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Best mattresses for back pain ✓

# Best Mattress for Back Pain in 2024: Doctor Reviewed

Nov 18, 2024 ✓ Fact Checked

In our search for the best mattress for back pain, we researched and tested many mattress brands and models. Here are the top 10 options suited to helping manage your back pain.

Written by: [Nicole Hernandez, PT, DPT](#)

Medical Reviewer: [Suzanne Gorovoy, PhD](#)

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## Key Takeaways

- The overall best mattress for back pain is the Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign because it offers zoned support and 1,000 individually wrapped steel coils.
- The ideal mattress for backache has medium firmness (or close), offers adequate lumbar support and pressure relief, and allows for easier bed mobility.
- The mattresses in our review cost between \$1,319 and \$2,499 for a queen, with an average cost of about \$1,900.
- About 23% of the population, or roughly 76 million Americans, experience chronic back pain.
- Many things can cause back pain, including prolonged sitting, lifting with poor form, or injury.

Back pain can range from annoying aches to debilitating pain. Research shows that up to 84% of the U.S. population experiences back pain at some point in their lives, with roughly 23% experiencing chronic lower back pain.

Pain throughout your back can significantly affect daily life and sleep quality, so it's crucial to talk to a health care professional to develop a treatment plan. Everyone's symptoms are different and require a tailored approach, but addressing sleep quality is one of the most important aspects of recovery, in addition to managing nutrition, stress, and activity levels. Replacing an old, worn mattress with the best mattress for back pain could help.

Based on our testing results, we developed a comprehensive list of mattress options for people with back pain. Each one had to offer plenty of pressure relief, surface support, and functional support to make this list. They also meet or exceed the industry standard for trial periods (100 nights), so you can try a mattress for a long time knowing you can return or exchange it if it doesn't work. Our top picks were tested and reviewed by experts, so we hope our list of mattresses for back pain helps you make the right decision.

## The best mattresses for upper and lower back pain in 2024

- [Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign](#): Best Overall
- [Nectar Premier](#): Best Mattress for Couples with Back Pain
- [Saatva Rx](#): Best Mattress for Back and Hip Pain
- [The WinkBed](#): Best Cooling Mattress for Back Pain
- [Saatva Classic](#): Most Supportive Mattress for Back Pain
- [Bear Elite Hybrid](#): Best Mattress for Side Sleepers with Back Pain
- [Plank Firm](#): Best Firm Mattress for Back Pain

- [Birch Natural](#): Best Mattress for Back Pain and Mobility Issues

## What we look for in a mattress for back pain

We found several important factors when testing mattresses specifically for backache, including:



### Mattress firmness

A medium-to-firm option is the doctor-recommended best mattress for back pain, according to the Journal of Orthopaedics and Traumatology.



### Pressure relief

Many people with pain around the shoulders or hips may benefit from a pressure-relieving bed for a good night's sleep.



## Spinal support

To help relieve pressure on the back, opt for a mattress that supports your spine and allows it to rest in its most natural position.



## Functional support

Look for a mattress that's easy to move around in, as many with back pain also have difficulty moving in bed or getting up in the morning.

## Video: Best mattress for back pain in 2024

Check out the video below featuring Nicole Hernandez, PT, DPT, to learn more about how we chose the best mattresses for back pain.

As a licensed physical therapist and NCOA mattress reviewer, Hernandez explains what we look for to determine whether a mattress is a good fit for those with back pain and why we chose the options we did.

Best Mattress For Back Pain 2024 - Our Top Picks!



# Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign: Best Overall Mattress for Back Pain

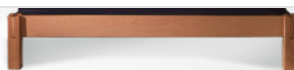
**Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign**

**BEST OVERALL MATTRESS FOR BACK PAIN**

9.3

Excellent





## Check Price

✓ We chose the Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign as our Best Overall Mattress for Back Pain because it offers a balanced amount of support and pressure relief in most sleep positions to help distribute weight away from sore areas.

