How To Identify Traditional Furniture Styles

No question about it -designing a room is hard work. Selecting colors, labrics and furniture that work together to create a fabrics and furniture that work together to create a comfortable, beautiful environment requires an eye for design that's difficult to

You can, however, learn to identify the styles of furniture that best suit your personal decorating needs. By paying careful attention to details you'll be able to choose pieces that complement your home and each other, according to Tom Burak, fashion director at Pennsylvania House, makers of fine quality furniture.

"Although trends in home furnishings tend to change from year to year, classic furniture designs remain popular and versatile choices," says Burak.

"Whether it's Colonial, Queen Anne or Chippendale, there is a variety of furniture styles available today in a wide range of prices, many inspired by priceless originals but refined to suit today's active lifestles." Burak offers several suggestions to help the furniture shopper identify these popular styles.

"Most furniture styles are characterized by a particular silhouette, shape or proportion," he says.

"Long tapering legs, a square back or gently curving arms and decorative carved motifs like shells, acanthus leaves, or ribbons all offer clues to identifying each style or period."

period."

An understanding of the basic history of furniture is also helpful, notes Burak. "For example, during the early Colonial period, American furniture design was utilitarian with few fanci-ful elements. Painted de-signs, usually on native pine, were the only sign of decoration.

"The gracful S-curve is ound on chairbacks, airrors and even table-ops," says Burak. "To omplement the elegant ilhouette, furniture sur-

faces were kept simple. Veneering and lacquers were used to add detail to the sophisticated designs.

the sophisticated designs.

The furniture of Queen
Anne's time reflect a re-Anne's time reflect a re-finement in grace and com-fort. "To provide comfort, chairbacks were shaped to contour to the body. The upholstered wing chair made its debut during this era, and is one of Penn-sylvania House's most popular styles today," explains Burak

Thomas Chippendale's stlye offers richly carved surfaces with gracefully proportioned curves, according to Burak. "The claw-and-ball foot, used with cabriole legs, is one of the most characteristic motifs.

"Acanthus leaves. knotted ribbons and elaborate fretwork are borrowed from the Oriental, Gothic and Queen Anne styles and incorporated into distinctive, easily identified designs."

Pennsylvania House's Philadelphia Highboy is inspired by an original Chippendale design, Burak adds

Masters of cabinetmaking and inlay, Thomas Sheraton and George Hepplewhite followed classic lines to create restrained, dignified pieces.

"Perpendicular lines and graceful sweeping curves were characteristic," says Burak. "Oval shapes, lyres and latticework were used with delicately turned legs and careful inlays and veneers. Adaptations of antique Sheraton and Hepplewhite pieces are scaled down to suit today's smaller spaces in Pennsylvania House's new 18th Century Cherry Collection.

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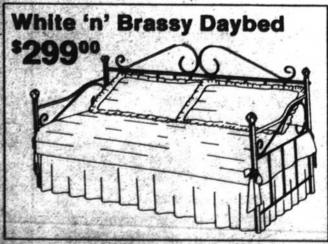


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