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the
10
most
seductive
slipper
chairs



THE LOWDOWN

"Slipper chairs are an easy way to make seating intimate and cozy," says Griffin. "But you have to remember that they're usually low, small, and narrow. Larger or taller people might not feel comfortable in them."

Whether tufted or tailored, the classic slipper chair looks good again.



text by DAVID COLMAN

photography by SUSAN SALINGER

produced by MARGARET RUSSELL

DOUBLE DUTY

"Keep in mind that slipper chairs perform two functions," says Coleman. "They're decorative accents and occasional seating. If you entertain a lot, get one that is both stylish and easy to move. This one scores big on both counts."

Designers **Elaine Griffin** and **Christopher Coleman** settle in

SKIRT CHASER

"A tailored skirt is a good idea on a slipper chair," says Coleman. "It's such a nice, classic piece of furniture, and the skirting reinforces its traditional charm. If you want a touch of that I-got-it-from-my-grandmother look, it's a lot better than a roomful of chintz and balloon shades."



STOOP TO CONQUER

"Most slipper chairs are low to the ground, which makes them hard to move around," Coleman says. "If you're going to shuttle it from one room to another, buy a slipper chair that's really lightweight so that a last-minute change in your seating plan doesn't break your back."



slip ahoy!

A slipper chair is a pudgy, armless seat, 14 to 18 inches off the ground and generously padded. Originally designed to facilitate getting one's shoes on and off, slipper chairs can look old-fashioned and not very functional, but they really do work. Here's how and why.

■ Slipper chairs are right for every room of the house but the kitchen: in the library as a catchall, in the entryway as a hall chair, in the living room as an extra seat, in the bedroom as a valet.

■ For convenient occasional seating, a slipper chair is great, but be sure that it's light enough to move around. Better yet, get one with casters on the front legs.

■ Traditional slipper chairs are puffy and tufted—sometimes too much so. If that's not your style, opt for a more streamlined model, which can be a bit severe but modern-looking.

■ You have two upholstery options: the over-the-top route (a busy chintz, tassels, piping, *capitoné*, etc.), which makes for a sort of decorative pillow on legs, and the sleek approach (solid fabrics, tailored details, neat cushions), which is easier to mix with other furniture.

MODEST PROPOSAL

"Since it's small and low, a slipper chair can be nice for an informal chat with someone sitting on the carpet or a cushion," says Griffin. "With a slipper chair you don't need a side table—the floor's right there!"



GROOMING: MITSUMI FOR LACHAPELLE

the top 10: how they rate

Lewiston Chair by Lillian August for Drexel Heritage

"Now *this* is a slipper chair," says Griffin. "The seat and back cushions are attached, so it doesn't get messy, and it's not too low. Plus, the style is versatile." Coleman likes it, too. "It's elegant, comfortable, lightweight—and affordable," he says.

Height: 33½"; seat height: 18"; width: 22"; depth: 30"; seat depth: 18"; material: fruitwood frame with ultra-down upholstery; delivery: 6 weeks; price: \$995



1

Queen Abigail Slipper Chair by Todd Hase

"Major personality here," says Coleman.

"I like the Art Deco styling; it's not overdone. And for a big slipper chair it's very easy to move." Griffin agrees, adding, "This one is more substantial than most. I'd put it in a man's dressing room, a boudoir, or a library."

Height: 30"; seat height: 16"; width: 21"; depth: 36"; seat depth: 20"; material: maple frame with foam and Dacron polyester upholstery; delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$1,886



2

Antigua Slipper Chair by Christian Liaigre pour Holly Hunt

"Clean, simple, beautifully designed," says Coleman. "Mixing this with other furniture styles would be a breeze." Griffin notes that "it's prettier than it is comfortable. But who curls up in a slipper chair anyway?"

Height: 33"; seat height: 16"; width: 21"; depth: 27"; seat depth: 19½"; material: walnut frame with foam and Dacron polyester upholstery; delivery: 12 weeks; price: \$1,942



3

Liza Tailored Upholstery Chair by Mitchell Gold

"This one is comfy, light, and inexpensive," says Coleman. "The low curved back makes it less masculine and a little playful. And even though it has a deep seat, it's a cinch to get in and out of. Wonderful."

Height: 27"; seat height: 21"; width: 20"; depth: 25"; seat depth: 18½"; material: hardwood frame with foam and polyester-fiber upholstery; delivery: 6 weeks; price: \$315



4

Piedmonte Looseseat Chair by Brunswick & Fils

"Very Southern—a mint-julep chair for ladies in Dallas," says Griffin. Coleman concurs: "This is overstuffed, all-American living-room comfort. It's heavy, though, so you'd better want it to stay put."

Height: 33"; seat height: 18"; width: 26"; depth: 33"; seat depth: 21"; material: hardwood frame with down and polyester upholstery; delivery: 12 weeks; price: \$2,430



5

Billy Baldwin Small Slipper Chair by Billy Baldwin Studio

"You can't get much more classic than this one," says Griffin. "And it's lightweight, though the pitch is a bit too upright." Adds Coleman: "The scale is nice for a small space where big chairs can often be a problem."

Height: 29"; seat height: 16½"; width: 18"; depth: 27"; seat depth: 18½"; material: hardwood frame with Dacron polyester, feather, and down upholstery; delivery: 8-10 weeks; price: \$1,650



6

Scott Slipper Chair by Philippe Hurel from Profiles

"This is a good, modern slipper chair," Coleman says. "The curved back is nice and wide, but the seat is very low, which could be a problem for some people. I don't love how blocky it is, but it would definitely work in a contemporary setting."

Height: 29½"; seat height: 14"; width: 24"; depth: 24½"; seat depth: 18"; material: beech frame with foam upholstery; delivery: 14-16 weeks; price: \$2,255



7

Salon Slipper Chair by Grange

"Definitely for a boudoir," Griffin says with a laugh. "It's very Marie Antoinette. No man should ever sit on this." Despite all the froufrou, Coleman says, "The chair is actually quite comfortable."

Height: 33½"; seat height: 18½"; width: 26"; depth: 32½"; seat depth: 18½"; material: hardwood frame with polyblend-down, baffled-down, and Dacron polyester upholstery; delivery: 10 weeks; price: \$1,330



8

Slipper Chair by Barbara Barry for Baker Furniture

"This chair is nicely cushioned," says Griffin, "but the back is pitched very upright." Coleman calls this one "heavy, luxurious, and very grown-up—the perfect conversation chair."

Height: 34"; seat height: 18"; width: 29"; depth: 32"; seat depth: 23"; material: mahogany frame with down and polyester upholstery; delivery: 6-8 weeks; price: \$1,734



9

Slipper Chair from ABC Carpet & Home

"This looks like a good old-fashioned slipper chair," says Griffin. "It would be sweet next to the fireplace in a traditional home, but it's probably too Victorian for modern decors."

Height: 37"; seat height: 15½"; width: 38"; depth: 22"; seat depth: 20"; material: wood frame with comfort-fiber upholstery; delivery: immediate or up to 6 weeks; price: \$1,995



10