- **Black Friday Sale!** 27% off and free gifts with code NCOA27

## Features

- **Price:** \$2,871 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Hybrid
- **Brand's firmness rating:** Medium
- **Mattress height:** 14"
- **Trial period:** 100 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping
- **Warranty:** 15 years
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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## Pros and cons of the Helix Midnight Luxe mattress with ErgoAlign

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## Our testing scores

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## Our expert take on the Helix Midnight Luxe mattress with ErgoAlign

The Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign is our best pick for back pain because of its well-rounded composition, which offloads pressure away from sore joints without compromising support. This hybrid ⓘ mattress is medium-firm and is most comfortable for light- and average-weight sleepers (less than 250 pounds) in any position.

When combined with the ErgoAlign Layer, this mattress provides additional support around the sleeper's midsection, providing extra support for lower back pain.



*The Helix Midnight Luxe features a plush pillow top, four layers of foam, and individually wrapped coils.*

uncomfortable pressure points. [According to research](#), targeted lower back support may reduce back pain, particularly for side sleepers who need pressure relief away from joints.

Our testers found the transition layer and coils in the Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign were responsive and adapted quickly to pressure changes, bolstering its functional support score. Moving around, changing positions, and getting in and out of bed were relatively easy. Our testers also noticed good reinforcement around the edges of the mattress. Without good edge support ⓘ, the mattress will collapse under your weight, which [may increase your risk of falls](#).

Unfortunately, bouncy coils tend to negatively affect motion isolation ⓘ. People who sleep with a restless partner will likely feel their movements. If this is a deal-breaker, check out [The WinkBed](#) hybrid mattress instead, which dampens motion across the surface better.

Helix has recently added in-home setup and removal services in select locations. In-home setup costs \$129, adding the removal of your old mattress raises the price to \$159. Helix also offers a 100-night trial period and a 15-year warranty.

## “ Our tester on the Helix Midnight Luxe mattress:

“The Helix Midnight Luxe has a comfy pillow top that allows my shoulders and hips to sink into the surface, which does make it more forgiving than firmer mattresses. It takes a little effort to roll over and push up to sitting as I’m getting out of bed, but it’s still relatively easy compared to softer all-foam beds we’ve tested. It’s a small tradeoff to consider.”

## Our mattress expert’s take

If you have back pain, this mattress could be a good fit due to its great support, pressure relief, and functional support. This can include people with sciatica or back pain and hip arthritis.

### Who may love it



- Those who like an extra mobility boost from bouncy, responsive coils

### Who may want to avoid it

- People who weigh more than 250 pounds and may perceive this mattress as too soft or unsupportive
- Those who can't haul the mattress into the home due to back pain
- Couples who are easily disturbed by movement

### Customer reviews

The Helix Midnight Luxe has a 4.4-star rating out of five and more than 6,100 reviews on its website. Many reviewers mention the mattress's positive effects on their back pain.

"We have really enjoyed our new Helix mattresses. They were easy to set up and we are sleeping much better. I have also enjoyed less back pain while I sleep."

– Jennifer S., verified buyer on 6/12/2024

"The first month or so with this mattress, my lower back was sore (back and side sleeper)... Didn't think my body would ever adjust. Luckily, my back adjusted now I sleep like a baby. Can't really compare with other 'expensive' mattresses, but no regrets."

– Juan A., verified buyer on 5/13/2024

On Google, the Helix Midnight Luxe mattress has a 4.3-star rating with 8,270 reviews. While most users gave the mattress a positive rating, some reviewers complained about it being too soft or losing support over time. According to our testing results, this mattress does seem softer than a true medium. If you're concerned the pillowtop feel may soften over time, opt for a hybrid mattress with a dense feel, like the Bear Elite Hybrid or Plank Firm.

