

HISTORY OF FURNITURE



**FURNITURE
IS A CLASS OF
DESIGNED OBJECTS
WHOSE UTILITY PROVIDES
FUNCTIONS FOR
SLEEPING, SUPPORT,
SERVICE, AND
SANITATION.**



FURNITURE DESIGN USES

- UTILITY,
- FUNCTION, and
- STYLE

TO DEFINE AN OBJECT



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<http://www.furniturestyles.net>

<http://home.howstuffworks.com/how-to-identify-antique-wooden-furniture-for-refinishing1.htm>

www.gutenberg.org

www.furniturehistorysociety.org

www.furniturelibrary.com



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SMITH, JACKIE L	RENNAISSANCE	7-Feb
BROWNE, SHAUNA M	LOUIS XVI	14-Feb
ENSMINGER, CASSANDRA L	ADAM/HEPPLEWHITE	19-Feb
NGUYEN, LONG	NEOCLASSICAL	21-Feb
MADRIGAL, GUILLERMO A	SPANISH COLONIAL	26-Feb
LONGACRE, JAMES R	FEDERAL	28-Feb
FEUSI, KAYSHA M	VICTORIAN	6-Mar
STEVENS, KATHRYN A	SHERER/MAYHEW/DUNCAN-PHYFE	11-Mar
KELLY, CHRISTINE L	ARTS & CRAFTS	13-Mar
KOCH, JOSIE	SHAKER/AMISH	18-Mar
FINCH, RUTHANNE S	ART NOVEAU	20-Mar
WOODY, TONYA J	LATE 20TH	8-Apr
PERREIRA, JESSICA A	ART DECO	ARPIL 3
FITZGERALD-KNOWL, SUZANNE M		
NICOLAS, VICTORIA H		
POLLNOW, LAUREN J		
TANGALOS, ROSE B		

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During the early 18th Century, circa 1730, fashions changed, first in Paris and then in the rest of the Western world.

The new style, now known as the rococo established greater delicacy in the scale of objects and a more intimate connection of furniture and people.

Architectural ornament was less relevant, as pieces in Parisian interiors were conceived to be in scale with people rather than with rooms.

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French Rococo

French sources were of primary importance and influence and their results were the most elegant.

Rococo began in the reign of Louis XIV and flourished during the reign of Louis XV. The French version included ambitious designs in a variety of materials that required great skill to execute.

These were characterized by complex, sinuous forms that curved in every direction.

Fanciful patterns were inlaid on layers of veneer that, in turn, were framed with *ormolu* (gilded bronze) outlining the legs, edges, and drawer fronts.

Columnar legs were replaced by animal-form legs in a variety of curved shapes.

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English Rococo

In England the rococo was much more restrained. Inlays were used rarely because cabinetmakers favored the use of walnut and mahogany veneers, which were handled with great skill to exploit graining.

English designers—and those who were inspired by them—introduced cabriole (curved) legs with claw-and-ball feet for chairs, tables, and chests. This foot must have been inspired by the claw and ball known from Chinese bronzes (but not from Chinese furniture prototypes); it represents a popularization of Asian design.

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Toward the end of the rococo period in England, Thomas Chippendale published a book of designs, *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* (1754), in which he presented the English interpretation of the rococo style.

He was the first to categorize the varieties of rococo as French, Chinese, or Gothic and offered samples of each approach. Innovative French designs of the 1750s were translated by Chippendale into engraved designs of elaborately carved examples without the French use of ormolu or inlays.

The element of the rococo emphasized by Chippendale and by most English artisans was its air of whimsy, achieved in French examples by a novel use of classical motifs. In the Director, Chinese and Gothic designs were included as additional ways of achieving whimsy; moreover, *these designs could be executed more easily than those based on French sources.*

