



How to quit fast furniture and design a timeless home

An Exclusive Guide by ECONYL® Brand

ECONYL®

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Fast furniture, explained

First came fast food. Then fast fashion.
And now fast furniture.

Fast furniture

[NOUN]

/fɑːst 'fɜːnɪ.tʃə/ noun

Mass-produced, low-quality furniture designed for quick consumption and disposal.

A decorative pink shape in the top-left corner, consisting of a quarter-circle and a rectangular extension.

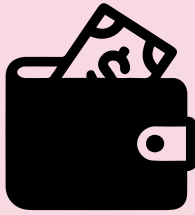
Why it's time to quit

The high cost of low-quality living

Do it for



The planet



Your wallet



Your health



Your happiness

The planet

Fast furniture impacts the environment through resource depletion, pollution and staggering waste. In 2018, Americans threw **12 million tons** of furniture, and over 80% of it ended up in landfills.¹



Let's not contribute to the mounting pile.

Your health

Toxic “forever chemicals” – known as **PFAS** – have been found in cheap furniture products, contaminating our homes.



Don't fall for that seemingly appealing “new furniture smell.” It could actually be a sign that harmful substances are being released.²

¹ “US Environmental Protection Agency, “Durable Goods: Product-Specific Data”

² Koren Helbig, “How to Avoid ‘Fast Furniture’ and Deck Out Your Home with Goods That Will Last,” The Guardian, May 3, 2025

Your wallet



Fast furniture has built-in obsolescence: **it lasts around 5 years**, and most of it is non-reusable, non-repairable and non-recyclable³.

Don't let a short-term saving hurt your pockets in the long term.

Your happiness

Does the first home look familiar? If you've spotted a similar design at a friend's place, it's no coincidence – fast furniture is turning our flats into soulless, cookie-cutter **replicas**.

Wouldn't you feel happier in a home that truly reflects your character?



Friend's living room 1



Friend's living room 2



³ Debra Kamin, "Fast Furniture Is Cheap, Stylish and Clogging American Landfills," The New York Times, October 31, 2022

Think before you buy

Six questions for conscious
home decor



1

Is buying new my only option?

Not everything needs to come in bubble wrap. The most sustainable purchase is often the one that already exists. Shopping new should be a **last resort**, not the default.

Check the next section of this guide for smarter (and often cheaper) alternatives.

What materials is it made from?

Look for durable, natural, renewable, or recycled materials:

- Solid wood
- High-quality metal
- Regenerated ingredients like ECONYL® nylon

Watch out for toxic, short-lived, and hardly recyclable options:

- Composite materials like particleboard and MDF
- Non-renewable and non-recyclable materials and coatings
- Harmful pollutants in finishes

2

3

Where was it produced?

Furniture miles matter. The closer to home it's made, the lower the footprint. **Geography** also tells a story about labor practices, working conditions, and supply chain transparency.

Prioritize items **produced locally** or in regions with strong protections against illegal logging and human rights violations.

Is the item third-party certified?

Labels and **certifications** can help you identify products that meet environmental and ethical standards. Look for tags like:

- FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) for Wood
- OEKO-TEX or GOTS for Textiles
- GREENGUARD for Chemical emissions

4

5

Who made it?

Every piece has a maker. Support companies that care for the planet and the people behind their products. If in doubt, check their **Sustainability Report**.

Look for our curated shortlist of brands that walk the talk in section 5.

What happens at the end of its life?

Think beyond the now. Can it be repaired, resold, repurposed, recycled? Or will it head straight to landfill?

Conscious furniture brands often offer **repair services**, and some even have take-back programs.

6

Old but gold

Four alternatives to buying new





1

Go second-hand

Vintage shops, online marketplaces, flea markets, or even curbside finds: second-hand furniture has history, character, and a much smaller footprint.

Repair, upcycle, and repurpose

A wobbly leg or worn upholstery isn't the end of the road. A few scratches aren't flaws, they're part of a piece's history. With a bit of creativity – or by working with a trusted local craftsman – you can give these pieces a second life, and a whole new personality.

2

3

Rent

Need something short-term or just testing out a style? Some companies – like Fernish – now offer furniture rentals, letting you furnish flexibly without long-term commitment or waste.

DIY

If you're up for the challenge, making your own furniture is a pretty cool option.

Here's our selection of DIY tutorial channels:

1. Woodworking for Mere Mortals – [Steve Ramsey](#)
2. Wilker Do's – [April Wilkerson](#)
3. Frank makes – [Frank Howarth](#)



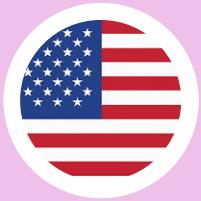
Treasure hunting

Where to find pieces
with soul and character



If buying new

A curated shortlist of brands that walk the talk:



Avocado

Handcrafts furniture in California from reclaimed wood, free of chemicals and designed for lasting quality and sustainability.

visit the site



MAKE Nordic

Creates long-lasting quality furniture, made from FSC-certified wood and OEKO-TEX -certified textiles.

visit the site



New Weave

Produces circular carpets made from our ECONYL[®] nylon and offers take-back services to ensure they are regenerated at the end of their life.

visit the site



Adventures in Furniture

Champions transparency, disclosing an environmental and ethical rating for all its wood furniture.

visit the site



Spotlight: ECONYL® e-shop

An online marketplace featuring products made with ECONYL® regenerated nylon. The shop offers a curated selection of items across various categories, including home accessories and decor items.

visit the site

For more, check out our B2C article on **slow furniture e-commerce platforms** worth exploring.



If buying secondhand

Online marketplaces

Etsy Reclaimed Furniture

A goldmine for one-of-a-kind reclaimed furniture. Think rustic barnwood dining tables built from salvaged timber, or vintage industrial shelving made with repurposed metal pipes.

[visit the site](#)

Facebook Marketplace

The digital equivalent of treasure hunting in your own neighborhood. You'll find secondhand gems just a few blocks away – often at bargain prices.

[visit the site](#)

eBay

Where vintage meets variety. With auctions, filters, and certified sellers, it's secondhand shopping with an edge.

[visit the site](#)

Flea markets and thrift shops

The ultimate playground for conscious furnishing, offering a wide array of unique items that you simply won't find at traditional furniture stores or big-box chains. The hunt is half the fun, and each item has a story waiting to be told.

Find the best ones in your city – a simple internet or social media search will do:



Best flea markets and thrift stores in...

Still unsure what to do?

Here's your everyday compass



If you'd like to buy furniture...

