

SHOULD I REFINISH MY FURNITURE?

A STEP BY STEP DECISION GUIDE



THE VIXENS DEN STUDIO

WWW.THEVIXENSDEN.COM

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Welcome to the Vixens Den Studio!

Hey there! I'm Becky, your furniture and decor rejuvenation guide and misadventures maven behind the Vixens Den Studio.

I started stripping the finish off of my first piece of furniture over 10 years ago. Every day I dragged my husband's childhood dresser out of our storage shed, and shoved it back in to dry every night. There were so many layers of paint to remove, but the piece turned out beautifully! Since then, I've rejuvenated loads of furniture, discovering new products and techniques along the way.

Now I want to help you decide if furniture rejuvenation is right for you and your piece! This guide walks you through the process step by step with a decision checklist at the end.

Let's get started deciding what's best for you and your furniture!



To Refinish or Not to Refinish?

Are you confused by all of the noise surrounding whether to refinish or not to refinish your furniture? Are you afraid of "ruining" the value of your potentially "fine antique"?

Everyone has an opinion, and generally we are all willing to share it.

The problem with an opinion is that one size does not fit all. Everyone has different styles, interests, and goals.

This guide breaks down the decision making process step by step to help you decide what is right for you and your furniture. Because at the end of the day, you're the one who has to live with it.

So let's figure out if refinishing your furniture is the right step for you and your home.



DECISION PROCESS

Step by Step

FUNCTION

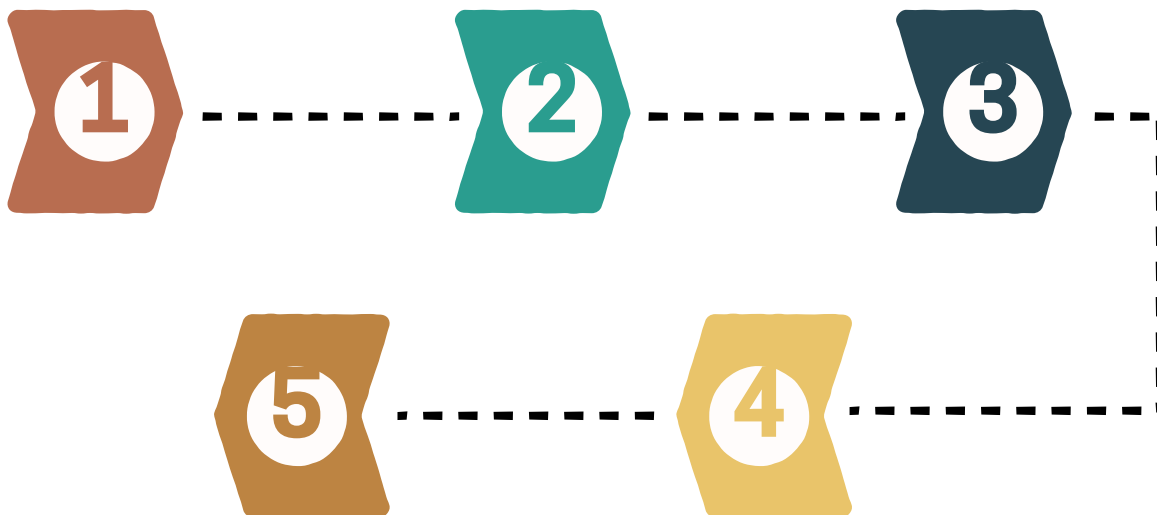
What is your intended purpose for the piece of furniture?

HISTORY

When and where was it made?

VALUE

What is the current market value?



CONSTRUCTION

What is it made of?

CONDITION

What is the current condition?



1: DO YOU WANT TO KEEP THE FURNITURE?

It doesn't matter how much a piece is worth if you never plan to sell it. While I still recommend evaluating a piece for its current value before you make a final decision, it's important that you love what is in your home. If you don't like the way a piece looks but you plan to keep it, then the choice is clear:

Refinish it!



"Be intentional with your space. Don't be afraid to step on a limb and design your home the way you love it."

JOANNA GAINES

(Interior Designer)

2: WHEN AND WHERE WAS THE PIECE MADE?

The "Original Antique" vs the "Valuable Reproduction"



An original antique will have value. But how much will depend on its condition and will still vary between dealers, locations, and the current design styles. Consult experts for appraisals before refinishing.