## With Back Pain

### Nectar Premier

BEST MATTRESS FOR COUPLES  
WITH BACK PAIN

9.1 Excellent

#### Check Price

- ✓ We chose the Nectar Premier mattress as our “Best Mattress for Couples With Back Pain” because it dampens motion across the bed, sleeps cooler than many other all-foam surfaces we’ve tested, and offers excellent pressure relief for a more uninterrupted night’s sleep.
- **Black Friday Sale!** Up to 50% off mattresses, plus spend \$1,000 and save \$100 (no code required)

#### Features

- **Price:** \$1,049 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Foam
- **Brand’s firmness rating:** Medium-firm

- **Shipping:** Free shipping; white-glove delivery available for \$199
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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### Pros and cons of the Nectar Premier mattress

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### Our testing scores

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### Additional Information

## Our expert take on the Nectar Premier mattress

Research shows that just one night of sleep disturbance can increase how much pain you feel, negatively impacting your recovery. If you want to limit how often your partner's movement disrupts your sleep during the night, you may need a motion-isolating mattress like the Nectar Premier.

“Sleep is the brain's reset button! The brain processes pain. When the brain is well-fed, hydrated, and allowed to get the rest it needs (eight hours uninterrupted sleep\*) people can experience less pain. If people don't sleep, they will perceive and experience pain magnified.”

— Caryn McAllister, physical therapist at High Quality Home Therapy in Stamford, Connecticut and Rye, New York.

*\*While seven to nine hours of sleep is ideal for adults, many older adults get less (six to seven hours) than that because of changing sleep patterns.*

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conforming surface won't miss it.

*Our testers thought side sleeping was comfortable due to the pressure-relieving foam of the Nectar Premier.*

These memory foam layers are also responsible for the excellent motion dampening from side to side. To test this, one person on our team lay on one side while another got in bed and moved around. "If I were asleep, there is no way I would notice your movement," said one of our testers. Our team was impressed.

But if you feel back pain while moving in bed, this bed may not be for you. When our testers dropped a 10-pound ball on the surface to test bounce and sinkage, we noticed the weight cradled into the surface with minimal rebound. Once it settled, there was a moderate amount of sinkage into the memory foam. Testers agreed that lying in bed feels like you're "in" the mattress, so changing positions is more difficult than on a hybrid or innerspring mattress with responsive coils.

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service at checkout to ensure it's available with your purchase.

## “ Our tester on the Nectar Premier mattress:

“As a 130–140 pound sleeper, I found this mattress to feel softer than expected, but still in the medium range. It was comfortable in most positions, but it's not the easiest mattress to move around on. Couples with back pain should like how the forgiving foam dampens movement and relieves pressure from the body, like sleeping on a cloud. But if your pain affects your mobility, you may need something more firm and responsive.”

## Our mattress expert's take

Light-sleeping couples with chronic back pain benefit from a mattress with motion isolation to encourage peaceful sleep throughout the night. The Nectar Premier transfers little to no motion across its surface, making it perfect for those who need to improve uninterrupted sleep patterns as part of their pain management plan with their doctor.

### Who may love it

- Couples who are easily disturbed by movement
- People who weigh less than 250 pounds and sleep in any position
- Sleepers who find back pain relief from gentle support and a conforming, pressure-relieving surface

### Who may want to avoid it

- People who weigh more than 250 pounds may feel this mattress is unsupportive and too soft

## Customer reviews

The Nectar Premier has a 4.4-star rating out of five with more than 5,800 reviews on the brand's website. Many reviewers mention this mattress's positive impact on their back pain and overall comfort throughout the night.

"This mattress is so comfortable, I can't believe that even in day one I had the best night's sleep. It's soft but firm if that makes sense. It molds to your body, and I am a side and back sleeper. My back pain is pretty much gone. I also can barely feel my husband when he moves."

— Dana S., verified buyer on 6/16/2024

"Should have purchased sooner. We're no longer waking up with back and hip pain."

— Heather A., verified buyer on 6/12/2024

Like many mattresses, the Nectar Premier isn't for everyone. Negative reviews said the mattress felt softer than expected, which is consistent with our testing results. It feels slightly softer than the true medium firmness per industry standard. If you need a firmer and more supportive option, especially if you or your partner weigh(s) more than 250 pounds, try the Titan Plus.

Read our [Nectar mattress review](#) to learn more.

