

Caring for your new mattress

Consider your new mattress and foundation as “sleep equipment” that needs to be properly cared for in order to assure good hygiene and the best performance. It’s important to follow mattress care instructions from the mattress manufacturer since products vary greatly. But here are some general guidelines to follow:

- **Proper installation.** Make sure your new mattress and foundation are properly installed in your home. Improper installation can damage your new sleep set. If you choose to transport and install on your own, ask the store personnel to give you some tips to help you avoid problems.
- **Use a protective pad.** A good quality, washable mattress pad (and one for the foundation, too, if you like) is a must to keep your set fresh and free from stains.
- **Let it breathe.** If you detect a slight “new product” odor, leave the mattress and foundation uncovered and well-ventilated for a few hours. A breath of fresh air should do the trick!
- **Give it good support.** Be sure to use a sturdy, high-quality bed frame. If it’s a queen-size or king-size set, make sure your frame has the extra-strong center support that will prevent bowing or breakage.
- **Don’t dry clean.** The chemicals in dry cleaning agents or spot removers may be harmful to the fabric or underlying materials. Vacuuming is the only recommended cleaning method. But if you’re determined to tackle a stain, use mild soap with cold water and apply lightly. Don’t ever soak a mattress or foundation.
- **Don’t remove the tag.** Contrary to popular belief, it’s not illegal for you, the consumer, to remove the law tag, but the information on the label will serve as a means of identification should you have a warranty claim.
- **It’s not a trampoline.** Don’t let the kids jump on your sleep set. Their rough-housing could do damage to the interior construction, as well as to themselves.

■ **No boards, please.** Never put a board between the mattress and foundation. It may enhance the sense of support for a while, but it will only make the problem worse over time. When any bed in your home has reached the “board stage,” get rid of it.

■ **Out with the old.** Once you’ve treated yourself to a new sleep set, arrange to have your old bed removed and disposed of. Don’t give it to the kids, relatives, guests or neighbors. If it wasn’t good enough for you, it isn’t good enough for anyone else.

‘Body impressions’ are normal

Many of today’s quality mattresses use extra-plush foams and fibers to create comfort layers designed to cradle your body and relieve pressure. In the first few weeks, you will likely notice some body impressions on the surface. These impressions are normal in today’s best mattresses. They indicate that the comfort layers are conforming to your body, as they are supposed to do, and shouldn’t be considered a sign that something is wrong with your new mattress. Unless your mattress care instructions indicate otherwise, you may want to periodically rotate it to even out these impressions over time.

For more information on getting a better night’s sleep, visit the Better Sleep Council’s website www.bettersleep.org.



THE Better
Sleep
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Finding the best bed for you

You spend more time on your bed than on any other piece of furniture in your home, and you rely on it more for your feelings of comfort and well-being. That's why it's so important to find the one that's right for you. Here's what to look for:

Comfort. Gone are the days when a mattress had to be hard-as-a-board to be good for you. A mattress that's too hard may only succeed in putting your shoulders and hips to sleep. You'll sleep best when your bed helps you feel cradled in comfort, cozy and secure.

Today's top-quality mattress/foundation ensembles are built for superior comfort. Luxurious new cushioning materials and extra-soft surface treatments create a plusher, more comfortable feel.

Support. Correct support is the essential ingredient for a healthy body. A good mattress and foundation will gently support your body at all points and keep your spine in the same shape as a person with good standing posture. Pay special attention to your shoulders, hips, and lower back – the heaviest parts. If there's too little support, you can develop back pain. But if the mattress is too hard for you, you can experience uncomfortable pressure.

Durability. It's the quality of the materials used and how they're put together that determine how long a mattress and foundation will provide the comfort and support you bought them for. The best assurance of good performance over a good many years is to buy the highest quality sleep set you can afford.

A word about the warranty. Don't look to the manufacturer's warranty to tell you how long to keep your mattress and foundation. It's there to protect you against product defects, not against the gradual loss of comfort and support.

Space. Cramped quarters can turn sleeping into a nightly wrestling match. A healthy sleeper moves anywhere from 40-60 times a night, including some dozen full body turns. You need freedom of motion while you sleep and to help you relax while getting to sleep.

If you sleep with a partner, be sure to select queen or king size. Both are not only wider, but several inches longer than the standard "double" (full size), which offers each sleeper only as much space as a baby in a crib.

Mattress size chart

King	76" x 80"
California King	72" x 84"
Queen	60" x 80"
Full ("double")	53" x 75"
Twin	38" x 75"

Note: All dimensions may vary by +/- one half inch.