A reproduction looks like an antique but has far less value. If the makers mark and internet searches confirm to your satisfaction that your piece is a low value reproduction, then refinish it!



3: WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL VALUE?

Reminder: Knowing the current value only tells you what a piece "might" be worth at a moment in time.

ON THE FURNITURE



Start with the piece itself. Look for a "maker's mark" which could be a stamp or a sticker with the manufacturer's name. Search for the manufacturer on the internet.

GOOGLE LENS



The next step is to snap a quick picture of your piece and run it through the Google Lens App. This will show you similar pieces and links to find out more about your piece and its potential value.

AUCTION SITES



Besides eBay, there are auction sites such as liveauctioneers, invaluable.com, gotoauction.com, auctionzip.com, or Sotheby's. These sites will give you a basic idea of what pieces have sold for in the past.

ANTIQUE DEALERS



If you think your piece may have great value, then it is always best to have a professional evaluate it, if only for insurance purposes. I recommend consulting at least three and averaging the appraisals.



4: DOES IT NEED REPAIRS?

If a piece is significantly damaged then it can be repaired. However, the repair may take significant time and materials.

This could be a wonderful opportunity to learn some new skills, or it could be a frustrating waste of time and money. I have several posts that cover various furniture repairs.

Evaluate the piece thoroughly, review the posts and decide if you want to move forward.



“In 100 years time all the corners are rounded off, there are dents, dings. It is a souvenir of life and history.”

CHARLES SHACKLETON

(Master Craftsman)

DINGS

There are many ways to easily disguise dents and dings from years of use. This is the easiest type of repair.



DAMAGED FINISH

Depending on the type of finish that you have, it could be a simple repair, or a full finish removal process. This is a time-consuming but simple repair.



STRUCTURAL CRACKS

Structural cracks could be as simple as a re-glue and clamp, or as complex as a tear apart and rebuild. It depends on a lot of factors.



MISSING OR DAMAGED PARTS

Here's where things get really creative. You can rebuild damaged or missing parts by hand, or find replacements from a reputable source. The complexity of this repair depends on the location of the damage.





5: WHAT MATERIAL IS IT MADE FROM?

The base material of your project determines the materials and techniques that you will use.

In general, you will have a much better final product if you are working with a solid material.

Most modern furniture is constructed using an MDF (Medium Density Fiberboard) material that is easily damaged and challenging to repair.

It can be done, but it requires special care to seal the material properly so that it doesn't swell during the refinishing process.



“The question of what you want to own is actually the question of how you want to live your life.”

MARIE KONDO

(Interior Designer)

MOST MODERN FURNITURE LOOKS LIKE REAL WOOD

Reminder: Whether it's real or not, if you love it and want to keep it then you should. Just be prepared for some extra challenges.



Furniture may contain a combination of solid wood frames and MDF or particle board tops or drawer fronts. These can still be finished, just be very careful when removing the parts or repositioning the furniture.

Veneer is an entirely different material. It is a very thin sheet of solid wood overtop of a less expensive solid or engineered wood. Veneer requires extra care when refinishing to make sure you don't sand through to the wood underneath.



Refinishing Decision Checklist



WILL YOU BE REFINISHING YOUR
PIECE OF FURNITURE?

I'M KEEPING IT FOREVER ☐

**IT'S NOT AN ORIGINAL ANTIQUE OR
VALUABLE REPRODUCTION** ☐

IT DOESN'T HAVE SIGNIFICANT VALUE ☐

**IT'S NOT SEVERELY DAMAGED OR I AM
WILLING TO FIX IT** ☐

**IT'S SOLID OR I'M WILLING TO LEARN
DIFFERENT REFINISHING TECHNIQUES** ☐

*If you checked off all the boxes, then you're ready to start the
refinishing process!*

*If not, then you have a piece that may be an investment. Consider
consulting a professional for valuation.*



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“HAVE NOTHING IN
YOUR HOUSE WHICH
YOU DO NOT KNOW TO
BE USEFUL OR
BELIEVE TO BE
BEAUTIFUL.”

WILLIAM MORRIS
(Designer)

READY FOR THE NEXT STEP?



*Rujevenate your furniture.
Love your home.*

Congratulations! You now have the process that you need to decide whether refinishing your piece of furniture is right for you. If you would like more information on the next steps, I recommend starting right here at: www.thevixensden.com. I would love to help you with any questions you may have! Email me at: Becky@thevixensden.com.

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