

Decorator's Notebook

Furniture Finds: Getting The Look For Less

(NAPSA)—Whether it's an apartment, condo or house, buying your first home can be exciting as well as expensive. After depleting your savings account purchasing your home, you might start to feel the pinch when it comes to furnishing it.

Here are some tips to get the look of luxury without the price tag:

- **Be Resourceful.** How do you find quality furniture without paying a high price? If you're willing to put in some time, buying unfinished or used furniture to refinish can save you a lot of money and leave you with the same look for less.

- **Sniff Out Bargains.** Hunt for fix-me-up furniture in attics, garage sales and flea markets. Some of the best pieces could be hiding in a friend's or relative's attic. Keep in mind that finding the perfect piece may not be love at first sight. Look beyond the surface to see if there is potential for refurbishing.

- **Transform Timeless Furniture.** Before you take home any piece of furniture, check for structural flaws such as cracks, loose joints, lifted veneer, warped surfaces or uneven legs. If the integrity of the piece is still good, refinishing it can change the appearance from old and worn to beautiful and timeless.

- **Give Furniture a Facelift.** Before you can banish the old finish, you need to find out what you're removing. Give it the cotton ball test. Dampen a cotton ball with acetone nail polish remover, then choose an inconspicuous test spot and dab it with the cotton. If



Attics—and yard sales and flea markets—are good places to look for low-cost furniture.

it sticks or the finish softens, you have a varnish, lacquer or shellac finish. Formby's recommends using their Furniture Refinisher, which will gently dissolve this type of finish. If nothing happens when you dab the cotton ball, then the finish is most likely paint or polyurethane. Try Formby's Paint & Poly Remover to lift and remove the old finish. After a light buffing with Paint & Poly Remover Wash, you're ready to add a beautiful new finish.

- **Rub On the Finishing Touch.** Applying a finish is essential for protecting stripped, stained or bare wood from moisture and wear. Formby's Tung Oil Finish imparts a warm, hand-rubbed luster to wood, enhancing its natural charm. By hand-rubbing Tung Oil into wood, you eliminate the potential for streaks, ensuring a beautiful, smooth finish. Tung Oil penetrates wood, protecting from the inside out.

For more information on furniture refinishing and project ideas, visit formbys.com.