## Saatva Rx: Best Mattress for Back and Hip Pain

Our Top Pick

**Saatva Rx**  
BEST MATTRESS FOR BACK AND  
HIP PAIN

9.7 Exceptional

## Check Price

✓ We chose the Saatva Rx as our “Best Mattress for Back and Hip Pain” because the design accommodates a wide range of body types and sleep positions, allowing most people to find a comfortable, neutral position.

- **Black Friday Deal!** Save up to \$600 (no code necessary)

## Features

- **Price:** \$3,295 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Hybrid
- **Brand’s firmness rating:** Luxury firm
- **Mattress height:** 15 inches (“)
- **Trial period:** 365 nights
- **Shipping:** Free white-glove delivery
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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## Pros and cons of the Saatva Rx mattress

## Additional information

### Our expert take on the Saatva Rx mattress

The Saatva Rx is our best pick for back and hip pain because it's designed to adapt to each sleeper's body and sleep position, accommodating specific needs. It's a true medium firm ⓘ , making it ideal for generalized pain.

This mattress conforms and molds to your body's shape, allowing you to find a neutral sleeping position throughout the night. It offers foam-capped coils, which individually react to provide support or pressure relief where you need it most. You also get targeted support at the lower back to meet the shape of your spine, which is often more comfortable.

According to our survey of 500 recent mattress buyers, 81.1% of respondents with back pain reported difficulty changing positions or getting out of bed. Testers appreciated that the Saatva Rx performed well in functional support, making movement less effortful or painful.



*Testers were impressed by this mattress's edge support. They could roll to the edge without feeling unsafe.*

Lastly, Saatva offers unparalleled customer support. The mattress comes with free white-glove delivery, so you don't have to lift anything and risk reinjuring your back. You also have one year to try your mattress at home, and if you decide to keep it, you receive a limited lifetime warranty.

Read more about the Saatva Rx and similar options in our review of [orthopedic mattresses](#).

## “ Our tester on the Saatva Rx mattress:

“The Saatva Rx performed impressively well. It's comfortable for every position and was easy to move around. I even like how luxurious it looks. It has this top layer of well-stitched plush quilting. I can't think of many negatives other than the price.”

## Our mattress expert's take

## Who may love it

- People who find highly supportive mattresses comfortable
- Those with sore joints who want a pressure-relieving surface
- Sleepers who like an extra mobility boost from a responsive surface

## Who may want to avoid it

- Those sticking to a budget
- People with tall bed frames may find it difficult to climb onto this mattress

## Customer reviews

The Saatva Rx has a 4.8-star rating out of five, with over 100 reviews on its website. While there aren't many reviews compared to other models, we spotted several referencing pain improvements due to improved sleep.

“We’ve had the king-size Rx for a week now. It has improved our sleep. We are 6 feet and 5 inches and 6 feet and 6 inches and this has improved our lower back pain. This mattress is a side and back sleeper’s dream. Well worth the hype I myself, enjoy sleeping on my stomach, and I feel that the supportive plush on this mattress may be a bit too soft. But still does not make it a dealbreaker. Definitely the most supportive and comfortable mattress we’ve ever owned.”

—LRGC., verified customer on 4/27/2024

“I’ve had my Saatva Rx for 1.5 months. There was not an immediate relief of my back and hip pain, but it was comfortable and supportive from the beginning. The gains I’ve made with exercise and stretching and massage (which I’ve been doing for a long time) seem to be “staying” now, and I no

We did notice a few negative reviews, but there aren't many. One reviewer mentioned delivery issues. Another bought an adjustable base with their mattress and found it was not assembled correctly.

To learn more about this model, read our [Saatva Rx review](#).

## The WinkBed: Best Cooling Mattress for Back Pain

### The WinkBed

BEST COOLING MATTRESS FOR  
BACK PAIN

9.4

Excellent

[Check Price](#)

- ✓ We chose The WinkBed as our "Best Cooling Mattress for Back Pain" because it scored highly in dissipating body heat during our testing. This is due to its breathable materials and thick coil layer, which encourages airflow.
- **Black Friday Deal!** \$300 off any mattress, any size.

