Furniture Care Guide

IMPORTANCE OF PROPER FURNITURE

After spending so much time picking the perfect furniture for your home, you want them to look beautiful as long as you can. Apart from buying or building a house, the other investment that takes the biggest share of a home budget is furniture. The cost of furnishing a house is quite high and thus, it is prudent to make sure that the furniture is taken care of. If you take care of your furniture, they will serve you for long. And that's possible with regular cleaning and care. Doing some regular maintenance will keep your furniture looking great and extend its durability. You won't find yourself thinking about buying new chairs in a few a years if they look just as good as when you bought them. If dirt and grime is left on your furniture it not only looks bad but can be abrasive to the material and cause damage to your precious furniture. Regular cleaning can also help you control allergens and odors that make living uncomfortable. Proper care can be as simple as proper placement. The wooden part together with the added upholstery should thus be well managed to maintain its aesthetic appeal and help it last longer. There are also other types of furniture such as leather, fabric, to help you take proper care of the different types of furniture, below are tips that will enable you to keep them clean and have them for longer. Avoid placing furniture where it will be hit by sunlight for extended periods of the day as that will fade colors and cause materials to weaken and crack. Unless your furniture is made of teak or other materials resistant to temperature fluctuations do not place furniture near heat sources, i.e. heaters and radiators. Dry heat will dry the wood and shrink it, leading to cracks and a weakened construction. With proper placement and regular care your furniture will look great and serve you for years.

CLEANING TIPS

FABRIC

All types of upholstery need proper maintenance if you want your furniture to last a long time. One tip that goes for all fabrics is to keep the furniture away from direct sunlight as much as possible to avoid damage and fading. Parents and pet owners seem to encounter the most trouble when it comes to caring for their furniture. Spills and dirt are unavoidable if you have little kids and your furniture is usually where the vast majority of accidents happen. Washing upholstery fabric every once in a while seems to be the only way to keep it spotless. However, not all fabrics are machine washable. Make sure to check the label for the care codes before washing your upholstery when compared to maintaining leather upholstery, keeping a fabric sofa in good condition may require a little bit more effort and care. Fortunately, you can ensure your sofa always looks brand new by using the following tips.

- Protect the upholstery by applying a fabric-protecting finish after you purchase the sofa
- Use only non-toxic cleaning agents specifically made for your type of fabric.
- Deal with stains and spills the moment they happen by blotting gently with a towel
- Brush and vacuum regularly to remove dust and dirt from the fabric

METAL

Furniture is relatively easy to clean. Remove any glass or upholstering, find a nice dry day outside and get to work. Fill a bucket with warm water, add some liquid dish soap. You'll want a nylon scrubbing brush, dip it into the soapy water and scrub down the entire piece. Use an old toothbrush to clean the grooves and corners. Rinse off the piece, use a damp sponge if your piece has fabric. Dry with a towel. For rusted areas, use a wire brush to remove the rust. Apply metal primer to the bare spots, allow it to dry. You can leave it as is or paint over it with a matching metal.

WOOD

When cleaning wood furnishings, never use all-purpose cleaning sprays, such as the kind used on kitchen tables, unless your furniture has a plastic coating. You'll usually want to avoid cleaning wood with water as well. However, sticky spots may need to be treated with soap and water. To do this, dip a lint-free cloth in mild soap or detergent dissolved in water, wring the cloth nearly dry, and wipe the area. Rinse and immediately dry with a clean, soft cloth. For most cleaning, lightly dampen a soft cloth with warm water and mild dish soap and rub the area. Oil polishes, cleaners, and furniture oils protect wood by making the surface more slippery. However, they do not offer a hard protective layer. Most commercial spray and liquid furniture polishes contain silicone oil, which can provide some protection. Keep in mind that products that contain a high percentage of oil will show fingerprints. If you have used wood sprays and polishes in the past or suspect that furniture has been polished with them, be aware that these residues can interfere with refinishing and may need professional attention. Lightly using water won't harm your furniture, avoid soaking. Avoid harsh cleaners that can damage the finish or sealer. Common blemishes on wood furniture come from hot coffee cups. If you have a white ring left over from a hot item left on your furniture, use a MILD abrasive to get it out. Use your finger for small spots or a soft cloth for large areas. If you have a scratch, shoe polish, and even walnuts, can be rubbed lightly onto a scratch to help cover up any blemishes. Remember, it is always best to rub, brush, or scrub with the grain, not against it.

LEATHER

Leather is one of the more durable, low-maintenance surfaces for home furnishings. Keeping your leather sofa, chair or ottoman clean is relatively simple if you follow the proper steps. But different types of leather upholstery have different cleaning requirements, so you first need to know what type of leather you have. Here's how to identity, clean and maintain your leather upholstery to keep it looking great. To find out what kind of leather upholstery you have, and the recommended care, start by checking the label or the written materials that came with the piece, or look up the item on the retailer's or manufacturer's website. If you don't have access to care instructions and you're not sure what kind of leather you have. Leather is very sensitive to spills, especially liquids, so they should be removed from the surface as soon as possible to keep them from soaking in and forming a hard-to-remove stain. Here are the steps for cleaning leathers. First remove all dust from the leather area. It is easiest to use a vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment, and make sure to get into any crevices you can. Follow this up by wiping down the furniture with a cotton or microfiber cloth. Mix equal parts water and vinegar to make a simple cleaning solution. Dip the corner of a cleaning cloth into the mix and wring it out. You want a damp cloth to do all of your cleaning. Follow up your cleaning with a dry cloth, make sure you don't let your leather soak as that may ruin the material. For grease stains, wipe off the grease with a dry cloth, and then sprinkle baking soda on the area. Let it sit for a few hours to draw the grease out. Wipe away with a rag.