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# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding the dates of periods and styles

Dates	Monarch	Period	French Period
1558-1603	Elizabeth I	Elizabethan	Renaissance Louis XIII (1610-1643)
1603-1625	James I	Jacobean	
1625-1649	Charles I	Carolean	Louis XIII (1610-1643)
1649-1660	Commonwealth	Cromwellian	Louis XIV (1643-1715)
1660-1685	Charles II	Restoration	
1685-1688	James II	Restoration	
1689-1694	William & Mary	William & Mary	
1694-1702	William III	William III	
1702-1714	Anne	Queen Anne	
1714-1727	George I	Early Georgian	
1727-1760	George II	Early Georgian	Régence (1715-1723) Louis XV (1723-1774)
1760-1811	George III	Late Georgian	Louis XVI (1774-1792) Directoire (1792-1804) First Empire (1804-1814)
1811-1820	George III	Regency	Restauration (1815-1830)
1820-1830	George IV	Regency	
1830-1837	William IV	William IV	Louis Phillipe (1830-1848) Second Empire (1848-1870) Third Republic (1871-1940) French State (1940-1944) Provisional Government of the French State (1944-1947) Fourth Republic (1947-1958) Fifth Republic (1958-)
1837-1901	Victoria	Victorian	
1901-1910	Edward VII	Edwardian	
1910-1936	George V		
1936-1952	George VI		
1952-	Elizabeth II		

German Period	Style	Woods	Dates
Renaissance (to c.1650)	Gothic	Oak (to c.1670)	1558-1603
			1603-1625
Renaissance/ Baroque (c.1650-1700)	Baroque (c.1620-1700)	Walnut (c.1670-1735)	1625-1649
			1649-1660
			1660-1685
	Rococo (c.1695-1760)		1685-1688
			1689-1694
			1694-1702
Baroque (c.1700-1730)	Early mahogany (c.1735-1770)	1702-1714	
Rococo (c.1730-1760)		1714-1727	
Neoclassical (c.1760-1800) Empire (c.1800-1815)	Neoclassical (c.1755-1805) Empire (c.1799-1815)	Late mahogany (c.1770-1810)	1727-1760
			1760-1811
Biedermeier (c.1815-1848)	Regency (c.1812-1830)	Exotic timbers, calamander, amboyna, ebony (c.1800-1900)	1811-1820
Revivale (c.1830-1880) Historicismus (c.1830-1880) Jugendstil (c.1880-1920)	Aesthetic (c.1830-1880)		1820-1830
	Arts & Crafts (1880-1900)		1830-1837
Weimar Republic (1918-1933) Third Reich (1933-1945)	Art Nouveau (c.1890-1915) Art Deco (c.1920-1940) Moderne (c.1920-1940)	Oak revival, bird's eye maple, rosewood (c.1920-1940)	1837-1901
	Utility (c.1940-1950)		1901-1910
Allied military occupation (1945-1949)	Mid-century Modern (c.1945-1980)	Chrome, tubular steel, bent and moulded plywood (c.1925-)	1910-1936
Federal and German Democratic Republics (1949-1990) Reunification (1990)	Minimalism (c.1950-1970) Postmodern (c.1980-1990) Contemporary (c.1990-)	Aluminium, moulded plastic, fibreglass, teak, Formica (c.1940-)	1936-1952
		MDF, plastic laminates (c.1980-)	1952-

# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding woods

The wood used to make a piece of furniture can help you to date it – essential information if you plan to sell it. These pages show the most common types used to make furniture.



Amboyna



Beech



Birch



Knotted birch



Calamander



Cherry



Chestnut



Coromandel



Ebony



Elm



Burr elm



Kingwood



Mahogany



Fiddle back mahogany



Flame mahogany



Maple



Bird's eye maple



Tiger maple



Oak



Pollard oak



Olive



Pine



Knotted pine



Rosewood



Bazilian rosewood



Satinwood



Sycamore



Walnut



Black walnut



Burr walnut



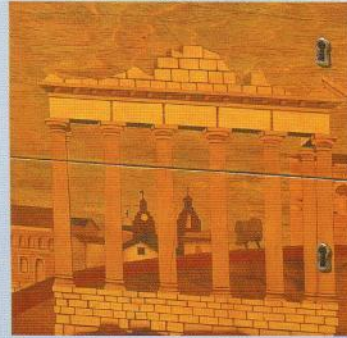
Yew



Burr yew

## DECORATIVE WOOD TECHNIQUES

### MARQUETRY



A pictorial mosaic made up of small pieces of different coloured woods and, often, other materials such as mother-of-pearl. These are often

enhanced with staining, colouring or engraving. The technique originated in Italy and spread to the Low Countries and Germany in the 16th century. Typical designs include flowers and birds.

