

# Refinishing can turn trash into treasured heirlooms

since there are dozens of ways to refurbish and refinish a wooden piece.

Your romance probably will begin at a junk yard or at a flea market, garage sale, antique store, thrift store, estate sale, auction, junk shop or swap meet. You might even uncover something worthwhile in your neighbor's trash heap.

Once you find it, it's up to you to evaluate just how you'll revamp your new-found treasure. Options include:

- Refinishing: Revive a dis-

tionable home furnishings are those with painted-on finishes.

A brush, sponge and techniques picked up through craft workshops or instruction booklets can help you create faux effects such as marbling, antiquing or tortoise shell, a stenciled design or a whimsical trompe l'oeil presentation.

With contrasting colors, you turn an ordinary piece into art furniture simply by highlighting interesting features with color, or by applying bold patterns and mo-

tifs.

• Upholstery: A few yards of cloth can revive a weathered sofa or chair and bring it into your present decorating scheme.

Turn the job over to an upholstery professional or learn do-it-yourself techniques through community education classes and how-to instructions in decorating magazines.

Those handy with the sewing machine can whip up slipcovers that update a worn piece while neatly disguising sins of the past.

By Sharon Williams  
Copley News Service

You love wood. And you'd never let age get in the way of a relationship with a beautiful, if not youthful, piece of furniture.

Your state of mind fits right in with the times. Furniture recycling and refurbishing are among the hottest decorating trends going today because they're smart both economically and environmentally.

Both also offer loads of opportunities in the way of creativity

## You can add security, too

There's no better time than during a remodeling project to install devices that enhance your home's security and safety.

Some to consider include low-voltage outdoor lights (ideally with motion-sensor controls), deadbolt locks on exterior doors, handrails in the bathroom (and other features to assist the elderly and disabled), and/or motion-activated alarms for doors and windows.

Your home should have a smoke detector on every floor. A new model from Generation 2, a company based in Overland Park, Kan., never needs a battery. It screws into a ceiling light fixture, and then the bulb is screwed into the smoke detector. The device works whether the light is on or off.

Other innovations include wide-angle peepholes (trade names include Door Scope and Doorspy) and video entry systems (one made by Aiphone has infrared capabilities and also serves as a room-to-room intercom).

If you're considering an electronic security system, make sure the company offers 24-hour central station monitoring. The written estimate should include installation, maintenance and monitoring charges.

Many companies offer a free security audit, inspecting the home to determine possible entry points and potential fire hazards; they then explain how these risks can be reduced or eliminated.

According to Joe Riggio, president of Holmes Protection of New Jersey, "Security technicians often work closely with decorators to match control panels, sensors and other equipment to any interior design."

He adds that security devices can be disguised as stereo speakers or other household items; wiring can be hidden under moldings. If you're a do-it-yourselfer, you'll find numerous home security and safety devices at larger hardware stores and home improvement centers. Also check retailers that specialize in these devices; one chain is the Safety Zone.

# Bedrooms are more than a place to lay your head

hardwoods, with posts that disassemble to make it easier to move the bed.

• Natural material beds make of raffia and twigs and rough-hewn wood posts.

As varied as furniture styles are, the real dress-up fun comes in the choice of mattresses and linens in which to outfit the bed.

Standard mattresses range from run-of-the-mill to those with extra-cushy quilting and ticking. Flotation and water mattresses have been engineered to reduce unnecessary movement while pro-

• American 19th century and country looks in lighter finishes that let wood grain show through.

• Iron beds with aged, antique look. In addition to basic black, iron beds are available in green, blue, gray and rust tones.

• Spartan Shaker-style beds, including ready-to-assemble ensembles that can be set up in just couple of hours.

• Sleigh beds and daybeds, which can do double duty as sofa and guest bed in sitting rooms and dens.

• Classic four-poster beds in

By Sharon Achatz  
Copley News Service

Today's bedrooms are full of sweet dreamy things that are as pretty to look at as they are comfortable to sleep on.

With all the furniture design and accessory options available, it's easy to create a room that offers not just place to sleep, but a distinctive mark of individuality.

Popular design styles for traditional bedroom pieces — such as beds, chests, nightstands and ar-

moires — include:

• Carpenter's level (18-inch). If you'd like to stock your garage or workshop with tools that go beyond the basics, consider:

- Pipe wrench (8-inch and 10-inch sizes).
- Combination square, for building projects.
- Set of wood chisels, for making cuts in wood and chipping.
- Cold chisel, for removing bolts and rivets.
- Small hacksaw, for cutting metal or plastic.
- Set of hex key wrenches, also known as Allen wrench.
- Pocket plane, for shaving wood from boards.
- Staple gun, heavy-duty version.

You needn't buy the following, unless you plan to use them often; they're available at rental service stores and yards:

- Concrete saws.
- Generators.
- Ladders.
- Power drain cleaners.
- Pumps.
- Power tools.
- Rototillers.
- Floor polishers.
- Air compressors.
- Rug shampoos.
- Wheelbarrows.
- Welders.

• Retractable steel measuring tape.

• Utility knife with a retractable blade.

• Putty knife.

• File for sharpening blades and tools.

• Power drill with a starter collection of bits.

• Plastic goggles for eye protection.

• Plumber's friend or plunger.

## Tool box tips

By Debra Lee Baldwin  
Copley News Service

Similar to a well-stocked medicine cabinet, a basic tool kit is must-have for every home. You'll be glad you have it when those inevitable repair projects come along. Your basic tool kit should contain:

- Hammer, fiberglass or wooden handle, weighing 16 ounces.
- Screwdrivers, several sizes of Phillips head and flat head.
- Slip-joint pliers (10-inch).
- Curved-jaw locking pliers. Commonly known as Vice-Grips, these work like a clamp or small vise.

• Needle-nose pliers with a built-in wire cutter.

• Adjustable wrench, also known as a Crescent wrench.

• Crosscut saw. The basic hand-saw.

• Retractable steel measuring tape.

• Utility knife with a retractable blade.

• Putty knife.

• File for sharpening blades and tools.

• Power drill with a starter collection of bits.

• Plastic goggles for eye protection.

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## HOMEFACTS



More than 3 million families will be burglarized this year

Burglars will steal more than \$3.4 billion in money and property this year, or about \$1,000 per home.

Facts about residential burglaries

- Police catch the thief in only one of seven burglaries.
- Burglars choose houses on corners for 40 percent of all break-ins.
- Burglars find someone at home in 13 percent of break-ins.
- About 49 percent of break-ins happen in daylight hours.

SOURCES: Justice Department; Money magazine

Copley News Service/Ken Marshall

# Bedrooms are more than a place to lay your head

viding optimum support. The newest option is a 10-inch thick pillow top, whose extra layers of padded luxury feel as comfy as a feather bed.

Bed linens cover the design and color spectrums, often with coordinating or complementary fabric curtains, throw pillows, slipcovers — even upholstered headboards.

Shaker simplicity pairs well with classic quilt comforters, floral brights or pastels, complementary or contrasting patterns, the stark simplicity of a basic spread or the cluttered comfort of heaps of paisleys and plaids.

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