### Features

- **Brand's firmness rating:** Luxury firm
- **Mattress height:** 13.5"
- **Trial period:** 120 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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### Pros and cons of The WinkBed mattress

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### Our testing scores

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### Additional Information

## Our expert take on The WinkBed mattress

Our team tested the luxury firm version of The WinkBed and found it to be a well-rounded choice because of its balanced support and pressure relief, good functional support, and true medium-firm level, which is recommended for those with general low back pain.

One of the main reasons The WinkBed is on our list is that it scored highly in its cooling abilities. Our team took temperature gun readings before and after two testers lay on the mattress for five minutes. The results showed that the mattress only heated up by 6 degrees, which is considered a great score.

This mattress provides this level of cooling through the Tencel ⓘ cover, a soft and breathable natural material our team has found effective in dispersing heat. Hybrid mattresses with thick coil

*During our testing, we noticed The WinkBed mattress has impressively good motion isolation compared to other hybrids. This is likely due to the individually encased coils, motion-dampening foam, and the soft Euro pillow top.*

The WinkBed mattress has a lifetime warranty, but white-glove delivery is not yet available. Make sure you get help, perhaps from a local moving service.

It also comes with a 120-night trial period term, which includes a unique exchange program for those who want to experiment with firmness levels at home. This brand offers four firmness levels (softer, luxury firm, firmer, plus), and if you don't like the option you purchase, the company will send you a mattress with a different firmness level for \$49. You get to keep your original purchase and the potential replacement mattress for up to 60 days before deciding to return one. To our knowledge, no other brand allows you to compare two mattresses simultaneously in the comfort of your home.

this mattress at all. When I push up to seating, the surface isn't too bouncy under my hand, which makes it simpler. And when I stand up, it's easy, because the mattress is taller than I'm used to. I also notice how cool the mattress feels—it's such a well-rounded option.”

## Our mattress expert's take

The WinkBed is great for hot sleepers with back pain. Tossing and turning to stay cool can disturb sleep, leading to unrestful and non-restorative sleep.

### Who may love it

- All back, side, and combination sleepers of any body type
- Stomach sleepers who weigh less than 250 pounds
- Couples who prioritize motion isolation
- Those who prefer an extra boost in mobility when changing position or getting out of bed
- Anyone unsure which firmness level is most comfortable

### Who may want to avoid it

- People who weigh more than 250 pounds may perceive this mattress as too soft for stomach sleeping
- Those who cannot haul the mattress into the home

## Customer reviews

“The mattress was a gift for my brother, and he absolutely loves it. He suffers from back pain, and the mattress has helped reduce it. Overall, he is sleeping much better and is feeling healthier as a result. He states that the mattress is soft, but not too soft. He also finds it easy to turn in bed. Overall, a great purchase!”

— Mary K., on 2/5/2024

“We’ve been sleeping on our mattress for a month and a half now, and so far we are very happy with the firmness and quality. The inner springs don’t squeak, the foam top layer is cushioning without being enveloping, and both of us have noticed a great improvement in our back pain. The only thing I would wish for is built in handles on the sides of the mattress. It is decently heavy and requires rotating so frequently, I have hurt my fingers a few times trying to keep a grip as we rotate.”

— Kristen P., on 1/15/2024

Negative reviewers frequently expressed disappointment because they were expecting to be pain-free. Although a mattress can influence comfort, it’s not the main approach to pain management. Always discuss symptoms with your doctor. Others mentioned how the mattress gets softer over time. If you’re concerned about the firmness level, consider going firmer and adding a mattress topper. You can also take advantage of the brand’s exchange program (explained above).

Review our [WinkBed mattress review](#) for more information on this bed.

## Saatva Classic: Most Supportive Mattress for Back Pain

### Saatva Classic

**MOST SUPPORTIVE MATTRESS  
FOR BACK PAIN**

9.7 Exceptional

### Check Price

✓ We chose the Saatva Classic as our “Most Supportive Mattress for Back Pain” because it offers targeted lower back reinforcement, strong edge support, and top-scoring functional support for easier movement in bed.

