

Top Tips for Beds



These tips have been produced to help you make an informed decision about buying a new bed that will suit your current and possible future needs. As we age, some people may experience difficulty with getting in and out of bed or may need to spend time in bed as a result of illness.

Tip 1

Room Space

Think about the space you need to move around the bed in the room. If you are downsizing or moving to sheltered housing, buying a smaller size of bed may be necessary. Allow for at least 80cm (32 inches) of clear space on both sides and at the foot of the bed. If you are wheelchair user, consider this being 150cm.

Tip 2

Overall Height

An average bed height of 50cm (20 inches) from floor to top of the mattress is suitable for most people. If you are having difficulty standing up from bed, it can always be made higher using specific blocks designed for this. You can't usually lower a bed.

If the bed is the correct height your hips and knees should be in line. If your knees are higher than your hips, the bed is too low

Tip 3

Mattress

Consider the depth of the mattress on top of the bed as this should be included in the overall height of the bed. Mattresses differ in firmness and this makes a difference to how well you can move in bed and how comfortable you are. A memory foam mattress can make it difficult to move and get out of bed as the mattress molds to your body shape.

Tip 4

Space under the bed

A bed frame can offer more space under the bed than a divan style bed. Most mobile specialist equipment and overbed tables need this space under the bed to accommodate the legs of the equipment. A bed frame also allows for easy pull-out storage boxes on wheels.

Tip 5

Bedroom

Remove any clutter from rooms or any excess furniture to give you as much space as possible. Consider good lighting, you might wish to include appropriate lighting for getting up overnight in the dark. Make sure your flooring is in good condition. If choosing to carpet your bedroom don't pick one which has a thick pile as this may cause difficulty with walking. Try to avoid rugs and keep cables out of the way as these can be a trip hazard.

Tip 6

Accessories to help turning in bed

If you have difficulty turning over in bed, check your bed covers aren't too heavy or cumbersome. Does your nightwear make it difficult moving and turning in bed? Could you change either your nightwear or the bottom sheet to make this easier? A bed lever is a rail at the side of the bed (fitted under the mattress) that gives you a handle to pull on to turn yourself over and to hold when sitting or standing.

A bed cradle is a frame that keeps the bed covers off your feet which might help you turn easier, as well as being more comfortable if you have sore feet (sometimes larger bed covers are needed if you use this to stop a draught making your feet get cold).

Tip 7

Accessories to help with lifting legs into bed

If you are having difficulty lifting your legs into bed, there is equipment and techniques that can help for example a simple leg lifter.

For more specialist equipment or advice contact Occupational Therapy **0345 608 1206** and select **Option**

Tip 8

Accessory to help with sleeping position

People who like to sleep propped up in bed with lots of pillows may

find alternative equipment such as an adjustable back rest beneficial.

Tip 9

Powered adjustable bed

Before opting to buy an electric bed, it is worth considering if your own bed can be altered to meet your needs first. Some accessories are shown in the photos on the back of this leaflet.

If you are going to buy one, try to include the height adjustment option as this makes it easier to get in and out even if your abilities change. It is not possible to raise an adjustable bed. If you are replacing a double bed with an adjustable bed, you can buy single beds and there are options available on the market for adjustable beds to join together. If you develop specific care needs the beds can be separated.

Make sure that any mattress you use on an adjustable bed is compatible with the bed you have chosen.

Check that you are able to move the bed, if necessary, for cleaning underneath. Check the weight limit of the bed.

Tip 10

Assessment if you have a specific condition

If you have a specific condition and would like further information and guidance, please contact Aberdeenshire Council Occupational Therapy Service on **0345 608 1206** and choose **Option 2**



Tip 7: Help lifting legs into bed



Tip 6: A Bed Cradle (above) and Bed Lever (shown on cover)

For further information and guidance, please contact Aberdeenshire Council Occupational Therapy Service on **0345 608 1206**

If you purchase a product due to a medical need or if you have a physical disability, then VAT exemption may be available. VAT relief forms are available on the UK Government website and are called Eligibility Declarations by a disabled person for VAT relief using the following webpage address: www.gov.uk