

UNDERSTANDING SLEEP



The importance of a good bed...

One thing is certain: without a comfortable bed, sleep will not come easily or fully refresh. But there is no such thing as the perfect universal bed. A bed needs to suit the individual and what is right for one person may be wrong for another.

Within the constraints of personal budget, a good bed should help you to wake physically and mentally restored to your full potential. So says Alistair Hughes, managing director of Savoir Beds.

“The right bed certainly needs to be comfortable – comfortable for you,” he says. “It needs to be supportive. Your body should be allowed to relax and not have to work hard to maintain the position it is resting in.” Support does not mean hard, in fact it may mean soft. And it is a myth that hard

beds are good for bad backs, says The Sleep Council’s Jessica Alexander.

A firm, supportive bed is not the same as a hard bed.

“Goldilocks had the right idea: the right bed’s neither too soft nor too hard,” says Ms Alexander. “It suits everyone’s very individual needs.” Mr Hughes says a bed needs to accept your curves and mold to your contours, coming up to meet your lower back for example, but allowing your hips or shoulders to sink in.

Here is his guide of what to look for when choosing a bed:

- A soft, cushioned top layer will normally aid comfort
 - Flexibility to take your shape and weight
 - A sleep surface that allows your body to breathe; slightly raised feet will aid circulation and absence of pressure points will help blood flow
 - Something big enough which, if shared, allows freedom of movement.
- “It should use animal fibres near the surface, as they breathe and wick moisture away,” he says. “Lower down it should have springs to do more of the hard work, with small pocketed springs in the mattress and big hourglass springs in the base, and have areas used to heavy wear, such as along the edges.”

Top ten quality killers

- 1 I go to sleep very late at night and have to be up early in the morning
- 2 I am worried or stressed about things going on in my life
- 3 I am a poor sleeper overall
- 4 I have too much to do during the day and not enough time
- 5 I am worried or stressed about things going on in the outside world
- 6 I have a health condition that wakes me up
- 7 My children keep me up at night
- 8 Snoring (my own or by my spouse or partner)
- 9 Outside noise
- 10 Sleep apnoea

Source: Philips Sleep Survey

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