8 Antiquing Tips for Smart Shopping

BY BRIDGET COILA, ANGIE’S LIST CONTRIBUTOR | FROM WWW.ANGIESLIST.COM

Looking for a bargain or trying to redo your entire home? Antique stores are a great place to start. Learn how to identify and assess deals on vintage pieces.

1. Know the jargon.
Understand the terms that antiques dealers use. By law, anything labeled as an antique must be at least 100 years old. Vintage collectibles are at least 50 years old. Other terms may not have a legal definition, so watch out for things tagged with terms like collectible, repro, reproduction or old-fashioned. They may not actually be old or valuable.

2. Stick with a style.
Identify your own needs and desires when it comes to antiques. If you’re trying to furnish an older home, decide what style would best suit the architecture. If you’re more interested in developing a collection of antiques that don’t take up much space, start researching vintage toys or collectibles small enough to display in a single cabinet or room.

3. Use a price guide.
Learn how to use a price guide before you head to the shop. These guides can help you identify specific pieces and determine the price range in which they’re normally sold. If you’re interested in collecting a specific type of item, such as art deco glass pieces or 18th-century furniture, use a guide that focuses on your category of interest. If you’re looking for a variety of antiques to use in your home, get a comprehensive guide that covers many different categories of antiques.

4. Ask questions.
Ask the shop owner or manager if he or she specializes in particular styles or types of antiques before you start exploring the store. Also ask if the proprietor belongs to any dealer associations or if he or she is a certified appraiser. The more knowledge and education the seller has, the more likely it is that he or she has priced the pieces appropriately.

5. Examine the piece.
Consider the condition of the piece you are interested in. Price guides can tell you the ideal price, but wear and tear can bring down the price considerably. Look for both normal wear, such as areas rubbed down by everyday use, and more severe damage, such as chips or cracks that have occurred accidentally.

6. Haggle smartly.
If you notice flaws, politely ask for a discount on the piece. Not all sellers will agree, but if you point out specific reasons why the piece should cost less than a standard price guide states, you might get a bargain. Don’t insult the store owner or claim that something is not genuine to try to get a deal.

7. Get it in writing.
Before you pay for your new antique, ask the owner about the store’s return policy. Get a written receipt that describes the item and its condition. A reputable seller should allow returns if an independent assessment determines that the item isn’t genuine.

8. Get it delivered.
Ask about delivery options before you finalize the sale. Some shops offer free delivery for large pieces, whereas others may throw it in as a perk if you are buying more than one item.
Antique collecting, the assembling of items of aesthetic, historical, and often monetary value from earlier eras. The term antique initially referred only to the pre-Classical and classical cultures of the ancient world. It is now applied to old artifacts of all cultures and, traditionally, an object usually defined as an object that is over a hundred years old.

History
Antique collecting has a venerable history dating from the preservation of valued religious objects in antiquity. By the 16th cent. English and European private collections of rarities flourished. It was the 18th cent., with its development of the art and science of archaeology, that produced the impetus for public and private collecting in earnest.

In the United States, collectors, seriously active since the 18th cent., first concentrated on old books, manuscripts, the possessions and mementos of famous men, and classical antiquities. State historical societies encouraged the growing interest in colonial history and its artifacts. In the late 1820s an association was founded to restore and preserve Mount Vernon, the first of the country’s many house museums. Finely crafted household articles such as pewterware and furniture founded collectors’ attention with the opening of the Centennial Exposition of 1876 in Philadelphia, in which reconstructed colonial rooms were exhibited. During the 20th cent., a great many objects in addition to paintings, books, and furniture attracted the collectors’ attention, and specialty collections grew in such items as quilts, bedspreads, jewelry, glass, coins, medals, matchboxes, chintz, porcelain, and silver and other metalcraft, needlework (including needlepoint, embroidery samplers, lace, and hooked rugs), bottles, stoneware, pill boxes, scrimshaw (expertly curved teeth and bones of sperm whale and walrus tusks), small figurines, fans, watches, clocks, periodicals, badges, daguerreotypes, postcards, photographs, toys, posters, military and political souvenirs, objects reminiscent of many forms of public transport (including railroad and ship bells, whistles, lamps, and models), buttons, and many varieties of folk art and memorabilia symbolic of the recent past.

What is an Antique?

As Michael points out, the word “antique” generally refers to an older object valued because of its aesthetic or historical significance. This loose definition applies to how we use the word in the title of our show.

