

Beds

- **Hard mattresses are not necessarily the best for bad backs**
- **You (and your sleeping partner) need to try a new mattress for at least 10 minutes before you buy. Look out for manufacturers who offer a trial period**
- **Always do the mattress test! See point 9 below**

1. Before spending money always experiment first. A stiff board under a mattress can make up for a sagging base. A medium mattress on an old solid/slatted base will give the same amount of variable support as buying a firm mattress on a soft base.
2. Don't take too much notice of the description on the product (e.g. "orthopaedic"). There is no regulation of manufacturers' descriptions of their product. You have to find one that best fits your needs regarding your height, weight, age, sleeping position and back problem.
3. Your new bed needs to be high enough, so that you can get up and sit down with ease, and wide enough, if you or your sleep partner is restless. (Have you considered a zip together mattress?)
4. The mattress should be supportive enough to take the weight of your body without sagging, but firm enough for you to turn with ease (a really giving surface is hard to turn on). The heavier the person the deeper the mattress needs to be. A soft or sprung base for a heavier person usually means more sag.
5. Interior sprung mattresses are the most common form of mattress and can provide sufficient support and cushion the bony curves of the body. They come with a large variation in numbers of springs and prices; always choose as many springs as you can within your budget.
6. Memory foam was originally developed for astronauts and works by responding to temperature and weight to relieve and disperse pressure. You must ensure that you can turn with ease, however, because lying in one position for too long can create stiffness. There are a number of manufactures that provide both mattresses and toppers. Foam mattresses often need less turning than other kinds, which can prevent back strain.
7. It is advisable to buy your mattress and base together. A solid base is good and offers support when sitting or getting off the bed. A good quality full sprung edge base is the most flexible and will absorb wear and tear well.
8. You may also need to consider other aids depending on your sleeping position and back problem, for example lumber rolls, mattress toppers, and shoulder pillows.
9. A simple rule of thumb to test whether a bed has the right level of firmness for you is to lie down on your back and slide your hand between mattress and the small of your back. If there is a large gap the bed is probably too hard, if it is difficult to push your hand through it is probably too soft, and if your hand slides through but remains in contact with your back and the bed it is probably just right.
10. A bed needs to be tested for at least 20 minutes according to the Osteopathic Council and some manufacturers do a home trial that is worth looking out for.

Relevant information

BackCare booklet: Back in Bed - <http://www.backpain.org/eccommerce/cat-leaf.php#bed>

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Useful Websites

The Sleep Council www.sleepcouncil.com.uk
National Bed Federation www.bedfed.org.uk
Ergonomics Society www.ergonomics.org.uk
General Osteopathic council www.osteopathy.org.uk

Corporate Supporters

Back in Action

Back in Action, 43 Woodside Road, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 6AA Telephone: 01494 434343,
Fax : 01494 434335 Email Address : info@backinaction.co.uk Website : www.backinaction.co.uk

The Comfort Shop

The Comfort Shop, 17 Alexandria Drive, St. Annes on Sea, Lancashire FY8 1JF
Telephone: 01253 724902 Website: www.the-comfort-shop.co.uk

GetBack Supplies Ltd

Nottingham Backcare, 583 Mansfield Road, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 2JN
Telephone 0800 243469 Fax 01159 120882 Website www.getbacksupplies.co.uk

ExtraComfort Ltd

ExtraComfort Ltd, 9 Kingsway, Altringham, Cheshire WA14 1PJ
Telephone : 07712 667864 Fax : 0161 928 8427 Email : sales@extracomfort.co.uk

Integrated Sleep Solutions Ltd (Reveva)

Integrated Sleep Solutions Ltd, Anchor Works, Rochdale Road, Oldham OL1 2HP
Telephone : 0161 665 2062 Email : info@reveva.com Website : www.reveva.com

Klass Vaki (Landmark Medical) Ltd

Unit 1, 1000 North Circular Road, London NW2 7JP
Telephone : 020 8450 7111 Fax : 020 8450 0901 Website : www.klassvaki.com

Meditrex

Meditrex, 18 Holroyd Road, Claygate, Esher, Surrey KT10 0LG Telephone : 01372 464859
Fax 01372 473997 Email : sales@meditrex.co.uk, Website : www.meditrex.co.uk

Oromed UK Ltd

Oromed UK Ltd, 14, The Uplands, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 7JG Telephone : 01753 891544
Fax : 01753 890140 Email : lg@oromedhealthcare.com Website : www.oromedhealthcare.com

Physio Supplies Ltd

Physio Supplies Ltd, The Warehouse, Beck Bank, West Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 3QN
Telephone: 0870 054 5050 Website: www.physiosupplies.com

The Posture People

The Posture People, 3 St George's Road, Brighton, BN2 1EB Telephone 01273 685 125 Fax 01273 698 563
Email Address enquiries@posturepeople.co.uk Website www.posturepeople.co.uk

Posturite (UK) Ltd

Posturite (UK) Ltd, The Mill, Berwick, East Sussex, BN26 6SZ Telephone 0845 345 0010
Email Address support@posturite.co.uk Website www.posturite.co.uk

Sasaki International Ltd

Sasaki International Ltd, Sasaki House, Unit 8 Waterside Park, Old Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes MK12 5NP
Telephone 0845 3306368 Website www.sasaki.co.uk

Sealy

Station Road, Aspatria, Wigton, Cumbria CA7 2AS
Telephone : 01697 320342 Website : www.sealy.co.uk

Tempur UK Ltd

Tempur UK Ltd Caxton Point, Printing House Lane, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1AP
Telephone 020 8589 7000 Website www.tempur.co.uk

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