

# Furniture & Design Trends



# Want Unique? Think Handmade

If you want your furniture to last, buying handmade provides incredible durability.

Unlike mass-produced options you find at many big-box retailers, pieces crafted by hand are built with high-quality wood and materials. They are a timeless option that can last for generations.

Did you know when you buy from a craftsman in your area, you're also enhancing the local economy? According to the organization Independent We Stand, for every \$100 you spend locally, \$68 stays in the community.

Finding a handmade furniture builder to support is easy and provides you with many benefits.

## ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

Handmade furniture is typically built from materials sourced from the builder's local economy.

When mass-produced models are constructed overseas, the environment is negatively impacted because of factory pollution and shipping methods.

Buying locally built furniture will also give you peace of mind that the materials are natural and safe rather than importing pieces that may contain volatile compounds or other dangerous substances.



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## HIGH QUALITY

Because of the quality materials used to build handmade furniture, it is much more durable than less expensive models. A local craftsman has the expertise to choose the right type of wood for the piece that was commissioned.

While a piece of furniture

built with cheaper material may look nice, the key to building a long-lasting model begins before the first piece of wood is cut to fit. Whether you are hiring a craftsman for a custom table or dresser or buying a quality piece from your local furniture store, you can be sure it was built with durability.

## MAKE IT YOUR OWN

When hiring a carpenter for your project, they will craft it specifically to you. The size of the space a piece of furniture will be in should weigh heavily on the design plans.

Give the carpenter accurate measurements to your designer so it will fit your room with-

out being intrusive.

Another cool feature of handmade furniture is when the carpenter adds a custom etching to your specifications. For instance, when commissioning a gift, you can create a special but concealed message or signature that your loved one will appreciate.

# Custom Furniture

When considering adding new furniture to your home, the most unique statement you can make is with a custom piece.

While it may be more expensive than purchasing pre-made options, you can create the piece to fit your flooring footprint perfectly.

If you feel there are limited resources in your local area to hire a custom builder, a great place to start is at a furniture store in your area. They will likely have a referral of a craftsman they have a relationship with and will assist you with the order. Many times, they will take over the burden of delivery once the piece is complete.

Here are some ideas to consider when choosing the style and material to create custom furniture to make your house feel like home.

## KITCHEN

A well-designed kitchen can mean the difference between comfortable family meals or a cramped social experience. The best way to ensure this room has ample functioning space is by designing your own furniture around its available square footage.

For instance, a custom island can become the main place for eating, storage and prepping. When designing this



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unique table, consider if it should be stationary or mobile so you can move it around when you need more space.

Cabinets are another great piece of furniture to build to your specifications. Allowing yourself plenty of room for storage can cut down on clutter

on your countertops or in your pantry.

## LIVING ROOM

Not all living rooms are built alike. You may fall in love with the design and material that makes up a sectional, but if it's too large, your living space is compromised.

Instead, hire a builder to create a unique sitting area to fit your home. Don't forget to ask your salesman or constructor about features like stain-proof capabilities or scratch-resistant materials.

## BEDROOM

From unique end tables to a

bed frame with storage, a bedroom is another area that benefits from a custom furniture setup.

If space is limited, a frame built with drawers for clothing and a headboard with room for decorations and an alarm clock can save a lot of space while making the area look larger.



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# Consider a Canopy Bed

When you want to add a touch of elegance to your bedroom, a canopy bed can become the centerpiece. Their uniqueness offers more than an appealing aesthetic.

Canopy beds provide benefits relating to comfortable temperatures to change the way you sleep.

If your room lacks the space for a large four-piece frame with an included canopy, you can save room by hanging a layer of fabric from the ceiling to cover each corner. When per-

forming a DIY installation, ensure you anchor the canopy securely to prevent it from falling.

When you're considering a transition to new sleeping quarters, here are some things to remember.

## CHOOSE A STYLE

There are many statements you can make with a canopy bed, take a look at these popular styles to add a modern touch or use a historical design from centuries ago.

**Four Poster:** The most common and modern type features four extending posts which support the frame. It can be left bare for a unique aerodynamic aesthetic or draped with fabric to create a cozy and romantic retreat.