But to understand the more precise definition of the word used by dealers, Michael talks about American history. He points out that the word’s definition changed in the 1930s. Then, as now, true antiques were considered artwork and came into demand. However, up until the 1930s the increasingly busy U.S. Customs Office kept facing the hard question: What objects should we classify as an authentic antique?

At the time, the word had different meanings for different people. In European collecting circles, the word would describe an antiquity from ancient Rome or Greece. In the United States, with its much shorter view of history, the word “antique” could describe an object made as recently as the Civil War. Businessmen looking to skirt duties tried to use an even vaguer definition, using the word to describe any beautiful and valued item that was less-than-new.

Seeking clarity (and a guidepost for what to collect duty free) the Customs Office polled dealers for a definition and from these formulated one of its own. Antiques, they concluded, were objects that pre-dated the mass production of objects in the 1830s. Since the defining moment went back about 100 years, the office defined an antique as something made over 100 years ago. Duty was collected on objects younger than the century-old divider and it still is.

Interestingly, the beauty of this definition is that it’s so elastic,” says Michael. “As the years move forward, so does the cut-off date that delineates an antique.

“In a stroke of luck, the Customs Service ended up doing us a favor,” says Michael of the new industry standard: “The one-hundred-year mark may be crude, but it’s helpful. We tend to think in terms of centuries. To have that as a gauge gives people a sense of time and distance.”

The definition also did away with a lot of the arbitrariness that was used to go into deciding what objects should be considered antiques.

To answer this deceptively simple question, we’ve turned to Michael Flanigan, a Baltimore expert in American furniture who likes to think about such things. In fact, Michael was one who suggested Antiques Roadshow on the idea that we’d have him introduce the first word.

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Antiques

What About Bob Antiques

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Junction Antiques and More

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Mackenzie's Antiques

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Plains Antiques & Home Furnishings

Red Barn Collectables

Scrantons Collectibles

The Strange & Unusual

What About Bob Antiques

What is an Antique?

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Antiques on the Avenue, an eclectic antique store in Scranton, has been open for business since September of 2017. Renee Brunetti, owner of Antiques on the Avenue, says she has a “mixture of things” for sale in her Prescott Avenue shop and is always on the hunt for unique items. “I’m always trying to find really odd pieces,” Brunetti says. One interesting piece that Brunetti mentioned was a small, alligator prepared by a taxidermist and styled with a top hat and a bow tie. She says it’s not the first one she’s gotten either.

Brunetti also has a passion for mid-century primitives. “I’m always trying to get out there is vintage clothing and jewelry,” she says. “I try to do a lot of quackery medicine, old, funky medical books — odd things.” Her customers enjoy her selection, too. Brunetti says she has repeat customers who come in and shop for specific items. “I have one customer who loves the blingy, fancy things,” Brunetti says. “And another that looks for old vintage suits — anything odd and unique.” Renee is looking to buy antiques for her shop, as well. If you’re looking to sell antiques call ahead of time to make an appointment. Check her out on Instagram at @reneebrunetti27 or find her on Facebook by searching for Antiques on the Avenue.

Antiques on the Avenue sells vintage clothing from 50s, 60s and 70s and costume jewelry to accessorize. Along with vintage costume jewelry Brunetti has a selection of sterling silver jewelry. “I sell to a lot of retailers and dealers and I’m always looking for over the top pieces,” she says. “I try to do a lot of quackery medicine, old, funky medical books — odd things.”

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### 10 Things You Should Never, Ever Pass Up at Antique Shops

**Costume Jewelry**

The gems don’t have to be real for the piece to be valuable. Flashy by well-known makers like Sarah Coventry, Weiss, Trifari and Renoir can fetch big bucks, like $500 for a pair of earrings.

**Antique Purses**

You might already own a vintage beaded purse, but the market is trending toward more retro offerings as well. Try searching out brightly-colored lucite purses from the late 50s the next time you’re out shopping.

**Native American Baskets**

These are easier to source in stores than online due to their fragile nature, advises antiques expert Dr. Lori Verderame. “Look for the leading,” she says. “You want to see a sharp, clean line.”

**Kutani Chinaware**

“You’ve got to be careful with ceramics because the makers do change a lot,” Verderame warns. “What keeps its value pretty well is Kutani chinaware.” The Japanese white porcelain offers such craftsmanship, you can hold it up to the light and see exactly how thin it is.

