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BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA

## Cue Sheet

# MATTRESSES



### EXTEND MATTRESS LIFE

Good care prolongs the life and comfort of mattress and box springs. Always use a mattress pad, and if desired, a cover on the box springs. These protect bedding from dust, dirt and soil. A pad absorbs moisture and body oils; it should be laundered regularly. Wash the box spring cover occasionally, too.

Open windows to air mattress while laundering bedding. A vacuum upholstery attachment can be used to help remove dust from a mattress. For even wear, it should be turned over, end for end and side for side, once a month during the first six months; once or twice a year afterward. Avoid bending or rolling a mattress when turning or moving it as this may damage the insides. When the mattress is removed, vacuum or brush the box springs around the frame. Some mattresses will have special care instructions attached. Be very sure you read, understand, and follow them.

Worn out bedding can interfere with sleep. Telltale signs include low or lumpy spots, hollow areas, sagging borders, noisy squeaks and lack of firmness. Protection and regular cleaning of a mattress along with turning it from time to time can extend its life. If a mattress shows signs of age and causes sleepless nights, it may be time to consider investing in a new one.

### BUYING MATTRESSES CAUSES CONFUSION

Mattresses come in a confusing array of sizes, brands, construction, coverings and price.

A mattress goes bad slowly. How do you know if you really need a new one? You probably do if your present mattress:

- is more than 10 years old



- has lumps, hollows, broken stitching.
- bulging sides, unspringy springs you can feel through the ticking.
- sways from side to side when you roll over.

Check the box springs for wear, too, and don't put a new mattress on worn out springs.

#### CHOICES

There are three main kinds of bedding - waterbeds, which are vinyl bags filled with up to a ton or more of water; ones made of latex or urethane foam; and innerspring types. Innerspring mattresses are the most popular. Judging quality is difficult because what counts most is hidden by ticking.

Most stores have a cutaway model of mattresses on display. This is helpful if you know what to look for.

#### Platform mattresses

Specially designed mattresses or platforms will give the quality performance consumers desire for the pedestal type look.

A regular mattress put on a platform will have about half the life of one used with box springs because it gets much more wear and tear. To get full life from a mattress and still have the platform look, use a box spring foundation.

Mattress manufacturers are meeting consumer needs for the sleek platform by designing special mattresses. One company conceals a box spring type foundation in the platform frame. Another is making a mattress with an extra turn in its coils - it's one inch higher than a conventional mattress.

To create the popular platform or pedestal look, either buy a specially designed mattress or use a box spring foundation.

#### Innerspring

Innerspring mattresses come in two basic types. One is the open coil, as in the large illustration, in which the springs are joined by metal ties, clips or small springs. In a standard double-size mattress the number of springs may be anywhere from 180 to 1,000, depending on the size of the coil. In open-coil construction the mattress may squeak if the springs touch each other. Some manufacturers use vinyl coated wire to prevent noise.

The second type, called a Marshall mattress, is shown in Figure 2 picture. Its springs are in individual cloth pockets that are joined together like long "ladders." Despite claims, the springs don't move completely independently of each other. A Marshall double bed usually contains about 800 coils.

The longest-wearing springs are low-gauge high-carbon steel. Generally, the more coils and the more turns to each coil, the firmer the mattress.