**Lit à la Duchesse:** Made popular in the 18th- and 19th century, this

French classic uses a canopy attached to the wall or suspended from the ceiling. It pulls off a regal appearance that makes a room feel more mature and elegant.

**Lit à la Polonoise:** This was another favorite during the 18th century that still holds up today. Four bed posts stand tall before tapering inward to meet at a round coronet. Fabric is draped from the center of the post and spread out to each corner.

## REGULATE TEMPERATURE

A bonus to canopy beds looking great, is their ability to help regulate temperatures to keep your bedroom comfortable.

During the winter, you can drape heavier fabrics to enclose your bed and keep warm air within your quar-

ters. Warmer temperatures can be managed by positioning fabric to block windows where the sun is most dominant throughout the day.

Blocking light during your sleep is also a way to achieve better sleep benefits, especially if you work overnight and most of your rest occurs throughout the day.

## DISADVANTAGES

Of course, there are a few downsides to consider before you invest in a canopy. You should expect to have another chore when it comes to cleaning your home. Consider keeping extra fabric on hand so you can rotate canopies between washings.

Kids and pets may also look at your canopy bed as a challenge to pull the fabric or even climb it.

# Find a Local Interior Designer

If your home is in desperate need of a facelift, hiring an interior designer is a great idea. Their expertise will show how to utilize the space you have and enhance it to make it feel roomier and more welcome.

Modern technology makes it easy to connect with an expert, here are some ideas on where to find them and how to explain your vision.

## FIND A DESIGNER

For an easy way to find the perfect designer for your project, simply get online. Search your social media for peers who have had success with their experts, and take time to ask them questions about pricing, performance and their experience.

You can also use career-based sites like LinkedIn to search for local designers in your area. The channel makes it easy to learn about their knowledge and even encourages you to connect with them about a job opportunity.

Don't forget to ask friends and peers in your daily life about their experience using a designer in your area. Sometimes, a referral may even land you a discount.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

Just as an interior designer



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will have questions regarding your project, you should have inquiries prepared for them, too. Remember, this is basically a job interview you oversee when deciding who to hire. Here are a few to consider, from the Architectural Digest.

**Do you welcome client**

**involvement during the process?** Many designers consult with a client about their basic vision of the project and get started. Others like to gauge a client's interest in the direction they are heading during different steps of the process.

**What is an example of a mistake you made, and how did you handle it?** Interior

designers likely made costly errors as they got started in their career. You should know how they handled it, why it happened and what they learned from it. This question can teach you a lot about their current knowledge.

**What are your main priorities when sticking to a budget?** Of course, a budget is

crucial during any home renovation. An interior designer will create an estimate based on your needs.

When discussing your plans, be firm on what the most important aspects of the design are, and they can figure out how to cut corners on less important factors while creating a beautiful area.

# The Lowdown on Upcycling

A cost-effective way to spruce up your living space is by upcycling dated furniture. The process is typically inexpensive and can turn a hobby into a career with the right determination.

If you have been wondering what to do with an old dresser or cabinetry, consider giving it new life before retiring it.

Along the way to becoming an upcycling expert, you will likely run across numerous tools you need for projects. Don't be afraid to ask friends and loved ones to borrow them before you invest in new ones.

With the right equipment and skill set, an upcycle venture can be an exciting way to refresh your home on a budget. Here are some ways to get started.

## WHERE TO FIND FURNITURE

If your current home lacks furniture that can be used to upcycle, there are other avenues to take in a search.

Drive around your community to locate neighborhood yard sales, antique shops or even flea markets. Once you have an idea of a project, you will find inspiration and great deals at these local outlets.

You should also ask family and friends if they will be



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upgrading their furniture. If they offer you an older piece, make sure its frame is solid and envision how you can make it new again before committing to bringing it home.

## COMMON EQUIPMENT

While some projects may

require special tools and equipment, there are several resources everyone who upcycles can be sure they'll need. Here are a few ideas from the Habitat for Humanity.

- Efficient sanding equipment like palm sanders, sanding sponges and a respirator;
- Quality brushes for prim-

ing, painting and staining; and

- Woodworking tools like a tabletop saw, files and adhesive.