### PARQUETRY



A form of marquetry that employs geometric designs, rather than figurative

or floral motifs. It is usually formed from woods with strong grains, such as kingwood and satinwood. Parquetry was popular during the French Régence and used on Neoclassical furniture.

### CROSSBANDING AND STRINGING



Introduced during the Renaissance and used to frame edges.

Crossbanding

is the practice of laying strips of veneer at right angles to the main veneer. They may be framed with a strip (or string) of contrasting wood or metal.

### FEATHER BANDING



Also known as herringbone veneering, feather banding is a refinement of

crossbanding and is also used to frame edges. Two strips of straight-grained veneer are cut on the diagonal and laid side by side to form a mirror image of each other. In the early 18th century, it was often used on the finest pieces, particularly case furniture.

# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding pediments

The style of pediment used to decorate the top of a bookcase, bureau, longcase clock or other item of tall furniture can help you to date it – essential information if you are hoping to sell. These pages show the most common pediment shapes in date order.



**Mid-17thC protruding foliated cornice, above scrolled acanthus-carved frieze**  
The Netherlands



**Late 17thC moulded cornice above a carved frieze**  
Wales



**Late 17thC moulded cornice, inlaid with foliate reserves**  
William and Mary, England



**Early 18thC stepped cornice**  
Queen Anne, Britain



**Early 18thC swan neck and gilt ball finial pediment**  
Queen Anne, Britain



**Early 18thC double-domed, cavetto-moulded pediment**  
Queen Anne, Britain



**Early 18thC ogee-arched pediment, with large carved central shell**  
George I, Britain



**Early 18thC moulded overhanging pediment**  
George I, Britain



**Early 18thC broken-arch pediment, centred by an urn finial**  
George I, Britain



**Early 18thC bow-shaped moulded pediment**  
George I, Britain



**Early 18thC moulded, broken triangular pediment, centred by a Rococo cartouche**  
George I, Britain



**Mid-18thC broken swan-neck pediment, centred by a coronet finial**  
George II, Britain



**Mid-18thC arch-shaped cornice**  
Germany



**Mid-18thC double-domed pediment**  
The Netherlands



**Mid-18thC moulded, domed pediment**  
The Netherlands



**Mid-18thC dentil-carved broken arched pediment, centred by a Grecian bust**  
George II, Britain



**Mid-18thC broken pediment, centred by urn-shaped finial, leaf-carved frieze**  
George III, Britain



**Mid-18thC moulded cornice, with central carved mythical beasts**  
The Netherlands



Late 18thC fretwork swan-neck pediment, dentil and drop cornice  
George III, Britain



Late 18thC moulded swan-neck broken pediment  
George III, Britain



Late 18thC broken triangular pediment, with over-projecting cornice  
George III, Britain



Late 18thC arched, cavetto-moulded cornice with a central rosehead  
The Netherlands



Late 18thC arched leaf-crested cornice  
The Netherlands



Late 18thC moulded pediment, the crest and cornice with dentillated borders  
George III, Britain



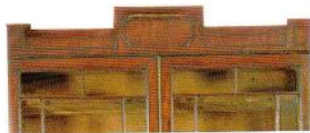
Early 19thC architectural pediment  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC swan-neck pediment, with rosette-carved terminals  
Ireland



Early 19thC domed pediment, with a central urn with trailing acanthus  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC astragal beaded pediment, centred by a tablet  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC domed inlaid pediment  
Regency, Britain



Mid-19thC triangular open pediment, with carved dentil cornice  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC arched and leaf-carved pediment  
The Netherlands



Mid-19thC moulded cornice with plain central pediment  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC broken pediment, centred by a Grecian urn, above a plain frieze  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC arched moulded cornice  
Victorian, Britain



Late 19thC broken pediment, centred by a gadrooned, twin-handled urn  
Victorian, Britain



Late 19thC stepped cornice, with a scroll-carved pediment  
Victorian, Britain



Late 19thC flared, bracketed pediment  
Arts and Crafts, Britain



Early 20thC cornice, carved and pierced with whiplash tendril uprights  
Art Nouveau, Italy



Early 20thC curved dog-tooth cornice, fretwork pediment, turned vase finials  
Edwardian, Britain

# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding furniture handles

The style of handle used on a piece of furniture can help you to date it, which is essential if you are hoping to sell. This page shows the most common handle shapes in date order.