Fig. 1

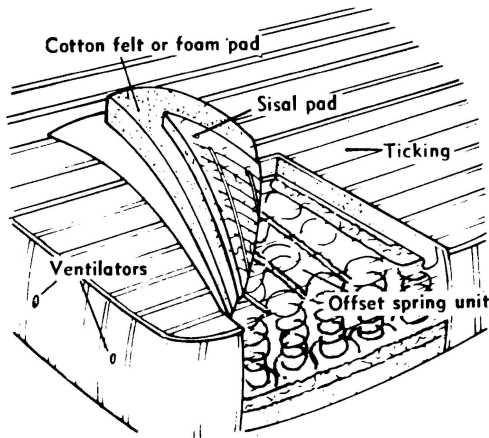


Fig. 1

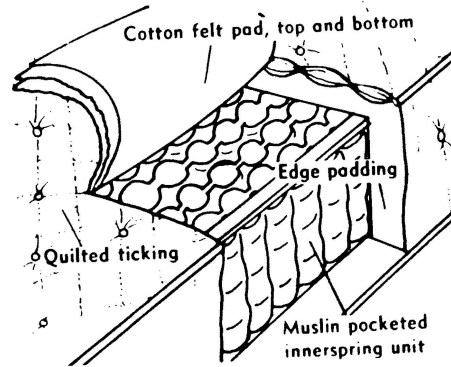


Fig. 2

Several layers of materials are used above the coils. They include an insulator to prevent the padding from working into and around the springs. Common materials include quilted cotton, urethane foam, felted hair and sisal. Padding or upholstery provides firmness and comfort, and keeps you from feeling the coils. It may be layers of cotton or foam or a combination of both, plus other materials. Good performance depends as much on the quality of the materials, as on the type of material used.

Ticking is the fabric that covers the whole assembly.

### Foam

Foam mattresses are flexible and lighter while being dust-free, lint-free and non-allergenic. They are made of ticking over a core 4 to 6 inches thick of natural latex or urethane. Latex cores, generally more expensive, are made individually and have molded air cells for additional resiliency. Urethane foam is made in large slabs, then cut to size. Some foam turns yellow with age. Foam mattresses don't have to be turned.

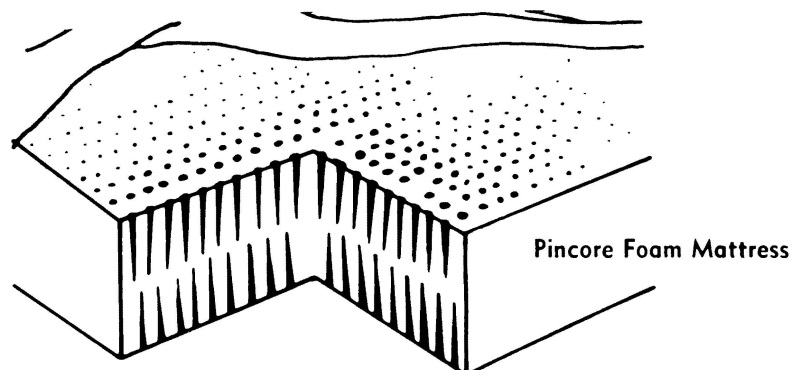


Fig. 3

## TEST FOR COMFORT

You are the best judge of comfort, and it is essential that you do so. Shop the local stores and see what is available. Lie down on samples of sets you're considering. Roll around and, undignified as it may seem, bounce up and down a bit. If you feel silly, consider if you make the right choice, you won't have to go through this indignity very often.

## OTHER FEATURES TO LOOK FOR

### Size

Know the size you want. Allow 36" width per person for greatest comfort. Length is a personal requirement and taller individuals may wish to buy 80" long bedding.

### Ventilation

Look for ventilation openings on innerspring mattresses. Most have at least four small vents, usually a metal or plastic perforated circle.

### Ticking

Tests have shown that generally damask tickings were more resistant to bursting than print tickings. The damask tickings also proved more colorfast than prints. Damask ticking showed a slightly greater air and moisture permeability than mattresses with a print ticking. An 8 ounce close weave ticking will wear better than a 5 ounce or less.

