Basic Furniture Shopping Checklist
by Karawynn Long (for getrichslowly.org)

-- Wood --
  good: solid wood or 9+ layer plywood
  bad: thin plywood, particleboard, pressboard, fiberboard
  bad: knots, cracks
  bad: soft, easily-scratched surfaces

-- Joints --
  great: dovetail, mortise & tenon
  good: reinforcing corner blocks
  good: dowels, screws
  bad: staples, nails, visible glue

-- Drawers --
  great: dust panels, floating bottoms
  good: metal glide-rails, stops
  bad: wood-on-wood sliding

-- Frame --
  good: even, level with floor
  bad: twists, creaks, wobbles

-- Springs --
  great: hand-tied coil springs
  good: close together, even resistance
  bad: any springs more than a few inches apart

-- Cushions --
  good: firm foam wrapped in padding
  good: protective inner cover
  good: reversible cushions
  bad: bare foam
  bad: loose fill without internal sectioning

-- Upholstery --
  good: aligned patterns
  good: skirts with lining or weights
  bad: skimpy padding along arms and back