



Caring for Your Bed

From your children's bunk beds to your king size bed, you want to make sure all of your beds are in good condition so that your family can get a good night's rest. Caring for mattresses and bedding is an ongoing process to ensure they remain supportive and comfortable. Here are some DOs and DON'Ts when it comes to the upkeep of your bed:

Mattresses:

- **DO** toss back the bedding for 20 minutes every morning before making it in order to air the bed and let it cool and dry.
- **DON'T** sit on the edge of the bed or mattress as it will weaken the edge of the mattress by focusing weight in the same small area.
- **DO** turn a sprung mattress from side to side and end to end every week for the first three months, and continue to do so every three to four months thereafter to help the upholstery fillings settle evenly.
- **DON'T** roll up a mattress to store it or squash it into cramped spaces as it can cause permanent damage.
- **DO** vacuum the mattress and box spring on a regular basis to remove dust mite allergens that may irritate asthma and eczema sufferers. Do so in a careful fashion so as to not dislodge fillings by pulling on buttons and tufts.
- **DON'T** leave polythene wrappings on a new mattress. This could cause dampness due to condensation build-up during sleep, leading the mattress to rot or grow mildew.
- **DO** change or replace your child's bed at significant growth periods. Regular replacement is important to maintain the condition of the mattress for hygiene and comfort reasons.

Pillows:

- **DO** test old and worn pillows by placing the pillow over your forearm. If it drapes, then it's time to replace it. Sleeping on a pillow that is too flat or thin won't offer your child the proper head and neck support.
- **DON'T** forget to change pillowcases at least twice a week in normal climates, but more often in hot and humid regions.
- **DO** wash pillow covers on a regular basis. Over time, pillows build up dust mites, mold, mildew and fungus. Frequent cleaning is required to rid your pillow of these allergens.

Bedding:

- **DO** make sure that bedding, as well as pillows and duvet covers can be washed at 140°F.
- **DON'T** let stains set in. Remove and wash sheets immediately so that stains don't penetrate the mattress and upholstery filling where they can cause problems.
- **DO** use washable, protective covers on the mattress and pillows, especially for younger children.

Source: The Sleep Council, www.sleepcouncil.com.