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How To Recognize Quality In Upholstered Furniture

quires X-ray vision. Often, an expensive fabric covers a poorly constructed frame, leaving furniture that looks terrific, but will not last.

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A trained eye can detect the true value of a sofa, wing chair or ottoman by examining key elements beneath the upholstery.

"Upholstered furniture should be inspected from the inside out, and valued the same way," says Walt Hamilton of Pennsylvania House, makers of fine furniture.

"Most consumers concentrate on the overall appearance of upholstered furniture, often overlooking basic construction features." If the piece isn't properly constructed, it is not a good value, says Hamilton.

The frame should be made of kiln-dried hardwood and have corner block reinforcements. Joints should be glued and double doweled. The legs should be extensions of the frame, not attached to a metal plate.

To test overall strength, lift the piece. It should be sturdy and should not creak or wobble. Apply pressure to chair arms and sofa backs to test for stability.

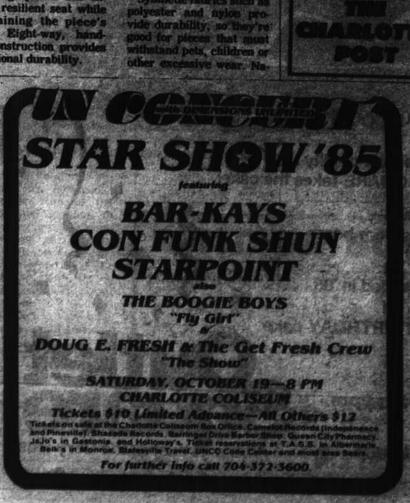
The spring system and

bility.

The spring system and cushions are other keys to the overall comfort and quality. A properly crafted spring system will ensure a resilient seat while maintaining the piece's shape. Eight-way, hand-tied construction provides exceptional durability.

Properly constructed padding will prevent springs from being felt through the upholstery. Cushions should be proper

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