- **Black Friday Deal!** Save up to \$600 (no code necessary)

### Features

- **Price:** \$2,095 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Innerspring
- **Brand’s firmness rating:** Luxury firm
- **Mattress height:** 11.5” or 14.5”
- **Trial period:** 365 nights
- **Shipping:** Free white-glove delivery
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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### Pros and cons of the Saatva Classic mattress

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**Additional information**

## Our expert take on the Saatva Classic mattress

The Saatva Classic is one of the most supportive mattresses our team has tested. It's a hybrid-innerspring mattress with a targeted layer of memory foam across the center for added lower back support. It also offers two layers of coils to provide extra lower back reinforcement and a responsive surface, which makes for easier movement. If your health care provider recommends purchasing a highly supportive mattress for your back pain, this is a great option.

Our team also likes how Saatva provides options to customize this mattress to the firmness level you prefer. We tested the luxury firm version, which we found slightly firmer than medium at seven out of 10 on the firmness scale, with 6.5 being the true medium per the industry standard. But you can opt for a softer or firmer feel. We think the luxury firm feel is best for back, stomach, and combination sleepers ⓘ. But side sleepers may need the softer version to avoid sharp pressure points at the shoulder and hip while still supporting the midsection in a more comfortable, neutral position for the back.

The Saatva Classic also offers a lot of functional support, so we found it quite easy to move on this responsive and bouncy mattress. Our testers loved the protective edge support that acts as a boundary around the perimeter of the mattress to help prevent rolling off the bed. This is an important consideration for those with back pain and mobility issues who feel unsafe changing positions toward the edge of the bed.

*We felt safe sleeping close to the edge of the Saatva Classic thanks to the fortified perimeter of foam.*

## “ Our tester on the Saatva Classic mattress:

“We’ve tested a number of Saatva mattresses at this point. They’re consistently supportive and easy to move on. The Classic is no different, offering what our team considers to be the gold standard in edge support.”

We want to feel confident in each mattress we recommend and review, so we turn to testers who experience back pain to get an accurate understanding of how each mattress provides spinal support in order to improve pain symptoms in the back. We asked Tim, age 62, to trial the Saatva Classic mattress because of his history of chronic lower back pain. He is an average-weight person, weighing between 130 and 250 pounds, and typically sleeps on his back.

## “ From our tester with chronic lower back pain

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I don't feel stuck in this mattress. I like firm, so this would be the style I would want to at least test if I was trying out the mattress."

*Our tester, who is a back sleeper with chronic lower back pain, testing the Saatva Classic mattress.*

## Our mattress expert's take

The Saatva Classic is one of the best mattresses for people with back pain who prefer sleeping on a firm, supportive surface. If you find relief by placing a thin pillow under your lower back for added reinforcement, you may like this mattress because it offers a similar effect.

- Sleepers looking for strong support in the lower back
- Those who like an extra mobility boost from bouncy, responsive coils

### Who may want to avoid it

- People who weigh less than 130 pounds may perceive the luxury firm version as too firm for side sleeping and should opt for the softer mattress
- Those on a strict budget may want to try lower-priced options
- Couples who are easily disturbed by movement

### Customer reviews

The Saatva Classic has a 4.8-star rating out of five and more than 3,400 reviews on its website. Of these, 1,111 specifically mentioned positive effects on back pain.

“I used to have back pain with my prior mattress, but that’s disappeared with the Saatva Classic (it is constructed with extra support in the center of the mattress). Most people that have complained about the Saatva Classic felt it was too firm. It’s definitely not the soft sink-in feeling of a memory foam mattress, rather you sleep more on top of the mattress.”

— Eric., on 5/18/2024

“I live with chronic back pain due to degenerative disc disease. I now wake up without lower back, neck, shoulder, and hip. The Classic luxury firm mattress is a life changer. [...]”

— Dione H., on 3/31/2024

On Google, the Saatva Classic mattress has a 4.4-star rating with 4,300 reviews. Some users complained about the luxury firm being too firm of a mattress and felt the softness levels were not accurate. This is consistent with our findings—the Saatva Classic is firmer, so keep this in mind

Check out our [Saatva mattress review](#) for more information.

