
GALLATIN VALLEY

FURNITURE CARPET ONE

Bozeman Montana

Furniture Construction: Sofas, Chairs, Tables, and more

You don't have to be a cabinet maker to buy furniture, but it is helpful to know a little about its construction. When shopping, investigate a piece's construction thoroughly, open drawers in chests; look at the underside of chairs; check the joinery work in casegoods. Ask questions about the materials used in order to learn about its stability and longevity.

There are thousands of manufactures that engineer furniture in different ways. We have outlined some basic information and pictures about furniture construction to help you quickly identify variations in quality. We would like to note it is the first factor we evaluate when choosing the brands and lines we carry and display on our showroom floor. These are the features we evaluate when choosing the brands we display on our showroom floor:

- **The Frame**

Frames are made of kiln-dried hardwood, hardwood plywood, softwood plywood, strand board or various combinations of these materials. Kiln-dried hardwood and hardwood plywood are noted for holding pegs, screws, staples and nails securely in place for longevity. For durability, look for reinforcements that are glued and screwed into place at critical joints and stress points. Less durable pieces may only staple support blocks in place or have none at all. Make sure the frame feels sturdy, sits squarely on the floor, and doesn't creak or wobble. Lesser quality furniture will use manufactured wood to save on costs. For more information about wood types, please see the "Wood Characteristics and Features" section.



Reinforcement is provided with corner blocks. This practice is also used with casegoods (i.e., tables, beds, etc...)



Back rails are reinforced by uprights to provide the utmost stability.



Quality frames will ensure structural integrity at every joint.

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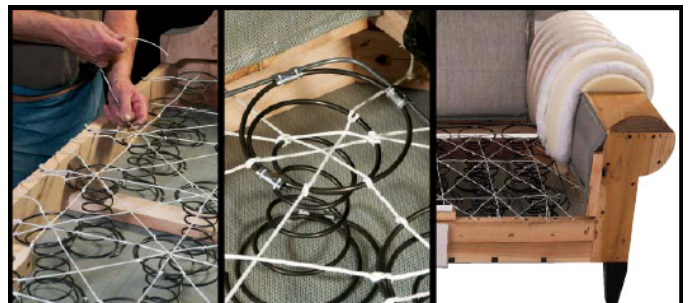
- **Cushioning & Seating**

Comfort is ultimately defined by personal preference. That's why we offer so many seat cushion options. Furniture cushions may be constructed using springs, cotton fiber, polyester fiber, or even down, but most are made using some type of polyurethane foam. Density is used to gauge the durability of foam. Generally, the higher the density the more durable the cushion will be. Better quality upholstered furniture uses foam with a density rating of at least 1.8 to 2.5 pounds per cubic foot. Foam cushions should be wrapped or covered to protect the foam from direct contact with the upholstery fabric. Ask a sales professional about cushioning or backing of a sofa's ability to retain its shape. Overtime, all foam or feathered seating and cushioning will break down, higher quality seating and cushioning units will have springs or coil systems encased within.



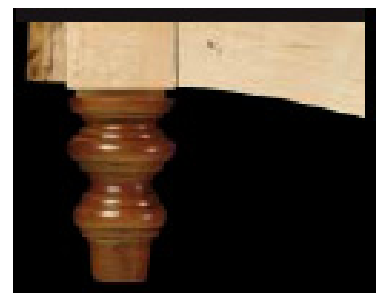
- **Eight Way Hand-Tied Spring Systems**

Eight-way, hand-tied, coil spring construction was once considered the hallmark of quality upholstery. In this type of foundation, each coil spring is placed in the seat by hand and tied into place with twine in a series of interlocking knots. Today, other construction techniques, including new steel spring configurations, offer equal comfort and durability. In general, the number of springs in the foundation and how they are reinforced determines cost and quality.



- **The Foundation / Legging**

More durable pieces of furniture will have legs that are from the same piece of wood as the frame. Many pieces of furniture will have different leggings for style, finishes and functionality purposes, such as rollers.



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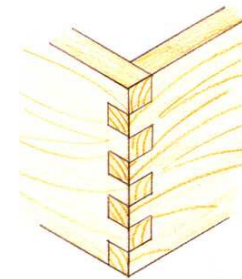
- **Mortise and Tenon Joints**

Most case construction features mortise and tenon joinery, a time-proven method of assembling two parts at a 90° angle.



- **Finger Joints**

To add strength to the furniture while minimizing flex across the joint, finger jointed corners are applied with glue and screws.



- **Dove Tailing**

Dovetail drawer construction utilizes the best dovetail for each application. English dovetails on the drawer front and back create a tight fit add exceptional holding power and usually provide more space in drawers. French dovetailing is also a very strong locking joint, but it is machined so that the drawer side slides upward into a long groove in the drawer front. These joints are quite often found in less expensive furniture and some special applications, liked curved drawer fronts. They are also found in a lot of imported furniture.



- **Joint Tips:**

A joint is the critical area where two pieces of wood are joined together. The strength of a joint determines the stability and durability of furniture. The best joinery (such as dowels, dovetails or mortise-and-tenon joints) is also glued, locking the pieces together and increasing glued surface areas. Corner blocks glued into corners add even more stability.

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- **Drawers**

Drawers should fit well, glide easily and remain level. They should be smooth inside with dust panels between drawers blocking dust and other material. Drawer fronts should be attached to the sides with concealed dovetails; backs may be joined to the sides by dovetailing or a simpler form of joinery. Corner blocks are often used for extra stability. Wood on wood glides or other mechanical sliding systems will provide a more smooth and efficient operation of drawers.



- **Backing**

Many manufactures will reduce costs by placing particle board or other types of manufactured wood in the backing of some pieces of furniture that are intended to be hidden from view/against a wall. Typically this practice has little to do with durability or overall quality of a piece of furniture.

Caring For Your Wood Furniture:

The longevity of your furniture will depend on the amount of care you take, degree of use and number of times it is moved. Never use soap and water or window/countertop sprays on wood. Be careful of surrounding wood when cleaning mirrors on wood pieces. If you do use a damp cloth with wax or another cleaning product, be sure to dry immediately with a soft, clean cloth. There are many good quality wood care products on the market, but take a moment to read the instructions, they are not all used or applied the same way. Pay close attention to any care instructions that come with your new furniture.