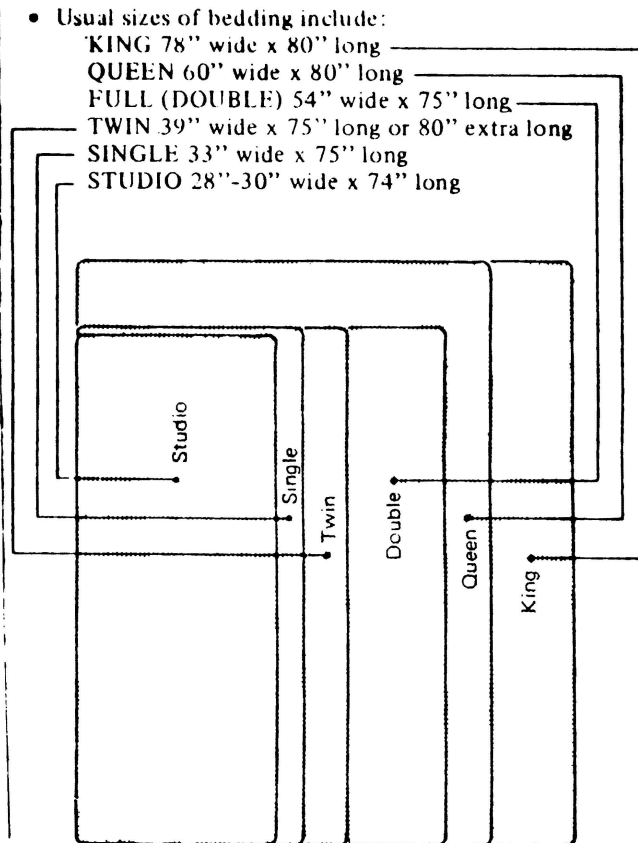


Fig. 4

### Handles

Since innerspring mattresses should be turned periodically, check for secure handles on each side, preferably fastened to metal plates inside the mattress rather than to eyelets attached to the ticking.

## BEDDING FOUNDATIONS

Foundations support mattresses and provide greater sleeping comfort. A worn bedding foundation can give uneven support and distort the shape of the mattress.

## Box Springs

Box springs are made of padding and a series of coil springs or torsion bars mounted on a wooden frame.

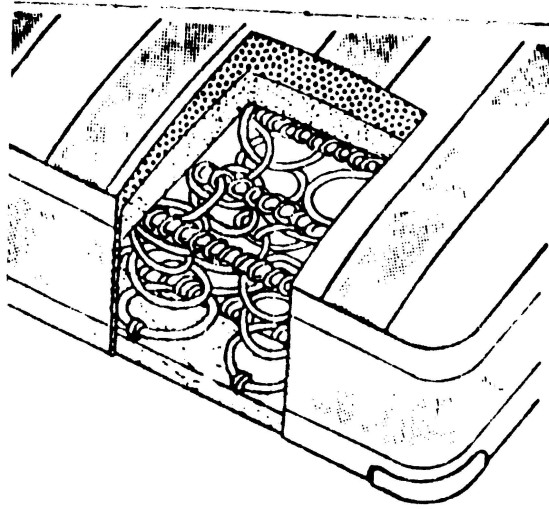


Fig. 5

Plastic corner guards protect corners from wear.

## Foam

This foundation is made from a slab of polyurethane. It is firmer than a boxspring foundation.

## PRICE VS. DURABILITY

If you're shopping for a mattress set that you will use regularly - you should buy the best and most comfortable set that you can afford. The better sets are the most expensive - from \$220 to \$300 for twin size. However, they should hold up for a long time.

If you plan to use the set in a guest room or vacation house and it will only be used occasionally -- then shop for comfort and price. Some of the less expensive mattresses may do nicely.

## GUARANTEES

Most mattress sets come with a guarantee. Better sets may have a 15 year guarantee, with coverage prorated over years of ownership. Others are guaranteed for shorter periods of time. However, under some guarantees, you may have to pay a stiff price to have the mattress shipped back to the company. Under the best guarantee you would return the mattress to the dealer.

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial purposes or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Cooperative Extension Service is implied.

## STUDY YOUR SELECTION

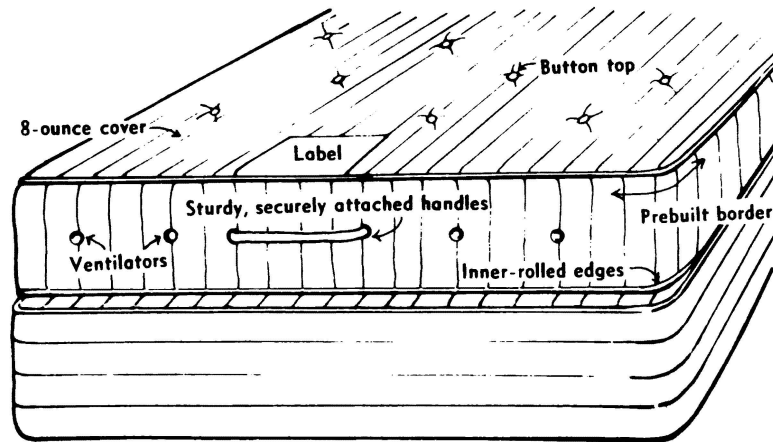


Fig. 6

Size \_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Important features noted:

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