



Finding A Sofa That Can Stand Up To A Decade Of Sitting Down

(NAPSA)—A living room sofa is likely to outlive a lot of things—from the family car and microwave to the kids' trendy hairstyles.

Most people keep a sofa from six to 15 years before buying something new. In a recent survey by Furniture/Today, a leading trade publication, more than half of consumers in the market for a new sofa were replacing one that was 10 years old or more.

If you are one of those consumers—or soon will be—here are some tips on how to choose your next sofa wisely.

According to Paula Hoyas, vice president of upholstery merchandising for La-Z-Boy, it is important to pay careful attention to the quality elements that give a piece its lasting power.

Read the fine print

Before you buy, be sure to read the fine print in the warranty. Note what is included and how long the company guarantees the product. For instance, La-Z-Boy offers a 10-year limited warranty on the cushions of all pieces within its Inspired Living collection. The duration of this warranty reflects the collection's quality craftsmanship.

Hoyas also points to this collection as an example of how mainstream furniture manufacturers are bringing the fashion-forward looks consumers see in magazines and designer showrooms onto retail floors—but at much more affordable prices.

Know what's on the inside

There are a number of high-end standards that mean more than just good looks.

Down, for instance, is a great indicator of quality and comfort. Down-proof ticking used in pillows and seat backs adds a desirable "crinkle" effect upon sitting.



Experts suggest looking for a combination of high style and quality craftsmanship when shopping for a new sofa.

Choosing down-blend seat cushions will provide an even more luxurious sit. Soft padded outside arms and back also add to the overall comfort of the piece.

Note what's on the outside

If you want a sofa to make a great visual impression for years to come, look for the following cues:

- Deep decking (the fabric under the seat cushions) to ensure that only the sofa's primary fabric is revealed when sitting. Six inches is ideal.
- Welting (the cotton cord covered with fabric that is sewn along the seams of the upholstered frame and cushions) that is straight and free of puckers.
- Skirts that hang smoothly with crisp corners.
- Fabric patterns that are matched seat to cushion to back to frame.

Make a statement

The more your new sofa speaks to your personal style, the more likely it will stand the test of time.

Hoyas suggests starting with a classically designed frame and adding personal flair with custom touches.

"With the wide array of optional accents available today, consumers can create one-of-a-kind designs," she says.

Try before you buy

You should put your furniture to the "sit" test before you buy. This test is the best and simplest way to judge the overall comfort of any sofa or chair.

If your at-home seating style includes sprawling, flopping and stretching out—and whose doesn't?—then these should be part of your test.

Finally, Hoyas recommends buying products with brand names you know and trust. Also, buy from a reputable furniture dealer, one that has been recommended by colleagues, family or friends.

For more information about the Inspired Living by La-Z-Boy collection, visit www.lazboy.com.