

Lonny

magazine

The Makeover Issue

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REVAMP YOUR CLOSET
Recover A Chair
REINVENT YOUR BATH
.....

200+

*Ideas for Every Room
in Your Home!*

Jessica Alba
DEBUTS THE HONEST COMPANY'S
NEW HO!

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The Lonny Guide to Upholstery

Think twice before you throw away that old piece of furniture—an update can give it a new lease on life. We turned to the experts at Chairloom for a primer on the process

Written by Allegra Muzzillo Photographed by Genevieve Garruppo

We've all been there. You spot a chair—dumped on the side of the road, unloaded at the local flea market, collecting dust in the corner of some forgotten antiques store. But it's got good bones, you insist. All it needs is new upholstery.

That's where Molly Andrews and Tracy Jenkins come in. As co-owners of the Ardmore, Pennsylvania-based furniture company Chairloom, the duo (with the help of a top-notch carpentry and upholstery team) have reinvented countless pieces ranging from 1800s heirlooms stuffed with actual horsehair to battered 1970s sidewalk finds. Because clients often don't know where to begin, Andrews encourages them to get involved in the creative process by pinpointing where and by whom furniture will be used, how it will function, and how firm it should feel. Read on to see what else goes into the transformation.



A pair of classic bergères was recovered by Chairloom in a cotton canvas with a pink herringbone pattern, created by Molly Andrews and textile designer Ryan Parker, and inspired by the studio's custom floorboards.

A Leg Up

Don't forget: you can swap out the legs on many sofas and armchairs for a more stylish pair. Chairloom often replaces dowdy legs for the company's tapered, solid-wood versions (seen here in unfinished wood). "They feel very midcentury but work in a contemporary setting," Jenkins says.



"If a chair has a skirt, which tends to be dated, the first thing we do is tear it off to see what it's hiding," says Jenkins. "It's almost never hiding anything other than a pair of great legs."



Elements of both an antique tufted settee and a vintage armchair, including a tall back and sloping arms, were adapted into Andrews's design for this custom porch swing, which she outfitted in Studio Bon's Ric Rac.

SMOOTH BACK

This armchair lets its modish metallic-silver upholstery, by Studio Bon, do all the talking.



TUFTING

The back of this 1950s-era seat features individual gathers of material that are crafted into a series of pleats.



Finishing Touches

When it comes to styling, the possibilities are endless. Buttons and tacks are strictly decorative touches, although the former are also usually sewn over tufted pleats to properly finish a piece. Cording provides more visual structure. Andrews suggests defining a cushion with cording in a contrasting color; for a less formal look, skip the cording altogether.

CHANNEL BACK

The detailing in Elizabeth Benefield's Bella floral adds a note of traditional elegance.



ALL THE TRIMMINGS

- 1 Buttons
- 2 Custom cloth buttons
- 3 Nails
- 4 Tacks
- 5 Cording