

A man with a beard, wearing a red polo shirt, is shown in profile, working on a piece of machinery in a factory setting. The background is blurred, showing industrial equipment and lights. A semi-transparent red overlay covers the bottom half of the image, where the text is placed.

GUIDE:

Quality Control Practices in 2023: Key Insights for Furniture and Homeware Retailers and Suppliers

Maintaining stringent quality control measures in the furniture and homeware sector is not an option—it's a necessity.



Quality control has always been integral to the furniture and homeware industry, even now more than ever:

With an upmarket clientele that demands flawless aesthetics and longevity in the same package, maintaining stringent quality control measures is not an option—it's a necessity.

However, the rapidly evolving landscape of the furniture industry in the world brings its own challenges. Intensified competition, shifts in manufacturing geographies, and continued cost-optimisation pressures - requiring a resilient and agile quality control team that can swiftly adapt to these dynamic circumstances.

To guide you through these relevant challenges, HQTs have created a quick guide focusing on quality control challenges and solutions for the furniture and homeware sector.

Table of Contents

- **4 Tactics to Curb the Risks of Finding Fraudulent Suppliers**
- **The Main Quality Defects in the Furniture and Homeware Sectors Caught in Inspections**
- **Insiders Information: Core Factors in Third-Party Quality Inspections**
- **Case Study: How a Leading Retailer Decreased Rejection Rates by 60%**
- **Quality Control Solutions for Furniture and Homeware**

4 Quick Tactics to Curb the Risks of Finding Fraudulent Suppliers

Let's explore four quick tactics, based on our own experiences, to assist you in identifying fraudulent suppliers and mitigating risks when sourcing from overseas.

1

DON'T JUDGE BY APPEARANCES ALONE

Are you sourcing from China or Vietnam? If a vendor's website is beautifully designed but only available in English and uses a personal cell phone number as the primary contact, be wary. Established vendors typically have multilingual websites (English and the local language) and accurate contact details, including address, phone number, and email.

2

INCONSISTENT COMPANY INFORMATION

Be cautious of suppliers whose company history displays inconsistencies between their registration date, claimed establishment date, and business scope. In China, you can quickly cross-check this information using the [National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System in China](#) to check the supplier's registration date and its business scope.



国家企业信用信息公示系统
National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System

企业信用信息 | 经营异常名录 |
请输入企业名称、统一社会信用代码或



统一社会信用代码:

注册号:

法定代表人:

登记机关:

成立日期: 2022年03月07日

在营 (开业) 企业

(正在进行营业执照作废声明)

3

COMPANY'S BANK ACCOUNT LOCATION

If a vendor's invoice shows a bank account in a different location than their registered address, exercise caution. The invoice, bank account, and company's name better be aligned. For safer transactions, ensure the company's bank account is registered in their business location's country.

4

BUSINESSES WITH VERY LARGE OFFICES

Lastly, verify photos of the company's exterior building. We have encountered instances where companies display images of grand offices that are not their own and taken elsewhere.

Upload an image of their building on [Google Reverse Image Search](#) and see whether it appears on other websites. Alternatively, use the Street View in [Google Maps/Baidu Maps](#) (if in China) to verify if the building matches their stated physical address.

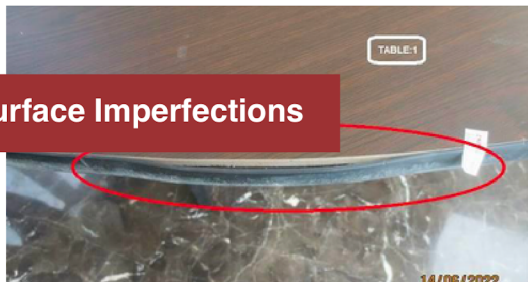
***Remember, these examples are just a few quick tactics to reduce your risks. However, having a reliable and objective quality partner on-site to visit the intended supplier/factory is the more secure option to protect yourself from fraudulent suppliers.*

The Main Quality Defects in the Furniture and Homeware Sector

In the furniture and homeware sector, the concentration of manufacturers in developing countries presents a challenge. With a mix of family-owned local producers to multinational corporations and a blend of modern and traditional manufacturing practices, inconsistent quality and prevalent issues arise.

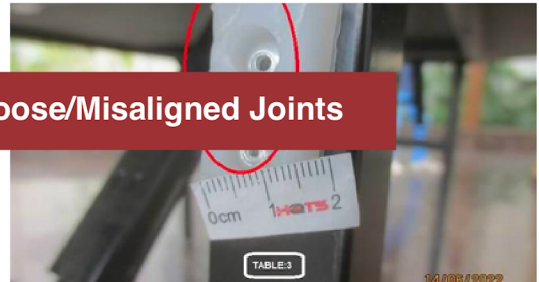
Below are a few core quality defects often found in our third-party inspections.

