

What are Soft Furnishings? Why They Are Important in Interior Design



Soft furnishings are easy to understand as they refer to any textile materials with a soft feel. Soft furnishings range from different fabrics to leather.

Soft furnishing definition as per dictionary is any product made out of cloth or fabric and leather.

This includes finished goods like cushions, curtains, and upholstery fabrics, etc.

The concept of soft furnishings is normally related to the home interior industry. Residential and commercial interior design ambiance is built using a variety of products including soft furnishings.

It is very important for interior designers to understand soft furnishings, and how they can be useful for them. The history of using soft material for the decor of homes is old.

Throughout history fabrics for interiors have been used for covering surfaces eg. furniture, walls, and floors.

The contemporary period with the advantage of technology has taken soft furnishings usage in interior spaces to new dimensions. Interior designers experiment with a range of fabric /leather materials in interior environments.

Soft furnishings use has increased in the home interior design projects to an unimaginable range of finished products. A few finished types of soft furnishing in interior products include:

Types of Soft Furnishings

- Upholstery Fabric / Leather
- Curtains
- Cushions
- Decorative sofa back throws
- Bed linens
- Table runners
- Table mates
- Carpets

These are just a few soft furnishing items. Interior designers use fabrics and leather depending upon the chosen interior theme and style. Every room in the house has its own requirement of fabric or leather / soft furnishings.

Living rooms to bedrooms, kitchen to dining rooms fabrics are used in different forms and styles in an interior design project.

Soft furnishings fall into two major categories:

1: Simple Soft Furnishings

2: Decorative Soft Furnishings

Simple Soft Furnishings:

Simple soft furnishings refer to fabrics and leather without any enhanced and decorated surface treatment. Generally by this means solid color fabrics without any decorated surface treatments.

In an interior design project, solid fabrics can be used for curtains or cushions or as an upholstery fabric.

Solid soft furnishings can be used in combination with decorative fabrics to achieve the desired look of the interior design project.

Decorative Soft Furnishings:

Decorative soft furnishings refer to fabrics with decorative/ornamental/beautified surface treatments. Fabric surfaces are treated using various techniques.

Embroidery, screenprint, block print, applique, and woven designs/ pattern makes the surface of soft furnishings decorative.

Decorative soft furnishings bring the element of beautification and attractiveness to interior design projects.

The use of decorative and solid soft furnishings varies on the nature of the interior design projects which may be residential or commercial.

Leather is mostly preferred for commercial interior design spaces. Whereas leather with treated decorative surfaces is used in residential interior design projects.

Reasons for using soft furnishings

It is important for interior designers and decorators to understand why to use soft furnishings. Interior design projects are worked upon with the main intention to create a functional space with an attractive ambiance.

Soft furnishings play an essential role in interior design projects. Here are a few factors which can explain why soft furnishings are used in interior design projects.

1: Alternative to expensive materials

Soft furnishings turn out to be a very inexpensive alternate material against the expensive ones. A good example of this could be the carpets or the area rugs. Both fall under the category of soft furnishings.

Soft furnishings can help in building an attractive ambiance while staying within budget constraints. Soft furnishings can be used as wall coverings in a variety of creative applications. They can be stretched onto a complete wall or can be hung as wall hangings.

2: Soft furnishings bring warmth and comfort

Soft furnishings can bring the element of warmth to any living space. The quality of fabrics in bringing the feel of comfort, richness, and warmth is exceptional.

Interior design projects depend on this quality of soft furnishings and use them smartly in different rooms.

3: Soft furnishings are easy to remove and replace

Soft furnishings can easily be replaced and removed in any interior space thus making them an attractive buy.

4: Soft furnishings brings volume, richness, and colorful life to an environment

Soft furnishings are good space fillers for any interior space. They bring volume and life to interior spaces through their color, texture, and pattern. Soft furnishings are a good product to bring style and personalized statement to interior spaces.

Interior design projects include various design elements to achieve the desired results. Soft furnishings are an essential ambiance building module for an interior project. Smart use of different types of soft furnishings can bring life to spaces both commercial and residential.

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