**Late 17thC round with drop handle**  
William III, England



**Late 17thC star with split pin**  
William III, England



**Late 17thC ornate with drop**  
William III, England



**Late 17thC round with ring**  
William III, England



**Early 18thC ormolu, swing**  
Régence, France



**Early 18thC batwing, swan-neck**  
George I, Britain



**Mid-18thC chinoiserie, fixed**  
Louis XV, France



**Late 18thC circular with drop**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC turned pull**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC husk and scroll drop**  
Louis XVI, France



**Late 18thC with drop handle**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC chinoiserie**  
The Netherlands



**Late 18thC swan-neck**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC foliate, shaped drop**  
Italy



**Late 18thC classical, oval**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC embossed, drop**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC foliate, drop**  
George III, Britain



**Late 18thC ring with backplate**  
George III, Britain



**Early 19thC ormolu foliate**  
Empire, France



**Early 19thC oval, drop**  
The Netherlands



**Early 19thC lion's-head, pendant ring**  
Regency, Britain



**Mid-19thC turned wooden pull**  
Victorian, Britain



**Mid-19thC glass pull**  
Victorian, Britain



**Mid-19thC foliate**  
Second Empire, France



**Late 19thC embossed oval**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC pierced pull**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC solid handle**  
Aesthetic, Britain



**Late 19thC heart**  
Arts & Crafts, Britain



**Late 19thC**  
Arts & Crafts, Britain



**Late 19thC hammered,**  
Arts & Crafts, Britain



**Early 20thC**  
Art Nouveau, Britain



**Early 20thC pierced**  
Art Nouveau, Italy



**Early 20thC goose-head pull,**  
Art Nouveau, France



**Early 20thC Bakelite pull,**  
Art Deco, Britain



**Early 20thC bronze pull**  
Art Deco, France



**Early 20thC chrome gate pull**  
Art Deco, France

# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding furniture legs and feet

The legs and feet on this page are shown with the dates when the styles were prevalent. Styles tended to be used for longer in the provinces and revived at later dates.

### LEGS



**Cup and cover leg, block foot**  
Charles II, England



**Bobbin-turned block leg**  
Charles II, England



**Barley-twist leg, flattened bun foot**  
Charles II, England



**Turned-inverted leg, turned foot**  
Charles II, England



**Cabriole leg, pad foot**  
George I, Britain



**Shell-carved cabriole leg**  
George II, Britain



**Cabriole leg, hairy paw and ball foot**  
George II, Britain



**Moulded straight leg**  
George III, Britain



**French cabriole leg, scrolling toes**  
George III, Britain



**Turned, tapered ring-turned leg**  
George III, Britain



**Turned, tapering front leg, pad foot**  
George III, Britain



**Reeded, turned, tapered leg**  
George III, Britain



**Regency sabre leg**  
George III, Britain



**Lobed baluster, brass cap**  
Victorian, Britain



**Turned baluster**  
Victorian, Britain



**Double scroll X-form support, brass caps**  
Victorian, Britain



**Double scroll leg, hoof foot**  
Victorian, Britain

### FEET



**Block foot**  
James I-George III



**Spanish foot**  
Charles II-George II



**Bun foot**  
Charles II-George II



**Pad foot**  
George I, Britain



**Irish trifold foot**  
George I, Britain



**Claw and ball foot**  
George II, Britain



**Hairy paw foot**  
George II, Britain



**Shaped bracket foot**  
George II, Britain



**Ogee bracket foot**  
George II, Britain



**Spade foot**  
George III, Britain



**Splayed foot**  
George III, Britain



**Turned toupie foot**  
Victorian, Britain

# IDENTIFYING FEATURES

## Understanding chairbacks

The style of a chairback – especially the shape and any decoration – can help you to date the chair, which is essential if you are hoping to sell it. These pages show the most common shapes in date order. It may also help to look at the type of wood used (see pages 242-243).



