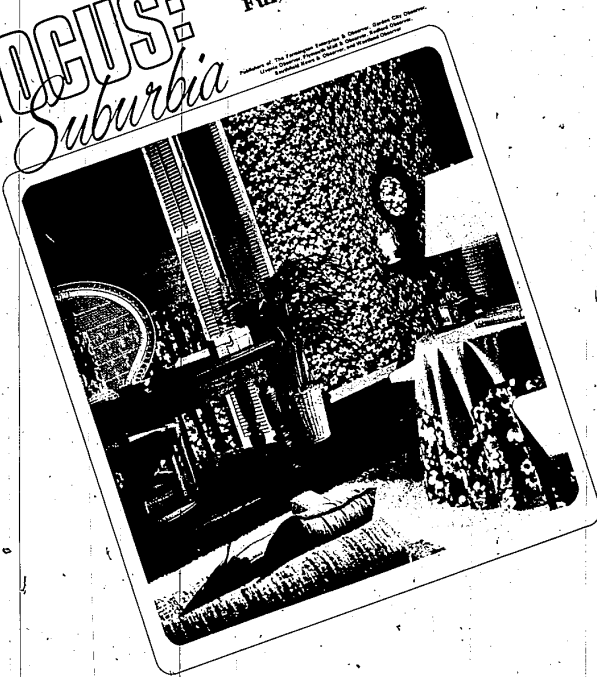


FOCUS: Suburbia

HOME Furnishings



ELEGANCE for your home...

doesn't take a lot of money. It takes imagination. Fresh ideas. And some good places to shop. We have all three for you in this weekend's edition of FOCUS: Suburbia "HOME FURNISHINGS."

Your imagination will be stimulated with some great information (like the advice below) and some interesting ideas!

Don't miss FOCUS: Suburbia "Home Furnishings" brought to you by your hometown newspaper.

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Furnishings Expert Offers Shopping Tips



Whatever Happened To Recliners?

Remember when recliners used to be big gawky monsters bought for the man of the house so he could have a chair all his own?

Recliners have entered the 70's with a new look, scaled to fit even small apartments and proportioned for modern lower-ceilinged rooms.

Many shoppers are really surprised to find the old stereotyped action chair has been replaced by a potpourri of styles and colors to please the most fashion conscious decorator.

Today, recliners come in a variety of styles to coordinate with any period or decor. Suede

and cords, once unheard of for upholstering recliners, are seen in the marvelous synthetics on recliners, making them practical to clean while looking luxurious.

The same exciting fabrics you would expect to find on standard chairs are available on recliners. Their great plus, however, is the pure comfort engineered into this type of seating. Constructed to take greater stress than ordinary chairs, the new recliners have sophisticated, "interiors" that in more cases than not will allow the person using the chair to determine the most comfortable degree of slant at any stage of reclining.

"You don't have to build a new house to have a new home. Nor do you have to buy a house full of furniture to create a new environment."

These are basic beliefs of Margaret Ward, home economist for the Southern Furniture Manufacturers Association. She also has ideas on how to approach home decorating - starting with careful planning, budgeting, and analysis of individual needs.

"With these," she continued, "you may transform the four walls of your house into an inviting home that is uniquely yours."

Developing a plan before purchasing furniture is a major key to success, Miss Ward said. Furniture preferences can be determined by studying magazine, newspapers and books, and visiting museums, model rooms, homes and stores.

Checking several stores will show the home decorator, she continued, what furniture is available, how various effects can be created with the same type of furniture, and which styles appeal to the purchaser when they are seen firsthand.

"For most of us," Miss Ward said, "shopping for furniture is like shopping for a new car. You know what you like the instant you see it, but what's inside is a puzzle to intricate to piece together."

Shopping at a reliable store which carries quality brand names assures the consumer of quality and performance, she said. Each piece of furniture should be both beautiful and functional. Durability, comfort, and ease of care are also desirable.

"Unless you know furniture as a mechanic does a car," Miss Ward continued, "you must examine furniture yourself and know what to look for, where to look, and equally important, what to ask."

She gave the following pointers on examining wood furniture - or casegoods as the furniture industry calls it - once a consumer finds an attractive style and design.

1. Rubbing your hand across the top should give a smooth feel and no indication of ripples. The finish should be clear, not cloudy.

2. Check to see if furniture which will be placed away from the wall has the back panel finished smoothly in the same tone as the rest of the wood. Unexposed parts need not be finished in the same quality as exposed parts, but they should be sanded smooth and stained to match the rest of the piece.

