

Mattress To Go Beducation®



How do I decide? I'm sooo confused!

Is this how you feel when shopping for a mattress? I can't blame you. I've been doing this for 25 years and I'm still learning. As a consumer you can't be expected to know everything about mattresses when you only buy one once every 10 years or so ([here's how you research a mattress](#)).

Part of the problem is that mattresses are a "blind product" - you can't see what's inside ([how a mattress is built](#)). And it's not like there's a *Mattress Today* magazine that will tell you what makes a good mattress and how they're constructed. To top it off, most of the people selling mattresses are ill-informed and primarily interested in their sales commission ([mattress advertising truths](#)).

The mattress companies aren't much help either. They generally produce the same beds nationwide, but in neighboring geographical regions they will change the name and the color of the beds to make it very difficult for shoppers to compare model to model. And when you attempt to compare prices, sleep shops and furniture stores all scream that they're never undersold ([bogus mattress price guarantees](#)), yet all of their prices are generally the same - how can that be if they're all the lowest? With all of this in mind, it's no wonder consumers put off buying a mattress until the very last minute.

While the industry and many retailers set up these roadblocks that make it difficult to find a quality product that fits your budget, there are things you can do to become an educated consumer. Keep reading below for some helpful mattress shopping tips.

Mattress Shopping Tips - Here's What You Need to Do

While choosing a mattress is a subjective experience, there are some research-proven methods you can use that will help you make a correct mattress choice. After all, your mattress is the most used piece of furniture in your home and it has the largest impact on your health and well-being.

Start with good support. You never want your mattress to have poor support that causes you to sink in as if sleeping on a hammock. Support comes from the [innerspring unit](#) and there are many different innerspring designs, so do your research. Make sure you pick a mattress containing an innerspring unit that uses twice-tempered steel, helping the springs retain their memory. Also consider choosing a thicker [gauge of innerspring steel](#) for longevity if the mattress design uses a lower spring count of a knotted offset design. Some models may add extra foam reinforcement or a specialized edge spring unit

around the perimeter of the innerspring and this can effectively increase the usable sleep surface of your mattress.

The [box spring](#), or foundation, has recently undergone quite a bit of change. Most brands are now using platforms that do not flex at all and these are more appropriate for the current style of one-sided mattresses. Some brands choose to use simple wood boxes, while others use metal semi-flex cages. A few companies still use torsion modules that flex a bit. The old coil box springs are not common and modern one-sided mattresses will not perform well when placed upon them. Be sure to consider replacing your box spring and mattress at the same time, as they are designed to work together. Additionally, newer mattresses and box springs comply with the new more stringent federal flammability guidelines.

Comfort is the most important feature of your mattress. Research has shown that you want an item with good support and decent comfort to help with pressure point relief and improved circulation. A hard feel does not always equal good support or good comfort. Comfort is most easily and commonly achieved through the use of different qualities and quantities of [foam](#) placed on top of the mattress, not necessarily by adding or removing springs from the innerspring unit. Make sure you select a product that contains higher quality (i.e., higher density) foams and ask to see a specification sheet of the quilt and upholstery foam layers of the mattress. Specialty foams are becoming more popular, with high-density polyurethane, visco-elastic and latex leading the way. Be sure to research the specific characteristics of these particular padding layers. And don't be shocked to find that the mattress you are considering is one-sided, as most brands now only produce one-sided mattresses.

You get to do all the hard work of lying down and trying out these products, so dress comfortably and don't be shy. Companies have attempted to use computer models, pressure pads or surveys to pick the right mattress for you, but these are marketing tools meant to sell a particular mattress brand instead of helping you select the bed that is best for your individual needs. A highly-skilled comfort consultant will be much more beneficial than any electronic pressure-mapping device.

Research from various independent groups has shown that your initial impression is usually the most accurate indicator of your happiness with a product, so if you find a feel you like, stick with it. Ask to see all the other items in the store that feel similar to the one you like and then differentiate between these items by price, features, benefits, quality and longevity. Sometimes choosing a mattress is not so much finding what you like, but what you don't like. Either way, you are narrowing your focus to a certain range of comfort and that is what you need to accomplish. You might have to come back for a second visit to finalize your selection – don't be afraid to do this. Never feel pressured to make an immediate decision, because the product you choose will be one which you'll be sleeping on for many years to come.

Warranty is another consideration, but less important. The average length of time people keep a mattress is currently 8 years (although recent research from Oklahoma State suggests you should replace your mattress after 7 years), so you should expect a mattress warranty for an adult support product to be a 10 year, non-prorated warranty (the standard in the industry). Many brands will use their warranty as a marketing tool, offering longer periods of time because they know consumers equate the length of a warranty with the quality of a product. This is not necessarily the case as mattress warranties only cover defects in workmanship, not comfort, and comfort is what is going to wear out on any modern mattress.

It is important to ask what the expected [comfort life](#) of any product is so that you will have an indication of approximately how long the mattress should keep its shape. Most of the more common mattress brands only offer a comfort life of 4-5 years. Premium mattresses using higher density foams can have a comfort life of about 8-10 years, with the more exclusive, ultra-premium brands using high-resilience foams and latex lasting up to 15 years.

Consider where the mattress you're assessing is produced. Is it composed of imported or domestic components? Look for foams that are CertiPUR-US® or Oeko-Tex® certified. We're currently experiencing an influx of foams from overseas that are produced to a much lower level of quality and environmental control, including many memory foams that have issues with off-gassing. You'll definitely want to avoid these products.

Ask about the quality of the [interior construction of the mattress](#). Are the padding layers closely secured with hog-rings and interior flanges, or are they floating loosely on top of the spring unit? Are the comfort layers secured with glue? A mattress will not provide adequate comfort for a long period of time if it is not assembled properly, even if it uses components of the highest quality.

Never ever consider a [used mattress](#), a comfort exchanged product or anything that comes from a store that offers used furniture or exchanged items. Additionally, avoid items that are sold in outdoor venues or tent sales. Besides the obvious health concerns associated with such items, the transition of bed bugs is facilitated by selling and using these types of mattresses.

Finally, take into consideration the reputation and track record of the store you're visiting. The reputation of your comfort consultant is just as important as the product you're purchasing, as this reputation validates the advice you're receiving. You will rely upon these people for help in choosing your product and for questions after the sale, so you'll want to make sure they are experts and have your best interest in mind. Make sure you're not pressured and that all your questions are answered to your satisfaction before making this important purchase.