When to replace your mattress

If you're waking up with stiffness, numbness, aches and pains, it's time to reevaluate your mattress and foundation (boxspring). How long a mattress will last depends on several factors, such as amount of use and original quality, but generally a mattress set that has been in use 5-7 years is no longer providing you with the best comfort and support. People's bodies change over time, and the need for good comfort and support only increases with age. That's why it's a good idea to compare the bed you are sleeping on now to newer models every few years.

Bed Basics

If you haven't shopped for a new mattress in a while, you'll be surprised at all of the choices. Just as computer and wireless technologies get more exciting each year, technologies are continuously being introduced that make the latest model mattresses and foundations a new experience in comfort.

Mattress makers are reaching new heights, literally, when it comes to building the best mattresses, adding so many extra comfort layers that they can be 14, 15 or 16 inches thick, sometimes more. (Don't worry about the sheets; extra-deep fitted sheets are now widely available.) New technologies are also giving consumers a choice between mattresses that perform best with regular turning and single-sided designs that don't need to be turned. But there's no way to convey the full array of new choices without a personal bed-shopping trip to experience them firsthand.

Innerspring. The most widely purchased type of bed uses the support of tempered steel coils in a variety of configurations. Layers of upholstery provide insulation and cushioning between your body and the spring system. The result of this basic approach, coupled with state-of-the-art technology, is a full range

of comfort choices.

Quality tip: You can't judge the quality of an innerspring mattress solely on the number of coils it contains. A high coil count doesn't automatically mean a better product. It's a combination of top quality innerspring system and superior upholstery materials that makes the difference.

Foam. Solid foam mattresses also offer a wide choice of "feels." They can be made of a solid foam core or of several layers of different types of foam laminated together. Advanced technology in polyurethane foams – which include the new visco-elastic ("memory") foams – and refinements to traditional latex foam have added to the choice of comfort, support and performance.

Airbeds. Airbeds are now designed to look like the familiar mattress/foundation combination, with an air-filled core providing the support instead of an innerspring unit or foam core. These designs also offer a range of feels and typically are electrically adjustable to suit individual sleepers' needs.

Futons. Futons are a popular alternative for those who need a sofa by day and a mattress by night. The mattresses must be very flexible, so they are typically made of cotton, synthetic fibers and foam in various combinations. The futon is designed to support sitting as well as sleeping.

Adjustable beds. Electrically adjustable beds allow sleepers to adjust the head and foot to the most comfortable position. The mattress and foundation must be specially built for the flexing motion and can be innerspring, foam or a combination. Since the flexing causes extra wear on the mattress, quality construction is very important. Only mattresses built for this purpose should be used with an adjustable bed.

Waterbeds. Most waterbeds are now designed to look like the familiar mattress/foundation, with a water-filled core providing the support and layers of upholstery for insulation and surface comfort. High-quality construction is especially critical when water is involved, so look for assurance that the vinyl and seaming are designed for maximum durability.

The right foundation. A good foundation is as important as a good mattress. The foundation takes a lot of the nightly wear and tear and contributes to the bed's overall comfort and support. Never put a new

mattress on an old foundation. When you select your new mattress, buy the manufacturer's recommended foundation – the two will perform best together. In fact, buying the mattress without the recommended foundation may affect the terms of the warranty.

Mattress shopping tips

Though you may find bed-buying somewhat confusing – after all, you don't do it very often and it's not easy to see what's inside – you'll be happy to know that consumer research shows that 90% of recent buyers are highly satisfied with their choice. Just remember to take these important steps to assure that the bed you choose is the right one for you.

1. Come prepared. When you're buying a bed for two, it's a good idea to bring your partner so the choice is the right one for *both* of you. Be sure to wear comfortable clothes (jeans or slacks for women) and shoes you can easily remove for lying down to try various models.

2. Do a comfort comparison. The only way to tell which mattress is right for you is to lie down on several different comfort choices. Don't be embarrassed. You don't think twice about test driving a car, and you shouldn't think twice about comfort testing a mattress. Lie down on each mattress for several minutes and roll into your normal sleeping position. Pay special attention to the support at the lower back and make sure you have plenty of comfort at the shoulders and hips.

3. Get the whole story. Your best strategy for making a wise purchase is to go to a store where the sales personnel make you feel comfortable, are knowledgeable and helpful. Ask to see illustrations or "cutaways" of the interior of the different models so you can see what's inside. Don't forget to ask about store services such as delivery and removal of old bedding.

4. Don't skimp on a good night's sleep. A "bargain" mattress and foundation are no bargain when it comes to getting a good night's sleep. Shop for the best value, not the lowest price, and buy the best you can afford. The mattress you sleep on is one of the best cost-per-day values of any purchase you can make, especially when you think of it as an investment in your personal health and well-being.