

Furnishings

Fabrics

Any material that is made through bonding, crocheting, knitting or weaving is considered fabric.

Fabric is chosen for its *fiber* content, *weave* and *pattern*.

Fabrics are made from either natural fibers like cotton, linen, silk and wool or synthetic fibers like fiberglass, acetate, acrylic, modacrylic, nylon, and polyester.

Weaves

Weaving is an ancient art that uses fiber to create fabric through handlooms or power looms.

Weaves are classified into three types:

Plain weaves > Plain and Basket weaves

Floating weaves > Twill and Satin weaves

Pile weaves > Cut and Uncut weaves

Patterns

Patterns are created by the weave of the fabric

Artistic patterns have been developed for many centuries in endless array of colors

Stability of color, soil and fire resistance are also important factors to be considered

Art

Art is a meaningful, artistic piece that compliments and shares its surroundings.

It is a desire to show or feature a picture, sculpture or other piece of artwork in a way that highlights the object.

Art should be chosen, not only for its content or sentimental value, but also for its suitability in size, scale and location.

Manufactured Casework

Manufactured casework includes stock cabinets made from metal, wood or plastic laminates and countertops, sinks and any fixtures or accessories mounted to the countertop.

Specialty Casework

Specialty casework is used in educational facilities as file cabinets, overhead storage, lab counters and under-counter storage, supply cabinets and trophy cases to name but a few.

There are many manufacturers of casework specializing in cabinets made from metal, wood or plastic laminates.

Many of these manufacturers specialize in making casework for industry or specialized facilities.

Specialty Areas

Child Care

Museums

Airports

Health Care

Ecclesiastical

Arenas or Stadiums

Animal Care

Residential

Waste Management

Distribution

Warehouses

Storage Facilities

Processing Plants

Commercial

Laboratory

Countertops

Countertops are workspaces that are mounted to the top of base cabinetry, to walls or freestanding with a support system. They are made from natural and synthetic materials to resist chemicals, heat and cold.

Office Accessories

For instance, clocks need to be where they can easily be seen but fit into the style and design of the space.

Desk accessories, lighting, trash receptacles, floor easels, projection screens, multi-media carts and coat racks are all necessary office accessories.

Office accessories or similar public places are not the home-style accessories that may come to mind but are necessary objects that are highly functional.

Furnishing Accessories

The list of furnishing accessories in residential and commercial applications is nearly endless. Accessories are a unique addition to the home. When choosing them, consider their contribution to the space.

Think of them in terms of mood, texture, color, size and shape before placement.

The most pleasing accessories are those that act like an extension of the space and enhance the décor.

Rugs and Mats

Entrance floor coverings include mats, grills, gratings, grids and tile.

The grills, gratings and grids are made from metal, rubber or synthetic materials.

Tiles are usually slate, quarry or a synthetic material like vinyl.

Rugs, mats and runners are made from the same materials and the same process as carpeting

Rugs, mats and runners are economical, long wearing and can easily be moved for cleaning

Window Treatments

Window treatments include curtains, draperies and their hardware and accessories.

It also includes blinds, interior shutters and shades.

Since there are many types and styles of windows that operate in different ways, there is no one-fits-all solution when it comes to window treatments.

Blinds

Venetian blinds are traditionally wood slats supported by tapes and maneuvered by cords.

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The thin strips are usually colored or the thick strips of cloth that are woven into the blinds are colored.

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Split bamboo blinds hang vertically and operate like draw draperies.

Vertical blinds are very popular in commercial application because of the large expanses of window to cover in curtain walls. They are also used in residential applications to cover large windows and doors.

Shutters and Hinged Panels

Shutters have fixed or louvered slats or space for shirred fabric panels.

Some shutters have inserts backed with fabric.

Panels are similar to shutters in that they can open and close.

Panels are usually plain and can extend from floor to ceiling, from windowsill to window top or to any length, the occupant desires.

Advantages of shutters and panels are that they provide privacy and if louvered, allow ventilation.

Shades

There are three basic types of shades:

Roller shades

Roman shades

Austrian shades.

Roller Shades

Roller shades are a strip of material that hangs from a spring-loaded rod placed at the top of the window frame.

They are made from many types of materials.

Translucent ones will allow some light to come through while opaque ones will completely block the light.

Both are durable, washable, by hand, and resistant to tearing, water and fire.

Roman Shades

Roman shades are usually made from rich, heavy fabrics that are used as the sole window treatment.

They are on pulls, much like the Venetian blinds.

The fabrics lay flat when extended and pleats into horizontal layers when the shade is raised.

Austrian Shades

Austrian shades or “balloon” shades operate on the same principle as the Roman shades.

Vertical cords are threaded through rings that are attached to the back of the shade at equal spacing across the width and height of the shade.

When the cords are pulled down together, the fabric lifts elegantly up into graceful scallops of beautiful fabrics.

