosophy that originated with the C40, but carries forward no specific components from previous designs.
- massively oversized diameters everywhere except for the seatstays. completely new BB design.

**C64** – introduced 2018.

- an evolutionary update to the top-tier C-series – still massively oversized tube diameters and still uses lugged construction.
- many-many incremental changes made, increased tire clearance, as well as introduction of a new oversized “threadfit” BB spec.

**disclaimer:** keep in mind we're talking colnago here – considering the vagaries of artisanal Italian bicycle production control methods, there will always be outliers and exceptions! this effort represents the majority of cases. if anyone can ID errors or omissions, please comment and share your knowledge – this document will be updated as new discoveries are made among the tifosi!



## C40-mk1

slim/round  
seatstays

carbon lugs and initially  
round then master-profile  
downtube and toptube

downtube  
shifter bosses

constant-diameter  
downtube

slim/round chainstays

## C40-mk2

lower headlug  
shift-cable stops

beefier, vertically  
ovalized chainstays

flared downtube  
toward BB



## C40-mk3

wishbone  
B-stay  
seatstays



titanium BB insert

## C40-mk4

diamond-cutout  
HP-stay chainstays







**C50-mk1**

1-1/8"  
front-end

larger-diameter  
downtube and toptube



**C50-mk2**

trimmed  
seatcluster  
lugs

trimmed  
HT lugs

**mk2.5**

slimmer/re-shaped  
HP-stay chainstays

trimmed BB-cluster lugs



## extreme-power

round-profile  
downtube and toptube

beefier 4-lobed chainstays

BSC BB insert

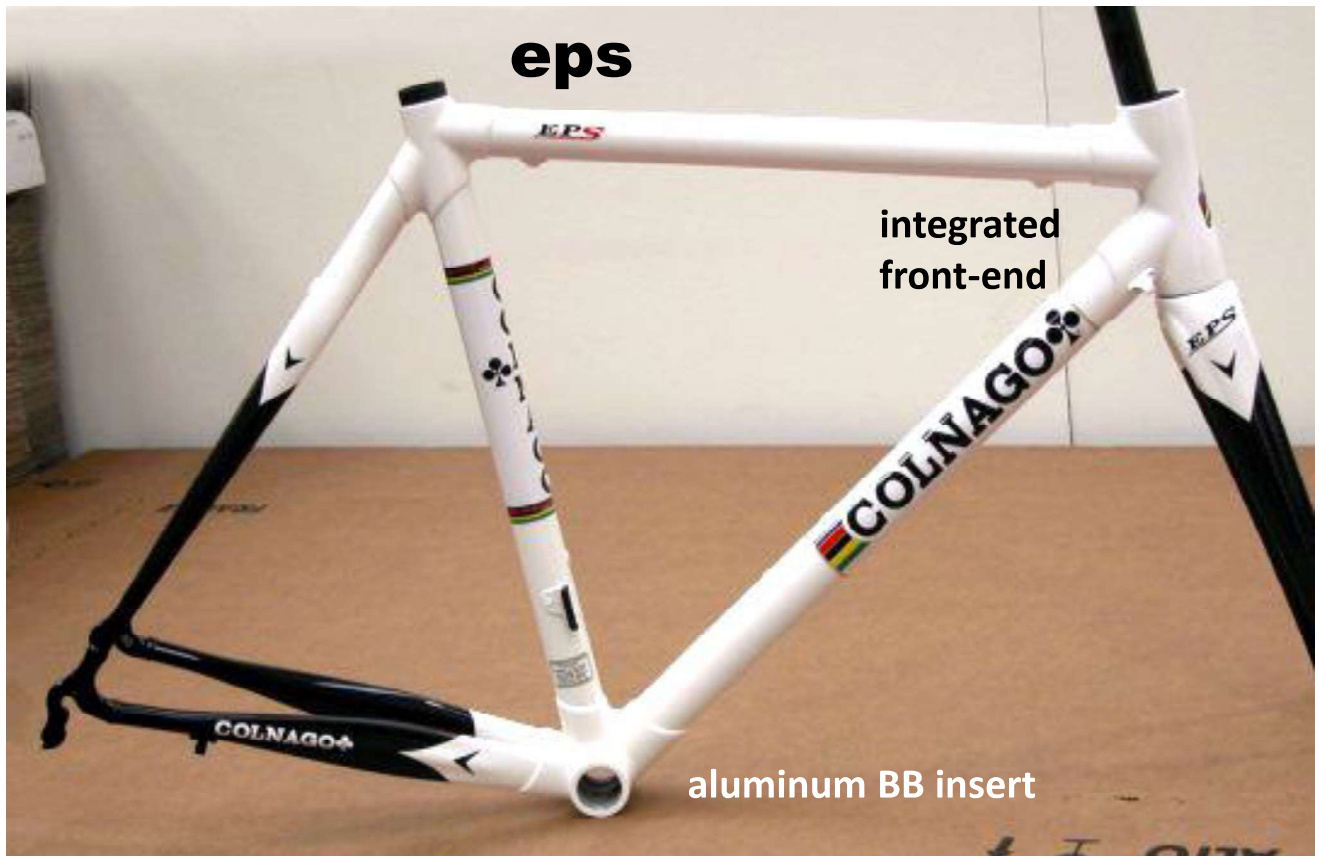
## extreme-c

slimmer diameter  
downtube and toptube

beefier 4-lobed chainstays

BSC BB insert









**c59**

master-profile  
downtube and toptube



**c60**

complete redesign

massively oversized  
downtube, BB shell,  
chainstays





**c64**