



Article published on May 9th 2012 | [Home Improvement](#)

When you think of French furniture it really all started with Louis XIV. He was born in 1643 and died in 1715 and from 1661 to 1700 his word was absolute when it came to taste and style in all things. He led the way in fashion, what you did and didn't eat and of course French furniture. When filling the vast and almost endless halls of Versailles every piece was approved by his official style guru, painter Charles Le Brun so that he could be certain that each item of French furniture reflected Louis self declared magnificence. Precious metals and jewels adorned chairs and tables and a mixture of carved and painted Suns. Well, he did call himself the Sun King! Also prevalent were fleur de Lys and animal prints in strong dark colours throughout the palace.

Philippe d'Orléans was regent from 1715 to 1723 and lived in the Palais Royal, a slightly more modest location, when Louis XIV's rule became intolerable. Of these years only 1700 to 1730 were in any way associated with French furniture style. After the aristocracy fled from Versailles to Paris the new wealthy middleclass that emerged wanted grace and elegance and this is reflected in the French furniture of that period when shells and scallops replaced the Suns and fleur de Lys as the popular motif. The use of caning for chair seats and backs became popular too.

Louis XV reigned until 1774 though his style legacy is only from 1730 to 1760 and during that time it was women who had the most influence on French furniture with Madame du Barry and Madame de Pompadour leading the charge. French furniture was now more about elegance and comfort than previous pretension. The introduction of Rococo shape and style with the use of exotic woods and marquetry were all the rage and the console table first became fashionable.

Louis XVI set the tone for style from 1760 to 1789 (that is my last Louis, well for the time being anyway!) The discovery of the ruins of Pompeii brings about a fashion for the new classicism with Greek and Roman influences on French furniture. Rococo takes a back seat to the return of symmetry and colours are more muted and the preferred wood for French furniture is Mahogany. The demi-lune console table makes an appearance.

Like Louis (sorry) Napoleon Bonaparte also liked to control all aspects of his court and this includes French furniture though now the style is rather grand and leaning towards Egypt and Alexander for its influences. The Empire style of French furniture can be seen today in most French homes. This period is also attributed with the introduction of the sleigh bed.

After another Louis or two and a revisit by Napoleon to prominence we do eventually come to a period of French Furniture that is not directly connected with royalty, emperors or regents and that is Art Nouveau with its flowers and symmetry swiftly followed in the 1920s by Art Deco. These two glorious and quite distinctive movements had an enormous influence on all design and style including French furniture, an influence still seen today.

Article Source:

<http://www.articleside.com/home-improvement-articles/the-history-of-french-furniture.htm> - [Article Side](#)

[Sweetpea Editor](#) - About Author:

Sweetpea and Willow offers exclusive range of beautiful a [french furniture](#), a [french style furniture](#), including french Beds, chaise Longues, armoires, dining tables, mirrors and more.

Article Keywords:

French Furniture, Living Room, Dining Room, Bedroom

You can find more [free articles](#) on [Article Side](#). Sign up today and share your knowledge to the community! It is completely FREE!