

BUYING GUIDE: HOW TO CHOOSE A SOFA

You'll spend a lot of time on your sofa, and it can be a big investment, so choosing the right one is important. We've put together this handy buying guide to help you make the perfect choice.



How to buy a sofa

Your sofa is the heart of your home: the place where you snuggle up with family, [relax at the end of a long day](#) and goggle at the latest blockbuster. Our top tip when it comes to sofa buying is to take your time. Before you take the plunge, take a moment to consider what you need from a sofa and what will fit best with your lifestyle. Do you want a sofa that's super soft to sink into, or something more supportive? How big is the room and what will work best in the space? Are you prone to spills and therefore in need of a [stain-resistant finish](#)?

Whatever you choose, you can be confident in our M&S quality. All our furniture comes with a 10-year guarantee and our sofas are built to last by master craftspeople – in fact, many of them are made right here in Britain. For added peace of mind, all our made-to-order sofas come with a stain resistant finish. Pick from [ready-made sofas](#) or create a sofa that's exactly to your taste with our [made-to-order sofas](#) by customising the size, colour, cushions, fabric and feet. This guide will take you through everything you need to know about choosing a sofa, from finding the perfect size to picking fabric, so get ready to relax in style.

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How to choose the right size sofa

Deciding what size sofa you need, especially if you're shopping online, can be tricky. The exact size of a sofa depends on what style you choose, but generally sofas can measure anywhere between 133cm and 242cm long. Below is our guide to the average overall widths of our sofas (shown in A on the main image):

4 SEATER: 213 – 242cm
LARGE 3 SEATER: 193 – 225cm
3 SEATER: 177 – 205cm
LARGE 2 SEATER: 153 – 185cm
2 SEATER: 133 – 165cm

You also need to think about how much space you need to relax and spread out on your sofa, particularly if you have several family members or like to entertain regularly. We've listed the average true seating areas below (B on the main image):

4 SEATER: 177 – 192cm
LARGE 3 SEATER: 157 – 172cm
3 SEATER: 137 – 152cm
LARGE 2 SEATER: 117 – 132cm
2 SEATER: 99 – 112cm

Of course, there's more to a sofa than just the width. You also must consider the height and depth. Each of our sofas lists the full dimensions in the product details.

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How to measure for a new sofa

Avoid any disasters on delivery day by making sure your sofa will fit. If it won't slide through hallways, door frames or up and down stairs without wrecking your decor, your dream sofa will have nowhere to go. Measure up the narrowest gaps around your home and consider obstacles before hitting 'buy'. The important dimensions to note are the height, depth and length of your sofa, all of which can be found on the product page. We take care of all the hard work: our sofas will be delivered to the room of your choice and our delivery team will also attach the feet, put the sofa in your chosen spot, and remove the packaging to be recycled. All you need to do is put your feet up.

It's also important to think about how your new sofa will sit in the room before you buy. Take some time to mark out with masking tape or sheets of newspaper the sofa's size, shape, and position to get a feel for how it will look. Think about what will be around your new sofa, too – sofa beds will need about 240cm to fully extend (more if you want to walk around the foot of the bed) and recliners extend to 150cm-180cm to give the optimal angle for chilling out.

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Which fabric should I pick for my sofa?

We offer a carefully curated range of fabrics in an array of different colours and textures, so you're sure to find something that suits your space beautifully. Our fabrics include:

Velvets: A great choice for both neutral and bold colours, velvet creates a striking look that's sure to be a focal point in any room. It's super soft (ideal for nights in on the sofa) and always in style.

Chenilles: Soft and inviting, chenille feels even softer to the touch than velvet. It comes in varying styles, from opulent to relaxed casual looks, while still offering warmth and cosiness.

Weaves: Available in varying designs, weaves are hard wearing and are a good choice for busy households. Choose from tightly woven structures for a sophisticated look, or chunkier weaves for a more relaxed casual look.

Naturals: Wool, cotton and linen are natural-fibre fabrics. Wool is great for a premium traditional look. All our cotton is responsibly sourced and certified with the BCI standard. Cotton is soft and breathable and a luxurious choice for your sofa. Linen and linen blends are also breathable and naturally hypoallergenic.

Leathers: Corrected grain leathers are finished with an embossing treatment that makes them easy to wipe clean. Unlike natural leathers they will not mark or scratch, making them the most hardwearing leather choice for your sofa.

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Do I need a stain-resistant sofa?

We spend a lot of time on our sofas and spills are inevitable, especially if you have children or share your home with furry friends. Thankfully, our stain-resistant technology means there's no need to panic about dropped dinner or muddy pawprints. It repels most water-based stains and liquids, which helps protect your new sofa from everyday mishaps. It works by creating an invisible barrier, which slows the absorption of liquids to allow you more time to clean up the spillage. Make sure to clean any spills immediately for the best results. Our made-to-order sofas come with a stain-resistant finish as standard for added peace of mind when buying your new sofa.

You can also choose fabrics that contain our Aquaclean technology on our made-to-order sofas. It covers every fibre with an invisible molecular coating, which means that dirt can't penetrate the fabric. Apply water over the stain, either directly or using a damp cloth, and then press down over the stain with a damp cloth and rub gently over the fabric using circular movements. Stains should just disappear. For the toughest stains, such as permanent markers, add water and a dab of soap.

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Which sofa cushions are right for me?

At M&S, we have up to four different cushion fillings within our sofas for you to depend from. Which filling you pick will depend on how firm or soft you want your sofa to feel, and the look you're going for. Think about whether you want to sink into your sofa or prefer something with firmer support.

Bounceback cushion: Our clever Bounceback cushion give a smart but comfortable finish. A high-density foam core is layered with soft foam toppers to give a modern clean-lined cushion with soft edges. These cushions keep their shape and are soft but supportive. They're perfect if you're looking for something low maintenance, modern, and supportive.

Relaxed fibre: Pick a relaxed fibre filling if you're looking for a super-soft sofa that's perfect for lounging and prefer a casual, informal look. A soft foam core provides resilience and structure, so the cushion will recover its shape once your chill time is over and will be ready to go the next time you need to sit down.

Firm cushion: This seat cushion is the firmest in our range. It offers long-lasting extra support with its memory foam top and base. Pick this filling if you're looking for a supportive sit.

Relaxed feather: This luxurious cushion has the look and feel of a 100% duck feather cushion, but with an integrated foam core for resilience. Plump regularly for the best performance.

