

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Refinishing furniture adds personal touch

Beautifully decorated homes can become even more so with the addition of beautiful antiques. These additions to the home may be handed down from generation to generation or picked up at a flea market, auction or garage sale.

While the original finish on some pieces may be in perfect condition, many of your bargains may be in need of refinishing. You can do this yourself, and when you are finished you will find even more pride in the lovely antique gracing your home.

"It is important for people buying furniture to know what they are buying in terms of wood. It is up to people to try to learn as much as they can as to what kind of wood they are buying," says Ivan Terron, owner of a local refinishing firm. Oak, ash, pine and elm are in the antique class and are more valuable. Maple or birch are more common and therefore less valuable.

When restoring a piece of furniture careful attention must be given to any repairs needed. Careful matching must be made.

If it is a family piece, you may want worn pieces to remain to create a visual picture of what was. If this is the case, sand to a smooth finish leaving any distinguishing marks for authenticity.

"It's up to the individual whether or not to make it as authentic as possible," says Terron.

To keep the look of the original finish, keep as much texture as possible. Don't destroy the look by sanding into the wood fibres. It is best to match original colour, adds Terron.

To strip furniture use a paste or gel stripper. Apply with a brush and work slowly and in small areas. Layer the stripper on and leave it on the required time. Let the stripper work for you. Don't rush it or you defeat the purpose of using it. The stripper will bubble the old paint and varnish right down to the wood.

Use a scraper to remove the old finish and then wash the piece with lacquer thinner.

As a safety precaution, Terron advises "watch your eyes, use safety glasses, be in a well ventilated area and definitely no smoking."

The next step is sanding and Terron advises using a 120 grit sandpaper. Go with the grain, using light easy strokes. Keep the area clean and dust free by brushing frequently. A scraper may be needed in corners. Try to obtain a nice smooth finish.

Depending on the individual, a stain may or may not be needed.

"If you choose to stain, a lighter stain is more versatile," says Terron. "You have a better chance of working towards the colour you want with several light coats rather than making it too dark at the start."

It is difficult to lighten a too dark stain without using the sanding process again.

After the stain is dry, usually after 24 hours.

Again, it depends on personal preference as to the type of finish desired.

You can brush on a lacquer finish or a urethane finish. This finish is almost care-free as most spills wipe up with a damp cloth.

Terron suggests thinning the sealer instead of putting it on straight.

Use a very thin coat to seal. Too much can build up and give your furniture a synthetic look.

You need to sand between each coat of sealer. Keep the area nice and clean and, most importantly, dust free. A very fine sandpaper of 220 or 240 weight is needed.

A finish such as Danish oil, which contains wax, needs to be buffed between each coat to bring out the satin finish. This finish is very good for preserving wood but is not as good protecting from spills as a urethane finish is.

An oil finish is used on woods such as mahogany or teak. These woods have natural oils, and the oil finish combines with these to preserve.

Oil is used on walnut, as it really brings the grain out.



OWN LINE OF PAINT

Warren and Gaye Klein, owners of Elmvale Home Hardware can advise you on your decorating needs. Choose from wallpaper or from the many colours of Home Hardware's

own brand of paint. A complete line of tools and household goods are also available to help you start and finish any household project.

Welcome...

TO
YOUR ONE STOP
DECORATING
CENTRE

Fantastic fashions

Partners and Edwards Floor Fashion is a decorating centre designed to help you have the home you want; offering a complete range of floorcoverings, (including carpeting, vinyls and ceramic tiles) wallcoverings, venetians, verticals, decorator fabrics, custom-made draperies, bedspreads and custom re-upholstery.

Our customers are guaranteed skilled craftsmanship, quality merchandise, service and decorating assistance from a qualified interior decorator. In our showroom knowledgeable sales personnel are available to answer your questions, and here you can receive help in

co-ordinating colours, designs and textures from samples of materials in drapery and upholstery fabrics, wallcoverings, and floorcoverings. An 'At Home Decorating Service' is also extended to our customers at no additional charge; providing additional help in blending floors, walls and window treatments into the customer's own personal room scheme.

Our decorating experience includes restaurants, resorts, businesses and offices as well as homes. Visit our 'One Stop Decorating Centre' soon and let Partners and Edwards Floor Fashions help in "putting it altogether" for you.

Drapery care important

After you have chosen new draperies for your home, attention to their care will give your draperies the longest possible life. However, draperies cannot be expected to last forever. It has been determined through testing that lined drapes should wear for five years; unlined, four.

With special care, these years can be beautiful years for your windows. To maximize their beauty and useful years, experts suggest you clean draperies frequently, at least once a year, and vacuum thoroughly between cleanings. Rotate them if possible, and protect them from atmospheric

elements, such as moisture from condensation on the window pane or inclement weather that reaches the draperies through open windows or patio doors.

Bring in swatches of material you are considering for his or her opinions on its maintainability. Your dry-cleaner can steer you to the best fibres, colours and fabric construction for particular problems you may know you will be facing, i.e., sunlight, water seepage on windowsills, atmospheric fumes. You know your home, your drycleaner knows fibres. Together you can keep both beautiful.



FLOORING - DRAPERIES - UPHOLSTERY - WALLCOVERINGS
(Venetians & Verticals)

293 KING ST.

526-2271

Partners
and
Edwards
FLOOR FASHIONS

DOWNTOWN
MIDLAND

526-3382