

FURNISHING



The Australian Furnishing sector offers a wide variety of jobs in many different companies, many of which are small, employing under 20 people.

All kinds of furnishing are needed for residential and commercial use. You could work with timber dining suites, sofa beds, mattresses, kitchens, blinds and awnings. Or you could produce furniture for offices and workplaces such as height adjustable swivel chairs, computer desks, workstations and airport seating.

You might make hotel bedding, conference room seating, restaurant/dining furniture, bar furniture, floor coverings and finishings or even soft furnishings like curtains.

You will gain skills in jobs such as Wood Machining, Cabinet Making, Picture Framing, Furniture Polishing, Furniture Designing or Upholstering. There are also jobs in sectors using paper, such as Paper Processing, Graphic Prepress and Offset Printing.

This work is hands-on and highly satisfying, and the skills you learn will be useful in many other jobs – or when it's time to renovate your home!



Bradley Hodgetts

“One of the reasons I chose to become a cabinet maker was that, as a kid, I always made anything I could. I'd always be keen to finish because I like to stand back at the end of it and think, 'I made that'.

If you get a chance through work experience to go out on the job and do some training, have a good think about it.

Keep in mind that your work experience could end up becoming a permanent position...”

Production Manager @ Toledo Furniture

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FURNISHING FURNITURE DESIGN



Do you like to design? Are you practical? Furniture is essential for everyday living, and as well as attractive, it needs to be sturdy, resilient and (usually) economical to produce. Would you like to learn about different materials, and design and prototype furniture that is functional and desirable?

Furniture design is rewarding work for those with a creative streak. You will develop skills in three dimensional computer aided design (CAD), concept development, material and fabric technologies and ergonomics.

You will also need to develop an understanding of the appropriate manufacturing processes to make sure your designs meet production requirements.

You could design anything from a metal filing cabinet, to an exclusive one-off dining



Ramler Furniture Specialists of Melbourne have been manufacturing furniture for over 50 years, from design concepts, prototyping, production, logistics through to installation. They have:

- designed and manufactured furniture for MacDonaldds, KFC and Boost Juice outlets throughout Australia
- supplied furniture for the Sydney Olympics and the Melbourne Commonwealth Games
- supplied Westfield's Century City Food Court in Los Angeles;
- and they are specialists in making cardboard furniture!

TAKE A SEAT

set to a range of furniture for a boutique hotel. You may find yourself working in many different styles, and will need to keep up with interior design fashions and market tastes to ensure your product will be well received.

Relevant qualifications that could lead to a job in this area are to be found in the Furnishing Training Package ([see the Qualifications InfoSheet](#)).



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FURNISHING

FURNITURE MAKING / FINISHING



Furniture Making and Finishing offers a range of opportunities for practical people who enjoy making things and working with their hands in a busy environment.

You could make dining suites and lounge furniture for the home, or chairs and desks for office and commercial use. You could also build and install kitchen and bathroom cabinets, beds, clothes chests and drawers, or wardrobes.

You could work as a Wood Machinist or as an Upholsterer. You could also work as a Cabinet Maker, who fits and assembles the finished pieces. You could apply stains and polish to give the furniture its final attractive finish.

In Furniture Making you will learn to select and prepare timber and use power tools and CNC machines to cut timber pieces. This is a great job for people who like



Thomas Chippendale's name is synonymous with furniture. He was born, the son of a carpenter, in Yorkshire in 1718 and published his masterful collection, Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director in 1754.

Joseph Hemingway first saw a copy of Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director aged 4. Since 1980 he has been specialising in reproducing furniture from 'The Director'. In 2000, taking 12 months, he hand carved and built the 'unmakeable' Design 23r. Not even Chippendale had done so. (Google it!)

IMPOSSIBLE

working with wood and other materials and want to pick up valuable and transferable skills.

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FURNISHING

PICTURE FRAMING



Quality pictures and paintings need the right frame to show them off to their best advantage on the wall. Picture Framers make frames of all types and sizes to display paintings, prints, etchings, tapestries and photographs.

While the artist is traditionally thought of as 'the creative', the choice of the most appropriate frame is an artistic process in its own right. You will talk to customers about the style and size of what they are after and help them understand colours and design. Working with many different materials, such as timber, aluminium and glass, you will also learn about moulds, paints, stains and varnishes.

Specialist Framers use the crafts of wood machining, wood finishing, French-polishing, cabinet-making, wood carving and gilding. You could even learn the preservation of historic artwork.



The Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci was assessed for insurance at \$100 million for its move to Washington DC and New York for exhibition back in 1962.

Pablo Picasso's 'Garçon à la Pipe' (1905) sold for \$130 million in 2004 at Sotheby's, New York, the most paid for a painting at auction.

You have to walk 24 km to visit all of the 322 galleries of the Winter Palace and the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. The galleries house nearly 3 million works of art.

