

Title:

Coffee tables - Time for a break?

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Summary:

Coffee tables take many shapes and forms but, generally speaking, a coffee table is considered to be a fairly small, low sitting table that would typically be the centerpiece of the common waiting room, lounge, or family room.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Coffee tables take many shapes and forms but, generally speaking, a coffee table is considered to be a fairly small, low sitting table that would typically be the centerpiece of the common waiting room, lounge, or family room. Coffee tables are utilitarian, in that they are normally used to store remote-controls, for the entertainment suite, books and magazines, and fittingly, are a great place to set down snacks or one's coffee mug when entertaining guests. However, as the center-piece, contemporary coffee tables are also usually chosen to suit the style and match the existing interior-decoration of one's home to add to the overall effect.

Accordingly, it is easy to find a very wide variety of modern coffee tables in different sizes, colors, shapes, fashions, and construction materials. Glass coffee tables are quite popular and if kept free of dust, add a pleasing aspect to the room. If combined with a stainless-steel or chromed frame, a glass-top coffee table will help to add to an overall clean, sleek, modern feel in a room.

Art-deco style tables are still readily available too as something of a relic from the 80's that is one style that seems to be diminishing in popularity as we now approach the end of the "noughties". Even still, one can still find lopsided pastel-colored plastic blobs and planes that appear to be stretched straight from some Picasso work, serving as coffee tables. Due to their diminishing popularity and simple construction, they tend to be cheaper these days. It should be noted that it is possible to find more "tasteful" designs built around similar themes.

If you are after a more classical look in your coffee tables then you probably

want to be looking at wooden construction. On the cheaper end of the scale you can find new tables made from plastic imitation-wood, or veneer-covered "chipboard" coffee tables, but these can have a somewhat tacky appearance and will tend to be poorer in quality.

If you are willing to spend big money, anywhere upwards of US\$200 for this small article of furniture, then you can find good quality solid wooden coffee tables that can really set a room off. With supplies of good timber and the loss of most of the world's old-growth forests, the only place one can find beautiful coffee tables made from solid wood (with the exception of pine) for less than about \$1000, is at an antique furniture store.

If your pockets aren't quite that deep do not despair! If you're prepared to put some work in the best option is to look around for something you like at second-hand stores. For bargain prices one can find beautiful coffee tables in need of sanding down, staining, possibly some filling or new fasteners, and a couple of coats of clear varnish. The end result can be quite stunning, rendering a \$60 stick of furniture into a \$400 centerpiece that any homeowner would be proud of.

With the nature of business today the cost of producing complex hand-crafted mosaic coffee tables, either made with inlays of slices of wood with alternating patterned shades, or ceramic-tile based table top surfaces, has become prohibitive. One may still purchase machine manufactured tables like this, with a less pleasing effect, or one could import such furniture from places like Pakistan and India at great expense. Once again real masterpieces in need of a little attention can be sourced at second-hand stores and the like, rewarding industrious home-improvement enthusiasts with coffee tables of outstanding quality and appeal.