

The right mattress for the best sleep

Shopping for a new mattress? Don't let price be the main deciding factor.

By Hector Tan



TEMPUR Sensation 22 Breeze Hero

Photos courtesy of Luxury Mattress Collection and Tempur Singapore.

CONSIDERING that you spend nearly a third of your life sleeping, choose a mattress that gives you a good night's sleep.

How to know if your mattress is right for you? Ms Janet Soh, country manager of Tempur Singapore said: "If you wake up feeling achy and sore, then you are sleeping on a mattress that is unsuitable for your body. Apart from giving you comfortable support, the right mattress will help you wake up feeling fresh."

Mr Kenny Tang, general manager of Luxury Mattress Collection, said: "Since having a good night's rest is vital to good health, invest the time and money to buy the right one as studies have shown that your state of health can be affected by the quality of sleep you get at night.

"While the average lifespan of a mattress is not more than 10 years, a sure sign that your mattress is due for change is when you start feeling uncomfortable lying on it."

The material matters

Innerspring mattresses use steel coil support systems which can vary in terms of spring shapes, designs, coil gauge, and the number of coils. The innerspring is covered by padding and upholstery materials such as foam, fibre and additional layers of smaller steel springs.

Mr Tang said: "While the number of spring coils vary by manufacturer, the idea is that the more coils there are, the better the mattress can conform to your body contour and give greater support."

Foam mattresses are broadly divided into polyurethane foam, memory foam, or synthetic latex foam. Most foam mattresses are made with synthetic latex or polyurethane foam. They provide decent support and vary according to make and composition.

"Foam used in mattresses comes from a variety of plant based or synthetic materials in different densities to offer consumers different comfort, feel and heat dissipation features. Each provides a different sensation when you lie on it," said Mr Tang.

He recommended taking into account factors like the temperature of your room when choosing foam mattresses, as certain foam compositions dissipate heat slower than others.

Memory foam is known to retain heat but it is

unique because of its ability to contour naturally to a person's body shape. Certain manufacturers have found a way to counter its heat retention properties by layering it with heat-dissipating materials.

Ms Soh said: "Memory foam 'hugs' a person with its natural conformity. This reduces pressure points when you lie down, which in turns provides comfort. Its shock-absorbing properties also make it a choice buy for couples who like a snug sensation while they sleep."

Natural and hybrid materials

Mattresses made with natural materials range from cotton, natural latex, wool, horsehair, mohair, silk, cashmere and linen.

Mr Tang said: "Natural materials help to regulate body temperature better than synthetic materials as they wick way moisture and provide good ventilation between layers."

Hybrid mattresses usually comprise inner-spring body systems that are layered above with foam or natural materials. These provide the best of spring support and varying degrees of sleep sensitivity according to the comfort levels being sought.

Height and width

"It does not mean that the thicker the mattress, the more comfort it will provide. In fact, some standard height mattresses are extremely high quality and provide excellent comfort," said Mr Tang.

Mr Tang recommended that you should determine the height of your mattress based on the ease of which you get on and off of your bed. Be sure to ensure that the height of the mattress will look good on the bed frame or headboard as well. A high bed with low headboard will look disproportionate.

Ms Janet Soh said: "Thicker mattresses may feel plush, but are not necessary comfier. Standard mattress lengths here are at 1.9m, which caters to most people. If you are tall, go for European or US sizes."

What suits you

Harder mattresses do not mean better support.

"Support requirements differ according to your weight and build. Focus on how supportive and comfortable a mattress is, rather than its hardness. Also, do not assume that orthopaedic beds are the best options. The term 'orthopaedic' generally refers to an extra firm bed. But a medium-firm mattress with proper cushioning can offer ample support too," said Mr Tang.