**Mid-17thC turned baluster back**  
Jacobean, England



**Mid-17thC carved back-splat**  
James II, England



**Mid-17thC arched and carved top with caned backrest**  
Charles II, England



**Late 17thC carved top rail, double scrolls**  
William and Mary, England



**Early 18thC back with wavy splats framed by scrolls and leaves**  
William III, England



**Early 18thC back with inlaid vase-shaped splat**  
Queen Anne, Britain



**Early 18thC back with moulded top rail and vase-shaped splat**  
Queen Anne, Britain



**Mid-18thC giltwood back, with carved serpentine top rail**  
Louis XV, France



**Mid-18thC giltwood back rail with carved flowers and leaves**  
Louis XV, France



**Mid-18thC back with carved crest rail over pierced waisted splat**  
George III, Britain



**Mid-18thC pierced ladder back**  
George III, Britain



**Mid-18thC back with undulating scrolled top rail and vase splat**  
George III, Ireland



**Late 18thC giltwood back with leaf-and-tongue border**  
Louis XVI, France



**Late 18thC giltwood upholstered back with berry finials**  
Louis XVI, France



**Late 18thC giltwood shaped back with arched top rail**  
Louis XVI, France



Early 19thC shield-shaped back with foliate and acorn-carved rails  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC shield-shaped back, with carved wheat ears and with a pierced splat  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC painted shield-shaped back, in the French Hepplewhite style  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC Hepplewhite-style arched triple splat shield back  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC inlaid shield-shaped back, with heart back and moulded crests  
George III, Britain



Early 19thC bar back carved with palmettes  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC back with painted and pierced rails  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC lyre-back, with solid top rail  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC ornamented backrest  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC moulded, tapered square back with scroll supports  
Regency, Britain



Early 19thC backrest decorated with a fan motif and floral marquetry  
Biedermeier, Germany



Early 19thC shaped back with carved top rail  
Empire, Russia



Early 19thC balloon-shaped back with patera-carved splats  
Victorian, Britain



Early 19thC pierced carved back with twisted columns  
Gothic Revival, Britain



Early 19thC buttoned blue leather back, with relief-carved thistle cresting  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC Venetian shell-shaped back  
Italy



Mid-19thC arched scrolling back with shaped vertical splat  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC giltwood moulded back with leaf-carved frame  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC back elaborately carved with flowers  
Victorian, Britain



Mid-19thC back carved with dragons chasing pearls  
China



**Mid-19thC carved and pierced back with crest**  
Gothic Revival, Britain



**Mid-19thC button-upholstered back**  
Victorian, Britain



**Mid-19thC Anglo-Indian high arched backrest carved in lattice openwork**  
Victorian, India



**Mid-19thC Thonet bentwood scrolling back**  
Austria



**Mid-19thC waisted button back with turned and blocked fluted uprights**  
Victorian, Britain



**Mid-19thC tracery-filled back with castellated top rail**  
Gothic Revival, Britain



**Mid-19thC shaped back with solid top rail**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC balloon-back**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC shield-shaped back with vase-shaped splat**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC papier-mâché back with painted decoration and gilt highlights**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC lyre back**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC reeded spindle back with a reeded frame**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC upholstered back with carved gilt surround**  
Victorian, Britain



**Late 19thC carved Black Forest back with a bear, oak boughs and leaves**  
Switzerland



**Late 19thC back formed from two fallow deer antlers, with cushion**  
Germany



**Late 19thC ladder-back**  
Arts and Crafts, Britain



**Late 19thC tall carved and panelled back**  
Arts and Crafts, Britain



**Late 19thC curved top rail and heart-pierced splat**  
Arts and Crafts, Britain



**Early 20thC ladder-back**  
Arts and Crafts, Britain



**Early 20thC back with waved splats and curved uprights**  
Art Nouveau, Britain



Early 20thC pierced back with oval crest and central splat inlaid with flowers  
Art Nouveau, Britain



Early 20thC triple-splat back  
Edwardian, Britain



Early 20thC Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann upholstered oval back  
Art Deco, France



Early 20thC stylised acorn back within 'theatre drape curtain' arched frame  
Art Deco, France



Early 20thC Thonet upholstered reddish-brown stained beechwood back  
Austria



Early 20thC back, Art Deco, Sweden



Early 20thC Marcel Breuer back, nickel-plated tubular steel and fabric  
Bauhaus, Germany



Early 20thC Mies van der Rohe Barcelona back  
Germany



Early 20thC Marcel Breuer cantilever back, leather on tubular chrome frame  
Germany



Early 20thC René Herbst back, tubular steel with elasticated sprung straps  
France