These are typical staples during any woodworking project which will require resurfacing and fresh coat of paint to be upcycled.

## HAVE FUN

Don't expect to become an expert during your first project. Learning what it takes to turn an outdated piece of furniture into a centerpiece will take time. The most important part of upcycling is to take your time and have fun building your craft.

# Covered Porches and Other Structures

Outdoor furniture can be the spotlight for great times during a get together or barbecue, or a serene place to relax after a long day. You can also create a backyard paradise by building a gazebo or covered porch to keep your furniture away from harmful weather elements.

If you are not an expert at DIY craftsmanship, don't hesitate to call a licensed contractor. In some cases, you may need special permits if you will be adding on to an existing structure. A quality builder can ensure your new addition will be constructed legally.

## WHERE TO BUILD YOUR PORCH

Constructing a covered porch creates a great escape to hide from the summer sun and remain dry while you watch a passing rain storm. Where you build it requires some strategic planning.

First, you should consider the layout of your yard. Avoid building it in areas where water puddles up during the rain or consider installing an efficient drainage system.

If you will use it as the setting for your outdoor kitchen, make sure the roof is high



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enough to avoid damage from grill flareups and nearby electrical outlets if your equipment requires a power source.

You should also consider if it will be an independent structure or an addition to a current building. Having a covered retreat right outside your backdoor can create a great point of access to your home.

## WILL IT HAVE AN OPEN PERIMETER?

When creating your porch or gazebo, you should also ask yourself if it will remain open or have rails or screens around the perimeter.

Wood or vinyl railing can create an attractive aesthetic while providing safety for children or pets. Wood can be easier on your budget but

requires regular maintenance to ensure its quality isn't compromised. Vinyl or composite lasts longer with little care but can be much more expensive.

For gazebos or standalone structures, surrounding it with a screen perimeter can offer great benefits.

The area can be a great place to allow small pets to go outside and enjoy the warm

temperatures without fear of them running away or becoming injured in the yard. An enclosed area is also effective in eliminating the risk of pesky insect intruders to ruin your outdoor plans.

Consider installing a permanent perimeter or take advantage of modern removable screens that are operated with high-quality zipper systems.

# Join the Metallic Movement

Interior design trends are going vintage by using metallic elements to enhance aesthetics.

The balance of wood and metal can make any room appear more modern and contemporary. If you're considering refreshing your interior with new furniture and upgraded accents, you should know how to bring metal into your plans.

When you're worried finding the balance between the two dominant materials is outside of your comfort zone, reach out to a local interior designer. Their expertise can help you choose exciting elements to spruce up your space or recommend a custom craftsman who can build the design you have in mind.

## CHOOSE THE RIGHT METAL

Because different metals have their own set of aesthetic advantages, using the right piece is important to pull off your vision. The experts at Fresh Home recommend viewing metallic elements in the same way as a color scheme.

Here are some suggestions when imagining dominant metals in your vision.

- Stainless steel works well when crafting a contemporary room.
- Chrome fixtures and on-trend polished copper are



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good materials to pull off a truly modern appearance.

- **Brass** is a classic choice used to maintain a rustic visual commonly found in Tuscan or farmhouse style homes.

## BLENDING FINISHES

Metals are also unique as they feature different finishes which can be used to tie a room together.

The most common styles

found on traditional metallic elements are:

- **Polished:** provides a shiny appearance which works well with modern schemes.
- **Brushed or satin:** a darker, less-polished aesthetic allows fixtures to blend better in contemporary designs rather than stand out.
- **Oiled:** amore traditional style used to provide a darker, antique look that remains

beautiful in classic themes.

Consider these finishes when designing furniture or adding metal accent pieces to your renovation ideas.

## SPOTLIGHT THE CENTERPIECE

If you want the metallic components in your room to stand out rather than blend with a design scheme, using opposing metals will provide

the look you're going for.

Create the centerpiece in your interior design by using accent metals for a bold fixture like a perimeter trim or large mirror. To pull it off, you'll want to play on different color temperatures found in metals.

Whether you're aiming to create a warm or cool color scheme, the right type of metal is waiting for your design plans.