PAINTING BY NUMBERS

This could be a great opportunity to work for a small boutique firm or even start your own business.

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FURNISHING

INTERIOR DECORATING & FURNISHINGS



Homes, offices, restaurants and hotels need not only furniture, but also a whole range of interior decorations and soft furnishings, such as curtains, lamps, rugs and cushions.

Interior decorators visit both domestic and commercial clients, using colour swatches and fabric samples to help them choose colours and fabrics and to work out colour schemes. They also source furniture, work out measurements and make up blinds and curtains, creating a full package for the client.

There are great interior decorating jobs available for those with a creative flair and an eye for colour. If you prefer hands-on work, then there is also demand for good sewing machinists to make up cushions and curtains, or you could work with interior designers to produce unique furnishings for one-off needs.



Marion Hall Best (1905-88) initially trained as a nurse but reinvented herself studying art and design, and architecture by correspondence. One of Australia's most influential interior designers she commissioned many fabric designs from Australian artists, particularly women.

Ward Brothers was founded by two brothers, cabinetmakers Fred and Tom Ward in Doncaster in 1919. Fred designed furniture for the Meyer Emporium and the distinctive chairs and tables of University House, ANU Canberra. Fred's grandson is still Managing Director.

BEST DECORATOR

Many interior decorators are self-employed, so this could be an opportunity to work for a small boutique firm or even start your own business.

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WAKE IT!

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FURNISHING

MATTRESS & BED MAKING



We spend one third of our lives asleep, so it is no wonder that everyone appreciates a mattress that is comfortable and affords a good night's rest. The challenge is to design and make quality mattresses that provide good support, are comfortable to sleep on, and are made from durable materials that will last for years.

The manufacture of good mattresses and bed bases depends on many years of research, and a technology that employs high tech fibres, inner spring support systems, multi-layer upholstery and a coil configuration designed for stability. Then there are the cotton futons, waterbeds, and foam only mattresses used in foldaway beds.

There are opportunities in mattress production and research. You could start as an operator and work your way up to being a supervisor.



A. H. Beard Pty Ltd manufactures mattresses and bedding. They...

- are 100 years old;
- are a 100% family owned company;
- won 1997 NSW Employer of the Year;
- won the Furniture Industry Association of Australia's Best Product of the Year for five years running;
- produce 200,000 beds a year;
- have made over 4 million beds.

Zzzzzz...

GOOD NIGHT

A regular, good night's sleep is vital for good health – working in Mattress and Bed Making is highly important for human wellbeing!

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FURNISHING

FLOOR COVERING & FINISHING



Floors can make the difference between a good home and a great one. Floor Finishers and Coverers install and repair floor coverings such as carpet, vinyl, rubber, cork, parquetry and timber floors.

You will learn to install carpet tiles, adhesive fixed carpet and/or welded resilient flooring. Given the rise in popularity of polished floorboards in homes, you will learn to prepare timber floors for finish coating and apply finishes to timber or parquetry or cork. You could even specialise in mixing and applying epoxy coverings, installing parquetry flooring or installing timber sports flooring for gyms and basketball courts.

Part of your skills-base will be the ability to prepare timber sub-floors and install hard underlays, and to also sand, stain and apply finished coatings to timber floors.



Parquetry (from the French word 'parquet') is a form of highly decorative wooden mosaic flooring. 'Parquet' literally means 'wooden floor'.

'The Parquet' in some countries (including France) refers to the legal prosecution who pleads from the wooden floor, as opposed to the judges who sit on an elevated platform.

This is the origination of the term 'sitting magistrate'.

Fascinating.

LEGAL
STANDING

Most Floor Covering and Finishing workers are contractors, so this could be an opportunity to work for a small firm, start your own business, or simply work your own hours and be your own boss.

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FINE WOOD



Would you like to make fine furniture using high quality solid timbers? Would you gain satisfaction from working on a beautiful blackwood dining table or oak cabinet and seeing it through to the end?

As a fine furniture maker, you will be multi-skilled and your job will be highly varied. You will develop cabinet making, wood turning and woodworking skills to a high level and become expert in wood polishing and finishing. You might work in a small boutique workshop and specialise in reproduction of antique furniture, bedroom pieces or occasional furniture.

You could also choose to be a wood worker and carve, laminate, inlay and sculpt wood to produce items such as sculptures, decorative wall panels, picture frames, jewellery boxes and eating utensils.



Barry Mills is a craftsman, and artist, a designer and maker of functional and aesthetic wooden objects.

All sorts of objects...

- bowls
- screens
- sculpted children's playgrounds
- timber boats
- gear lockers for the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron;
- and the gates for the Australian Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

FORM & FUNCTION

Fine wood products are not normally mass-produced, so the skills you learn could lead you to work for a small company or eventually start your own business.

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