Early 20thC Gerrit Rietveld Zigzag oak back  
The Netherlands



Early 20thC Marcel Breuer, birch plywood back  
Germany



Mid-20thC Charles and Ray Eames plywood back  
USA



Mid-20thC Piero Fornasetti Lyre back, plywood with silk screen print  
Italy



Mid-20thC Arne Jacobsen Ant or No 3100 back, moulded plywood  
Denmark



Mid-20thC Harry Bertoia Diamond back, chrome wire  
USA



Mid-20thC Vernon Panton Cone back  
Denmark



Mid-20thC George Nelson Pretzel back, plywood  
USA

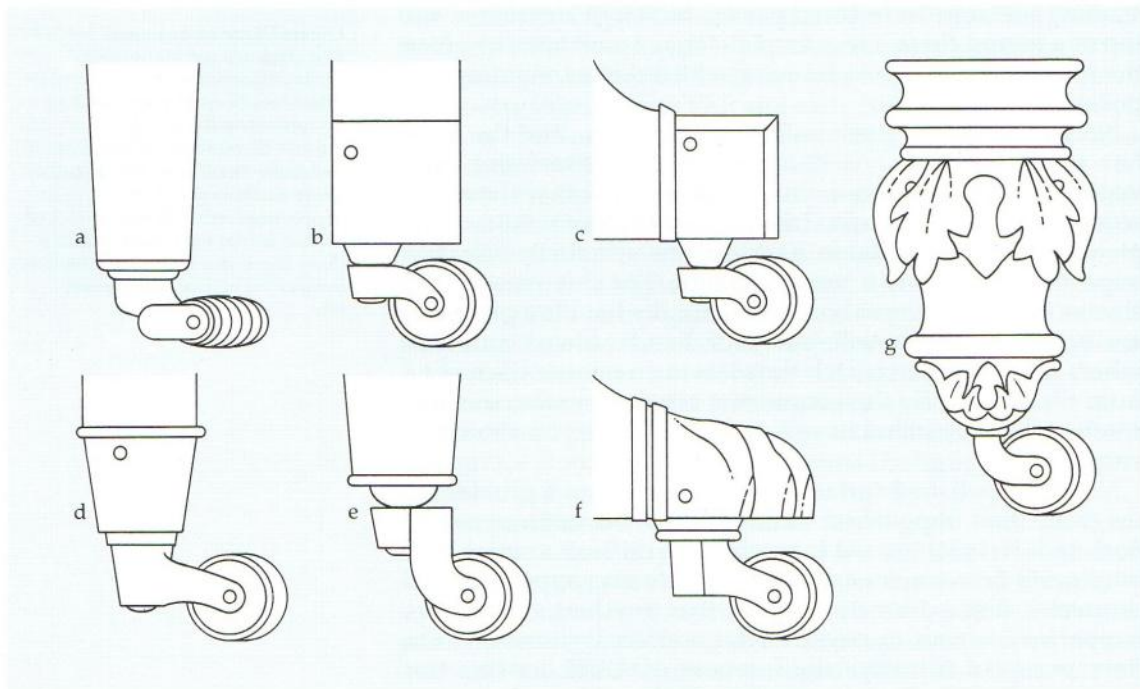


Mid-20thC Arne Jacobsen Swan back  
Denmark



Mid-20thC Eero Aarniro ball back, fibreglass  
Finland

## Dating Castors.



**[a]**  
The type of castor, with the wheel made of leather discs, used about 1740-60 concealed beneath claw and ball feet or to terminate square, untapered legs.

**[b]**  
The square cup castor, c. 1760-75; by now the wheel is likely to be of brass.

**[c]**  
Plain toe castor used on 18th-century splay-leg furniture; if it tapers it is likely to be post-1790.

**[d]**  
The tapered cup castor: from about 1785.

**[e]**  
The simple brass castor used on small pieces of furniture in the last quarter of the 18th century.

**[f]**  
The lion's paw castor, used on splay-leg furniture 1800-1820 and on much reproduction furniture since.

**[g]**  
Cast gilt-metal castor of the late Regency—after 1825. The decoration of the castor now reflects the ornamented foot.

place to put it if it is to be more than mere ornament.

Another useful clue to a mismatch is that many cabinets made to sit on bureaux and secretaire chests were fitted with a row of small drawers at the bottom. These will properly be of the same quality of construction and of the same timber as the small drawers in the fitted part of the bureau or in the secretaire drawer. As with all two-part furniture, check overall for compatibility of quality, timber and back boards.

## Chairs

In the 18th century, the average upper middle class household would probably have had a set of 24 chairs — certainly a minimum of 12. Over the years, these sets have been divided by inheritance and it is now rare to find a set of 12 or even 10 dining chairs from the late 18th or early 19th centuries. In the 1950s and 60s long sets were not in demand — sixes were what the market wanted, made up of six singles, five singles with one carver or four singles with two carvers. At that time carvers, highly valued today, bore only a small premium over singles, and all were relatively cheap.

But demand has changed in the last ten years. As large pedestal dining tables have come back into fashion, longer sets of chairs are required to accompany them, and eights or tens are much sought after.

**Scrambled Sets** The simplest solution would be to copy up to the number required, but this is relatively expensive in materials and labour and the result is not as authentic-looking as the alternative — to scramble the set.