Curtains and Draperies

Curtains and draperies are available in floor length, sill length and apron length unless custom-made

Formal curtains and draperies include glass curtains (sheers), draw draperies and drapery panels.

Informal curtains include shirred, ruffled and café curtains.

Formal Curtains

Glass curtains or sheers hang straight down from a rod behind the formal curtains or draperies next to the glass.

Draw curtains are designed for privacy and can be opened or closed using drapery hardware.

Drapery panels are narrow panels of fabric that cannot be drawn.

Informal Curtains

Shirred curtains hang directly on rods that are installed at both the top and bottom of the window inside the frame. The curtains are wider than the window by two or more times and are gathered onto both rods then shirred (aligning the curtains in a pleasing pattern).

Ruffled curtains usually have ruffled hems and some have ruffled inside edges. They have ruffled valances and tiebacks as accessories to finish the effect.

Café curtains are straight curtains hung from rings or tabs that slide along café curtain rods. They can be tiered to cover an entire window or hung only on the bottom half of the window with a valance hung at the top.

Commercial Furnishings

Commercial furniture includes any furniture needed for privacy, storage, work surfaces, shelving and lighting.

This includes furniture needed in educational facilities, office, retail, hospitality, recreational, medical, personal services and exhibition facilities to name but a few.

Character, comfort and scale should determine how a piece of furniture fits into any situation. An understanding or working knowledge of materials and finishes are an asset when choosing furniture for any facility. When choosing furniture make sure it is comfortable, sturdy, of good quality and fits into the space and style of the facility.

Systems Furniture

Systems furniture are panels and components that include work surfaces, shelves, drawer units, flipper doors, file units, task lighting, tack surfaces, pencil drawers, file pedestals and box pedestals to name a few of the options available.

The panels are acoustically designed and most are hard-wired for electricity, coax and phone lines.

They can be arranged in many different styles, come in several heights and lengths and can be matched to any décor.

Multiple Seating

Multiple seating is furniture that is required to accommodate audiences.

It includes fixed seating used in theaters, schools, auditoriums, restaurants, and the pews and benches used in churches to name a few.

Another type of multiple seating is stadium and arena seating that includes both bench seating and individual seating.

Restaurant style booths and tables, multiple-use fixed seating and telescoping bleachers and chair platforms, often found in school gymnasiums are included.

Residential Furnishings

Furniture styles, although many, usually fall into one of three main groups:

Traditional

Country

Contemporary

Traditional

Traditional or classical styles mostly come from early European designers, the French and English.

Cabinetmakers built furniture designed to please those who commissioned them.

Traditional styles are sometimes identified by the cabinetmaker that built the furniture or the reigning monarch of the time.

Country

Country styles are similar to traditional but more simplified.

The furniture is considered more casual and less ornate although its function is the same.

Country styles were more often named for their geographical region such as American Colonial, English Country, American, Italian and French Provincial.

Folk styles included Shaker and Pennsylvania Dutch.

Contemporary

Contemporary or modern styles evolved from Scandinavian designs and German Bauhaus designs.

The Scandinavian designs reflect the bold style that emphasizes the single sculptured lines of natural wood.

The German Bauhaus style was more interested in producing furniture that could be mass-produced.

Designs evolved around modular steel and laminated woods.

Lighting

There are three areas of lighting that the designers should concern themselves.

Health

Function

Aesthetics

Health and Function

Lighting for health relieves the strain on eyesight, fights fatigue and depression, physical discomfort and headaches.

Light can be controlled by reflectors and diffusers manipulating the glare that lighting can create and controlling the brightness so illumination has quality as well as quantity.

Consideration must be given as to what the function of the space is and what task is going to be performed when selecting the best lighting.

Aesthetics

There are three basic types of lighting used in buildings.

Incandescent

Fluorescent

Halogen

All three can be used as direct or indirect lighting or combinations of the three.

Lighting is chosen for aesthetics in certain areas.

Since there are too many types of lights to list it is important to understand that lighting can also be sparkling, dramatic or even sensual.

A need for variety due to the many tasks and functions of our buildings, results in the many forms of lighting from which to choose.

Interior Planters

Live and artificial plants are used extensively in commercial and residential buildings.

They assist in the process of air exchange, add humidity to the area and are aesthetically pleasing.

Keep in mind that just any plant may not create the effect or drama that the owner wants to create and therefore make sure that the scale, texture, size and form of the plant compliments the rest of the décor.

Site Furnishings

The interior of a building is not the only place that requires furnishings.

At the residential level there are patio sets, deck furnishings, pool accessories and garden seating to name a few.

Commercial buildings may want to add park benches, picnic tables, bike racks and trash receptacles to help their property stay clean. Others may want shelters, message centers and pet waste systems if they are near a park or residential area. In the parking area, owners may want to put down some speed bumps and add planters throughout the site.

Site furnishings, like interior furnishings, must be scaled to the site and be a complimentary style that fit well into the overall plan.