Surface Imperfections



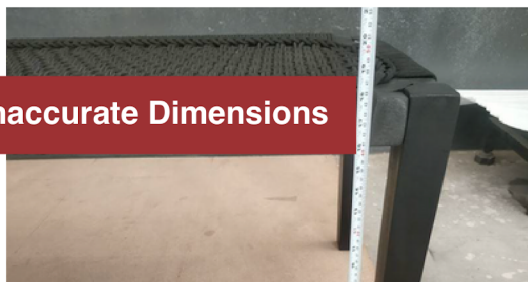
One common issue in high-end furniture and homeware inspections is surface imperfections. These defects include scratches, dents, stains, or uneven finishes. For example, a wooden dining table may have noticeable scratches due to poor handling during manufacturing or transportation.

Loose/Misaligned Joints



Improperly fitted or misaligned joints are another frequent defect in furniture items. Chairs, tables, or cabinets can have loose or incorrectly aligned connecting parts. For instance, a chair's leg may not be securely attached to its seat, posing stability and safety risks.

Inaccurate Dimensions



Discrepancies in measurements compared to the purchase order often arise, affecting the overall design. For example, a cabinet may have uneven shelf heights.

Poor Upholstery Work



Flaws in upholstery workmanship, like uneven stitching, color variations or loose fabric, are prevalent in items like sofas and chairs. Inadequate padding material can result in visible gaps in seams or sagging cushions.

Insiders Information: Core Factors in Third-Party Quality Inspections

Let's take a quick look at the dimensions typically assessed in piece-by-piece third party inspections of luxury furniture. Generally, the main dimensions that the inspector will focus on can be categorised as follows:

INSPECTION RESULT SUMMARY			
Category	Conform	Not Conform	Pending
1.Quantity	x		
2.Workmanship	x		
3.Style, Color & Documentation			x
4.Field Test & Measurement			x
5.Shipping Mark & Packaging			x
OVERALL CONCLUSION	PENDING for client's evaluation		

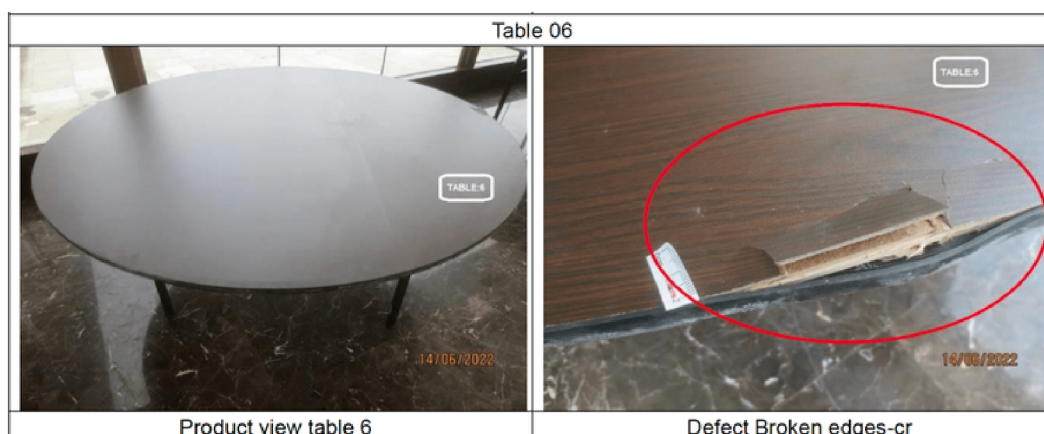
1. QUANTITY VERIFICATION

The inspector verifies the quantity, which involves counting the number of goods ready for shipment to ensure they match your purchase order. Below is an example of a quantity verification that displays the inspected quantity and the number of defects.

CHECKING QUANTITY STATUS								
1. Quantity								
Date	Model No.	Req. Insp. Qty	Insp. Qty	Passed Qty	Percentage	Defects		
						Critical	Major	Minor
14/06/2022	72' Round table	60	60	0	0	1	58	1
14/06/2022	60' Round table	72	15	0	0	0	13	2
20/06/2022			45	4	8.9%	6	35	0
21/06/2022			12	2	16.7%	1	8	1



2. WORKMANSHIP

The inspector will compare the furniture to the agreed-upon design and check for visible damages such as broken edges, scratch marks, or broken legs. They will also assess the material quality, evaluate the sturdiness of the furniture's joints and screws, and overall appearance.