**Meissen Porcelain**

Another valuable type of ceramic? Meissen porcelain, from the German town of the same name. Don’t pay big bucks just because it’s authentic, though. “With any antique or collectible, if it’s not in good shape, leave it alone,” Verderame advises.

**Tin Toys**

For the young at heart, vintage toys are the way to go. The lithographed tin variety are especially collectible. "They can sell for $45 and you flip them online for somewhere between $250 to $350," Verderame says.

**Duncan Phyfe Furniture**

In case you’ve missed it, mid-century furniture is having a moment, but traditionalists don’t have to give up on collecting classics. Verderame recommends looking for pieces done in the style of 19th-century furniture maker Duncan Phyfe since they go for reasonable prices while still maintaining value.

**Maria Martinez Pottery**

This Pueblo artist produced so much of her iconic blackware, you can now find it all over the country, Verderame says. Take note: Martinez often signed her pieces different ways and with other members of her family, dating her creations to specific time-frames.

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### HOURS

**FRIDAY**

11-7

**SUNDAY**

11-5

Appointments available. Call for more information.

**Antiques on the Avenue**

1027 Prescott Avenue, Scranton • 570-604-0177 or 570-800-5928

Search ‘Antiques on the Avenue’ on Facebook

**Appointments available. Call for more information.**

**By Hartt Lang | HLANG@TIMESLEADER.COM**

**Times Leader**

**A Guide to Antiquing and Furniture Restoration**

Sunday, April 8, 2018
How to Paint Furniture: A Beginner’s Guide

BY ERIN SPAIN, HOME, DIY, LIFESTYLE BLOGGER | WWW.ERINSPAIN.COM

PROJECT SUPPLIES:
- Murphy’s Oil Soap
- Medium Grit Sandpaper
- Fine Grit Sandpaper
- Primer
- Tack Cloth
- Paint
- Paintbrush
- Foam Roller
- Paint Sprayer (Optional)
- Topcoat

SUPPLIES:
- Paint
- Primer
- Foil Roller
- Paintbrush
- Tack Cloth
- Topcoat

How to Paint Furniture:

STEP 1: PREP, PREP, PREP!

First, prep your piece of furniture. You can’t just slap on a coat of paint and call it a day. It will peel and chip and it will not last. The first thing I like to do before I paint a piece is to give it a good cleaning (after removing the hardware, of course), especially if it’s been sitting around in a dusty garage or storage space. Murphy’s Oil Soap works great and it’s safe for furniture. Remove all drawers before painting and work on those separately.

STEP 2: SAND

Next, sand your furniture and get all of the glossiness off so that the paint will have a good surface to “grab” onto. Medium-grit sandpaper should be fine. (If you use fine-grit between paint coats.) If you are painting as opposed to staining, there is no need to strip the finish or sand it down to the bare wood. Simply removing the glossy finish will suffice. If the surface is already dull, you can skip this step.

STEP 3: PRIME

After your furniture is dry and dust-free, paint on some primer. This helps your paint adhere to the piece better and it also covers any stains or discolorations in the wood. I prefer KILZ Primer, and they also offer it in a spray (which I haven’t tried yet, but plan to!). I’ve heard great things about it. Oil-based primer is also great for furniture.

STEP 4: PAINT

Then, sand again! Using a fine-grit sandpaper, lightly sand your piece between EVERY SINGLE coat of paint. This helps you attain a much more professional and even finish. Be sure to remove the sanding dust each time—tack cloth works great.

STEP 5: PAINT AGAIN

Now that you have your piece primed and ready, it’s time to paint. For furniture, I use interior latex paint, usually in a semi-gloss finish. I recommend anything that’s not a flat finish. (It will show every fingerprint and flaw and will be harder to clean.) The glossier the finish, the easier to clean. Paint thin coats, and I will repeat: sand between each coat! This step is very important if you want to achieve an even finish. I normally paint 2-3 coats total.

STEP 6: PROTECT

After your last coat of paint has dried for at least 24 hours, you are ready to seal it. (Or you can just leave it alone and let it cure for about 30 days. But if you plan on doing this, then seriously, leave it alone and don’t touch it!) Sealing your furniture provides extra protection for your finish and also creates a wipeable, easy to clean surface. If you are using a white or extremely light color of paint, I highly recommend that you do NOT use polyurethane to seal your finish. If you are using a white or extremely light color of paint, I recommend anything that’s not a flat finish. (It will show every fingerprint and flaw and will be harder to clean.) The glossier the finish, the easier to clean. Paint thin coats, and I will repeat: sand between each coat! This step is very important if you want to achieve an even finish. I normally paint 2-3 coats total.

