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# Property



## Get back to basics: how to sleep better

*Make your bedroom the most restful place in the house, from a calm interior design to pillows that use space technology, writes Emily Brooks*

# COVER STORY



Hideaway: a luxury flat in Knightsbridge, left, is £12.25m through Strutt & Parker

technology is said to be the enemy of sleep. The stimulation of interacting with your phone or tablet before going to bed compared with the blue light emanating from the screen are thought to disrupt the body's natural night-time rhythms. On the other hand, technology is also covering the recesses of poor sleepers from highly engineered mattresses in small gadgets that will help you drop off and wake up, there are many modern methods to tackling this age-old problem.

Smith, the mattress maker, has used a data-driven approach to create a user-size-fit-all mattress in response to the idea that everybody needs pillows and other bedding tailored to their sleeping position and weight. "We worked with the Sleep to Live Institute, based in the US, which has data on 10 million people's sleeping habits," says family Wynne-Jones, head of product development. "We were then able to identify specific pressure points on the body, which correspond to zones on the mattress. For example, across the shoulders and upper back, or against your calf, we can cause zones that alter the giving extra support and comfort. Using such a vast data bank we've been able to tailor the design to suit 95 per cent of the population."

The resulting multi-layered mattress, a hybrid of memory foam and springs, arrives rolled in a box for ease of transportation, an additional feat of engineering, since the coil springs had to be designed not to rattle when rolled. Its pillows are also different, stuffed with memory foam fibres that

have a breathable strip around the edge; there's also an optional heat and moisture controlling "smart coating" made from Outlast, a patented material that has no effect on space technology. All this tech goes against the other prevailing trend in mattresses, the return to natural materials such as wool, deemed to be more breathable. Wynne-Jones agrees that Simba matches, that pine has the added benefit of tailored support. "Yes, you could have a complex layering system with cashmere, wool, silk and cotton, but by using new materials you not only get that breathability but, a real responsiveness that you wouldn't find in those products."

Royal Anping, the Dutch bedding company, takes a similar approach by sewing its top-of-the-range mattresses with a different composition in the shoulder and hip area. The bases of the beds are made from metal mesh that anchors in the shoulder zone as sleepers move between their back and side, meaning they're less likely to wake up.

Royal Anping is also the go-to brand for highly engineered, adjustable modern beds that do not look like they belong in an institution.

Jonathan Warren, director at online bedroom retailer Time 4 Sleep, agrees that the main areas of growth are all-natural, handmade mattresses and those with a hi-tech approach. "There's definitely a focus on craftsmanship, but memory foam mattresses have also enjoyed a revival due to the arrival of gel memory foam, which helps to reduce heat and increase blood circulation, as well as reducing the strain on aching joints."

Bedside gadgetry is another massive industry, with money pouring into crowdfunding sites for anything that is sleep-related. The Gravity Blanket, for example, a really heavy blanket, weighing up to 20lb, which invalids the user's made bedlines. Also, a hybrid of memory foam and springs, arrives rolled in a box for ease of transportation, an additional feat of engineering, since the coil springs had to be designed not to rattle when rolled. Its pillows are also different, stuffed with memory foam fibres that

**HEAD SPACE**  
LEITE ÖDÖWICK  
Barn in Sussex, comes in £2.5m with Strutt & Parker. A bright, clean bedroom from 1500 London, main



Head space: a bright, clean bedroom from 1500 London, main

your head", which incorporates sun-rise-imitating LED lighting, raised 5740,000 against a target of £50,000. These products may take a while to reach the UK, but there are plenty of other gadgets if you're not ready to fill on your bedside table. White noise machines block out background sounds, replacing them with a happy noise, none or nature noises, while the Scarsdale is an "all-night alarm clock" that wakes you up with pleasant music, from mini to grand. Diana Simpson, lighting expert at John Lewis, recom-

**SUNRISE**  
SUNRISE  
wakes up to natural light to help  
stomped, left,  
for sale with Strutt  
& Parker at £1.75m.  
Simba developer's  
one-type-the-all  
mattress, right

mande Bouvier's Wake Up Light: "It has a simple and smart design to help regulate your sleep/wake cycle and combat seasonal Affective Disorder. It really feels like you're waking up to gentle sunlight, slowly brightening up your bedroom, rather than the sharp

equally important place in the bedroom," says Paul Cook, managing director of developer Duplecare. In partnership with Artisan, a development in Hixsonia, has a system that can be programmed to use low-level lighting and turn off the fan in the bedroom at night, so as not to disturb a sleeping partner. Blinds open and close as the sun comes out, and lighting and temperature can be

## MAKING SENSE OF SLEEP



**OBEDIENT ALARM**  
£79 by Sensorwake  
(amazon.co.uk)

**WELSO WAKE UP LIGHT**  
£10 by Bouvier  
(johnlewis.com)

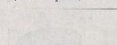
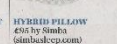
**HYBRID PILLOW**  
£50 by Simba  
(simba.co.uk)

**WHITE NOISE MAKER**  
£20.00 by Avantek  
(amazon.co.uk)

**REHEAT'S MONITOR**  
£109.95 by Apple  
(apple.com)



**HORN ANALYSER**  
£280 by Kettellion  
(kettellion.com)



Symmetrical: a bedroom by Bouvier & Cauchet, who advises staying low-tech

says Gail Taylor of Fitzhugh's. "Generally we use a light, natural palette of soft colours with warm undertones such as sage, dove and cream. We sometimes use a darker colour, but generally just for a feature wall behind the headboard; this creates a sense of being cocooned. A dark blue is a great choice." As well as advocating good storage, she says that "symmetrical use of accessories, photos, hooks, lamps and paintings create a sense of order and calm."

Turn toward, who has created hotel bedrooms for Four Seasons, says that "texture and layering are always crucial, and it is important to play with different fabrics and finishes. Always consider the counterproductive quality of a particular material: fabric plays a big role in creating a soft, more seductive atmosphere." Mary Graham of interior designer firm Solverson Graham opts for fabric-lined walls to achieve that cocooning feel. "It creates a sense of warmth and will help absorb sound that you have an uncluttered night's sleep," she says. She also recommends downlights in bedrooms, instead of a single layered look using lamps, picture lights and wall lights, all on dimmers.

If you cannot afford light, pure linen bed linen is becoming popular for its breathability – and it looks so well-travelled. "For the weekend, most linens are wrong with linen. The fabric gets softer and softer with wear and has dry washes," says Jessica Mason, founder of linen company Finesse. "It also helps to regulate your body's temperature, which is important if you have a cluttered mind, then walking into a cluttered bedroom is going to be a real problem." She also cautions against fabrics including her favourite, a silk pillow, always airy and warm, and lights as ways to improve the bedroom. "Avoid bright colours and too many patterns as this stimulates the senses."

**Avoid patterns and bold colours as this stimulates the senses**