3. STYLE, COLOR & DOCUMENTATION

Inspectors will then check the items against the purchase order, product specifications, client requirements, and other relevant documentation.

3. Style, Color & Documentation				
DESCRIPTION		Conform	Not Conform	Pending
The inspected samples were consistent with		-	-	-
Purchase Order		-	-	-
Product Specification & Client comments			X	
Digital photo		X		
S. No	Item Description	Supplier Specification	Image	
1	Table, Executive Meeting Type IBM table Size: 1830*455*760mm Without Modesty Panel			62
2	Table, Executive Meeting Type Rectangle table,			76

4. FIELD TEST & MEASUREMENT

Lastly, the inspector performs various tests on the inspected items. These tests may vary depending on the product category and client requirements. They may include smell checks, size measurements, appearance checks, moisture content checks, and testing of moving parts.



4. Field Check						
Item		Specification	Sample Size	Conform	Not Conform	Pending
4.1	Smell check	-	2 Sample/item	x		
4.2	Size measurement check	-	5 Sample/size	x		
4.3	Appearance check	-	All pieces	x		
4.4	Moisture content check	-	2 Sample/item			x
4.5	Function check	-	All samples	x		

Item No.	Product dimension		Moisture check	
	Specification	Result	Specification	Result
72' Round table	72" dia	71.75" 72" 71.75" 71.75" 72"	-	8.9 8.7
60' Round table	60" dia	60" 60" 60" 59.75"	-	7.1 9.3

Case Study: How HQTS Helped a Leading Indian Retailer Reduce Rejection Rates by 60%

Background

HQTS was reached out to by one of India's major retailers, which sources high volumes of items from China, to address persistent quality issues that resulted in rejection rates exceeding 50%. These defects included inadequate material quality, shade variation, stains, slubs, and communication challenges with the Chinese suppliers throughout Mainland China, resulting in increased expenses and operational disruptions.

CHALLENGES

- Inconsistent material quality
- Shade variations
- High rejection rates of delivered products
- Communication barriers with Chinese suppliers

SOLUTIONS

HQTS designed a customised final random inspection program, taking into account the client's unique requirements. Our inspectors followed the ASTM D5430 (4 Points System) for Visual Inspection and Grading Fabric, examining the fabrics on criteria such as quantity verification, pantone matching, fabric thickness, loose threads, and fabric roes. HQTS dispatched inspectors in all required service points in Mainland China.

BENEFITS

- 1 REDUCED REJECTION RATES**

HQTS was able to catch most quality defects in the factory through its inspection program. The retailer was able to reduce its garment rejection rates by 60%.
- 2 CUSTOMISED INSPECTION PROGRAM**

HQTS provided a tailored inspection program designed to meet the strict requirements of the Indian retailer.
- 3 IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND ISSUE RESOLUTION**

HQTS acted as a vital communication link between the retailer and their Chinese suppliers, helping to resolve issues and strengthening the client-supplier relationship.

One-Stop Quality Control Solution

HQTS is the trusted quality control partner for over 25 years, serving more than 15,000 international businesses worldwide. Our global presence includes a network of technical experts in over 40 countries, a professional team of 4,000+ staff, and nationwide coverage in key manufacturing countries such as China, Vietnam, India, Turkey, and Malaysia.

From assessing new suppliers to ensuring safety, quality, and compliance, HQTS offers solutions at **every step of the way.**

Supplier Verification

Supplier/Factory Audits

Conducting an audit of your intended supplier is the ideal way to ensure that you are working with legitimate suppliers. This can vary from a quick supplier audit to a comprehensive factory audit that includes an on-site visit to their manufacturing site.

- Company Legality Information
- Bank Information
- Human Resource
- Exportation Capability
- Manufacturer's Background
- Manpower and Production Capability
- Manufacturing Process and Production Line
- In-house Quality System such as Testing and Inspection

Product Quality Control

Product Inspections

If the products you have sourced have quality issues, our quality inspectors will randomly inspect and evaluate several samples/products selected from a large batch or lot. This process helps determine if the entire set has been produced in accordance with the specified specifications and requirements.

- Prior to Production Inspection
- During Production Inspection
- Piece-by-Piece Inspection
- Pre Shipment Inspection
- Container/Loading and Unloading
- More

Compliance

Governmental and Product Certification Services

HQTS can test the products you are sourcing in accredited laboratories to ensure they meet not only quality standards but also applicable product standards. Additionally, we can issue Certificates of Conformity for a range of global markets.

- SASO Certificate of Conformity
- SFDA Certificate of Conformity
- Uganda PVoC Certification
- ROHS
- CE-Marking
- More...

Client Examples



BLACKBERRYS



For inquiries, please contact
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