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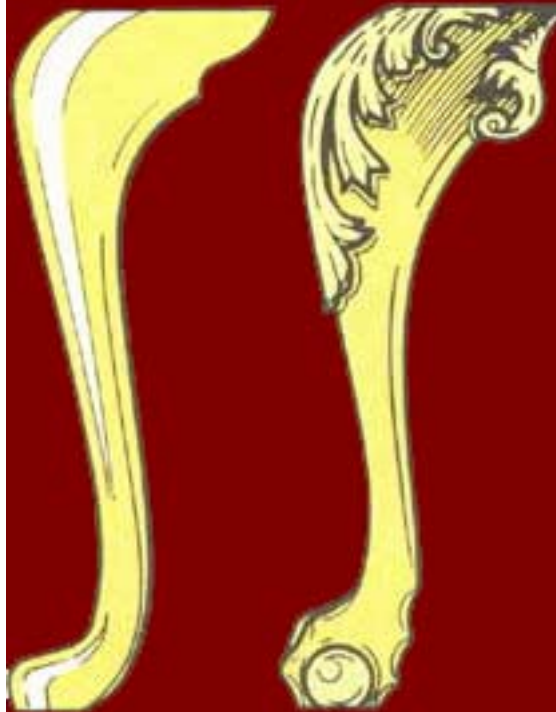
Thomas Chippendale Sideboard

A unique and handsome piece of Chippendale work. The outline is elegant, and the scrolling delicate. The pedestals are peculiar in their form, the panels being carved in draperies, etc. In the frieze are two drawers, with grotesque heads forming the handles. The back is fitted with shaped glass and surmounted by an eagle. The whole forms a very characteristic piece of work of the period, having been made about 1760-1770.

Thomas Chippendale published his book of designs in 1764, with the object of promoting good French design in this field of art.



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Thomas Chippendale, 18th century English furniture maker, gave his name to a great period as both designer and master craftsman.

Characteristics: derived styles combining English, French, and Chinese designs. Graceful and well-proportioned forms. Comfort sometimes sacrificed for appearance.

Early Chippendale pieces have cabriole legs; later pieces have strait legs. Carving was the main type of decoration, favorite styles being lions' paws, shells, acanthus, acorns, roses, dolphins, and scrolls. Fretwork is used extensively, veneering occasionally, and also gilding and lacquering. Inlay, painting, or applied ornament is also used.

Practically all Chippendale is almost exclusively mahogany. A jump from the common heavy oak pieces of his predecessors.

Upholstered materials include leather in colors, brocade, velour, satin, and plush. His large pieces had broken pediments, and his Chinese work always had fretwork.



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From about 1740 to 1760, English designers worked consistently on a small scale.

Some, however, chose to follow designs that were classical and more in keeping with an architectural style called the *Palladian*, in which Renaissance designs of the Italian 16th-century architect Andrea Palladio were scaled to 18th-century taste.

The London cabinetmaker William Vile, who was employed by the Crown in the 1750s and 1760s, made some classical furniture along with rococo work.

In the American colonies, the lightly scaled classical was as important as the pure rococo in furniture made between 1740 and 1780.

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English and American chair designs are the exception to the rule of continuing classical emphasis.

Fashionable designers in London developed elegant side and armchairs with wooden backs, a basic form different from the upholstered-back chairs favored on the Continent.

At first, the backs were made with solid splats as the central support, framed by curving rails and stiles in a design that was a very free adaptation of Chinese chairs. Later, the frame was yoke-shaped, and the splat was executed in one of a large repertoire—rococo in spirit—of pierced-work designs.

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In the English approach to furniture design, woods were handled with an appreciation of their distinctive qualities, and American cabinetmakers chose to follow the same path. In Europe, cabinetmakers were more intent on creating the appropriate rococo fantasies, using paint where inlays and ormolu might prove too expensive. Italian, German, Scandinavian, and even provincial French cabinetmakers followed this Continental manner of executing rococo design.

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Neoclassical Furniture

Neoclassicism, a reaction against the rococo in favor of classicism, was a movement that began while the rococo was still at its height. The designers who initiated it advocated a return to ancient Greco-Roman sources rather than to the Renaissance. To suit 18th-century taste, however, they adapted the ancient models by scaling down the ornament to a delicacy that appealed to those bored with the rococo.

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The question of who was responsible for this revolution in design is a disputed one.

Robert Adam, the English architect, introduced the first of his neoclassical designs before 1760. Across the English Channel in Paris, however, an important collector, La Live de Jully, had furnished a room “à la grecque,” or in the neoclassical style, at about the same time.

Artists of English, French, and other nationalities were finding the ruins of Rome and Athens worthy of study and were becoming aware of the place of history in the study of design.

Neoclassicism was the first conscious effort to revive a style, rather than to use elements of a past style as inspiration for new designs. The earliest efforts were less Roman than its designers seemed to believe, but the change to purer historicism occurred in a relatively short time