

# Reduce, Reuse, Recycle - old furniture

As part of the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle pattern of protecting the environment, consumers should consider buying second-hand furniture. This reduces the carbon footprint of the manufacture of new furniture.



"The manufacturing of new furniture has a considerable impact, especially when you consider that packaging, storage and shipping form part of the lifecycle of new furniture. There's a long supply chain that we have no influence over, but we can reduce our carbon footprint by adjusting our buying habits," says Richard Mukheibir, MD of Cash Converters.

Selling old furniture or buying 'pre-loved' furniture keeps it out of the landfill. It is also one less item that has to be manufactured from scratch, thereby saving raw materials, reducing the carbon footprint and lowering CO2 emissions.

"We can see by the quality of stock that comes into our shops, and how quickly it moves, that our society is slowly becoming less of a disposable society. People are more responsible when it comes to disposing of items they no longer need, by selling them to furniture resellers.

"Nearly new furniture loses value in the resale market, which is a major plus for those who are looking to purchase second-hand goods. Many pieces are still in excellent condition and can be purchased at a bargain price. Additionally, when you buy pre-loved furniture, you can often buy much better quality than you would be able to if you were buying brand new. Your purchasing power is extended."

Mukheibir cautions that when you purchase previously owned goods make sure you are getting a good quality item and there is some form of guarantee.

## Furniture buying tips

- Try it out, take a seat, open drawers, lean on tables... make sure the piece is in satisfactory shape.

- Let the creative juices flow. A lick of paint or new upholstery can breathe new life into any item of furniture.
- Ignore the minor faults. Sometimes a little DIY can turn an ok-item into a wow-item. It is easy to sand down a few scratches or simply replace a cushion.
- Pay attention to the type of wood used. Hardwood furniture, such as oak, is durable and is a good material for items you expect to last a long time. Softwood furniture like pine is more suited to furniture you do not expect to have over a long period.
- Know your dimensions and have a good idea of the amount of space you have before purchasing a large item.
- Browse regularly, especially if you are looking for something in particular. Pre-owned stores get new stock all the time, particularly during the change of season or around Christmas.

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