Now, there are a few different ways to go about painting. You can use a paint sprayer, or even regular spray paint (just get a decent brand!), a brush, or roller. I usually use a small foam roller on the main parts of the furniture and a brush in the hard to reach crevices, painting the crevices last. The roller helps prevent visible brush strokes.

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900 Marketplace - Art Craft & Vintage Market
April 29, 2018 • 10 AM – 4 PM • 900 Rutter Ave. Forty Fort, PA

“900 Marketplace features handcrafted items such as jewelry, pottery, furniture, home decor, skin and beauty products, candles, paintings, photography, and more. As well as vintage and antique dealers. One dealer sells vintage clothing and accessories, the others have vintage and antique home goods ready for use and others that are suitable for DIY projects.

The event will also have food trucks, food vendors, and live music. There will be over 80 vendors both inside and outside of the 900 building. With the majority being outside. The event is free to attend and (friendly) dogs friendly.”

- Shylo Egenski, Event Coordinator

April 29, 2018 • 10 AM – 4 PM • 900 Rutter Ave. Forty Fort, PA
900 Marketplace - Art Craft & Vintage Market

Market Vendor List

Amore Aroma
Anthracite Heirlooms
Art By Erin Jordan
Art of the Earth
Antiques Trading Co
Backwoods Brittle Company
Bad Kitty Knits
Beawaver’s
Beyond Loaves
Black Lab Fabrications
Blind Spot Nut Butters
Bobbi J. Designs
BohoVintageHome
Boutique Libertina
Broni Bear Woodworking
Celestial Soap Co
Cole Hastings
Counterpart Kombucha
Country Girl Kettle Corn
CREATIVE MINDS 105
Dazzling Daizy Designs
Didametals
earth and wears
Eclectic Visionarian
Edie Mae’s Soap
Elisa Robles-Carlo
Far Island
Fly Me Home
Fondipity
From Drab to Fab
Gourdamenti
Grateful Roast Cafe
Gravity Line Forge
HaleBoppComet
Haymakers Grill
Igourmet
Inspired Slacker Art
Juliet’s balcony
K. Joseph Designs
Kate’s Creations
K&D Creations
Kim Cappellini
Laurabee Studios
Life’s a Gem
Lil’ Sofia’s Jewelry Box
Love and Lights
Lucky Streak Clothing Company
Mad Mallard Food Truck
Mariah Sol Copper Jewelry
Marianart
Michael Allen Designs
Michele Bells Lanterns
Michele Peters-Novak Designs
Moonrise Candle Co
MPK Photography
Newkirk Honey
Noor Dols
Purple Squirrel Pastry Company
Rita Galenty (Vintage Glass)
Royal Rock Equestrian
Rynkiewicz Dips and Mixes
Sally Ann Designs
SamZiembaStudio
Savage Mane Beard Co
Seven 810 Fixtures
Shady Nook Bee Farms
Spoon Sisters
Spoonably Sweet
Squirrels in the Attic
Still Not A Hippie
Stitches In Bloom
Strung From The Heart
Tarot For Living
The Baklava Lady
The Bearded Ladies & Co
The Eclectic Contessa
The Essential Apothecary
The Paper Fuchsia
Tinton Pots and Plants
Treewood Antiques
Turnergraphics
Uncle Bucks BBQ Food Truck
Vintagereduxx
Walter and Lu
Whimsy Wicks Candle Co
Winged Wonders Jewelry Design
Workshop Fabulous
Zeke’s Antiques

Photos from 900 Marketplace Art Craft & Vintage Market

Photos from 900 Marketplace Art Craft & Vintage Market has a variety of unique artisans and crafters from all over NEPA.

The 900 Marketplace event is free to attend and (friendly) dogs are welcome.

900 Marketplace Art Craft & Vintage Market

Rain or Shine!
Sunday April 29th
10-4PM
Largest Antique Mall
in the
Scranton Wilkes-Barre Area

PLAINS
Antiques &
Home Furnishings
PlainsAntiques.com

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