3. Check drawers to see if they slide easily. The drawer itself should be sturdy, especially at the joints. In furniture of superior quality, the joinings are as near perfectly matched as possible, smooth and tight.

Crevice's and gaps filled with glue show inferior workmanship. A dust panel, a solid panel of wood between drawers, keeps the inside of casegoods clean.

4. Make certain doors and catches function properly.

5. Examine the hardware. It should be attractive, securely attached and appropriately scaled for the piece.

6. Read labels on the care of the finish and its resistance to stains and scratches whether it be solid wood, veneer or plastic.



MARGARET WARD Home Economist

lowing considerations in buying upholstered furniture:

1. Make certain the furniture appeals to you in color as well as style and design. Don't dismiss a pleasing shape because of the fabric. The store can usually order the piece in a variety of upholstery coverings. However, the consumer should choose a fabric in the weight and general category of the one shown. For example, don't try to substitute a delicate silk material for a heavy fur fabric.

2. Check the tailoring as an indication of overall workmanship. Upholstery should have a smooth appearance with plaids, stripes and prints matched and centered if possible. Skirts should hang straight and even. Cording and welting should be smooth, straight and firmly stitched.

Decorative details - tufting, trapunto, buttons - add to the cost of the furniture, but they give the individuality one expects in the more expensive and high quality furniture.

3. Cushions should fit snugly in the corners of the frame and adjoining cushions. Reversible cushions help distribute wear. Contrary to popular opinion, a zippered cover should not be removed for cleaning. The zipper was used as an aide to the workman who stuffed the pillow.

4. Scratch the upholstery fabric with your fingernail to see that no threads will catch or pull. The fabric should be strong and closely woven.

Spot and stain resistance finishes are available for all fabrics, and certain fibers offer better wear. Read labels and hang tags carefully.

5. Many types of fillings are used, often in combination. Many states require a label to identify the filling content, but this is not an indication of grade or quality.

A good test is to squeeze a pillow and watch it return to its original shape. If it responds slowly, you will find shifting, matting, lumps or distortion in your upholstered piece.

6. The basic framework must withstand stress and strain over a long period. Rub your hand on the frame under the seat cushion and make certain you feel no sharp wood edges.

Legs should be supported to remain rigid under stress, and joints should be reinforced and glued. If the piece has webbing, it should be wide and closely woven.

Seat and back springs should be firmly attached. Arms on the outside edge of the frame should not have sharp edges. Also check underneath the skirt to see if the leg and foot are attached to the block or frame.

7. You depend upon upholstered furniture for comfort in sitting. A chair should be the right height for the person using it most. The height, width, depth and slant of the seat and back should be tested.

"The most important thing to remember in furnishing your home is to enjoy the experience," Miss Ward advised. "Don't feel pressured to 'Get it done.'"

By taking time to look around and learn what you really like, then studying each piece of wood furniture and upholstery carefully, she said, you will have a lovely home that "best suits your needs."

NEW FURNISHINGS OPT FOR RELEVANCE

New Lines Expand Quality and Variety

The most important trend in current home furnishings is the absence of "the trend."

Rather than being based on the latest style, newest fiber or most popular color combinations, the trend of home furnishings today is to meet current needs - to be "relevant."

The home furnishings industry

has never been noted for earth-shaking change.

As long as furnishings represent such a large dollar investment, the public probably will not tolerate the degree of planned obsolescence that fashion industry thrives on.

In wood furniture and upholstery alike, modular, and

multi-functional furnishings are providing solutions to many of the problems posed by our increasingly mobile society living in the confines of more limited space.

Modular "systems" are popular because the consumer can purchase one or two pieces now, then add more as her pocket-

book or space expands.

Versatility in room arrangement, optimal use of space, portability for moving, and adaptability after moving are a few of the advantages.

Although most sectional systems were originally introduced as wrap-around series in youth furniture, they are found today

in a full range of styles - Baroque, English, Early American, Spanish, French.

Conventional dimensions of height and width are being challenged, with the ultimate apparently the floor-to-ceiling system that is typically European.

This use of systems is not

only overcoming the architectural boredom of typical builder's homes, but it is also serving the varying phases of family life where furniture changes its functions every few years.

In seating, more curves are shown. Lines are often rounded, flowing and undulating. The use of urethanes and other

bondable plastics makes the new lines possible.

In fabric covers, the olefins and polyons are making news because they wear longer and clean easier, while simulating almost any fine weave and fiber. Other newcomers are the double-knit polyesters and vinyls.