## Bear Elite Hybrid: Best Mattress for Side Sleepers With Back Pain

### Bear Elite Hybrid

BEST MATTRESS FOR SIDE  
SLEEPERS WITH BACK PAIN

9.4 Excellent

[Check Price](#)

- ✓ We chose the Bear Elite Hybrid as our pick for the “Best Mattress for Side Sleepers With Back Pain” because the coil layers provide gentle zoned support that reinforce spinal alignment. In contrast, the memory foam layers offer high-scoring pressure relief at the hip and shoulder.
- **Black Friday Sale!** 35% off sitewide + 2 free pillows with mattress purchase with code BLACK35

### Features

- **Brand's firmness rating:** Medium
- **Mattress height:** 14"
- **Trial period:** 120 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping, white-glove delivery available (\$175)
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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### Pros and cons of the Bear Elite Hybrid mattress

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### Our testing scores

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### Additional Information

## Our expert take on Bear Elite Hybrid mattress

The medium-firm version of the Bear Elite Hybrid stands out as a great choice for side sleepers with back pain because it offers zoned coil support and excellent pressure relief. Plus, it truly feels like a medium-firm mattress should, which research shows is the best firmness level for people with general back pain.

In fact, one tester and her partner own this mattress and frequently sleep on their sides and find it comfortable. The only drawback they found was the off-gassing ⓘ, which occurs with most hybrid or foam mattresses. The material's smell took about three days to clear out of the bedroom (even with the windows cracked), so consider this if you purchase any mattress with foam.

found almost no force buildup under prominent joints, like the hip and shoulder. This is a great sign for side sleepers because force buildup can be uncomfortable, leading to tossing and turning throughout the night to find a better position.

*Our team uses a pressure mapping system with heat sensors to detect how much contact and force hits certain areas of the body.*

Our team also liked the zoned coil support in this mattress. The coils in the center are reinforced to maintain a spinal alignment while lying on your side. A neutral spine position may relieve back pain because it keeps the body from twisting or bending, potentially leading to discomfort and pain during the daytime. Our testers noticed how the coiled reinforcement felt gentler and less obvious, which some people might prefer, compared to a mattress like the Saatva Classic. Because each coil of the Bear Elite Hybrid is individually wrapped, motion doesn't transfer as much as traditional interconnected coils, so you're less likely to disturb a sleeping partner if you switch sides at night.

Check out our [Best Mattresses for Side Sleepers](#) roundup if you want more options.

## “ Our tester on Bear Elite Hybrid mattress:

“The Bear Elite Hybrid offers a true middle ground in mattress firmness. My weight is evenly distributed, and it’s responsive enough to adapt to my position changes.

Overall quite comfortable.”

## Our mattress expert’s take

According to our survey of 500 recent mattress customers with upper or lower pain, 39.1% report side sleeping is their preferred position. About 47.6% of the same customers also chose medium or firm mattresses with a firmness level of five to seven out of 10 on the firmness scale. We think side sleepers with general back pain should enjoy the Bear Elite Hybrid and its supportive, pressure-relieving design.

### Who may love it

- Side sleepers who need just enough support under the midsection for relief
- People who need maximum pressure relief at the hip and shoulder to avoid discomfort
- Couples who prefer hybrid mattresses but value motion isolation

### Who may want to avoid it

- People looking for a mattress on a budget
- Anyone looking for strong support to manage back pain

## Customer reviews



“I don’t know how many mattresses I’ve purchased over the years, and I was always horribly disappointed. This mattress is amazing! My chronic back pain has actually decreased, and I’ve never slept better. I highly recommend this product!”

— Tina D., verified buyer on 1/17/2024

“Has only been a bit over a month but currently loving the Elite Hybrid. Great nights sleep, the back pain I was dealing with from my last mattress is gone. Will see how it holds up, but nothing but positive things to say for now!”

— David D., verified buyer on 5/10/2024

We also came across some negative reviews. Some people perceived this mattress to be on the firmer side. We also found a few couples who expected better motion isolation and support for two people. While the Bear Elite Hybrid scores above average for both support and motion isolation, it’s not the highest-scoring, so light-sleeping or higher-weight couples might opt for another model. Try the [Titan Plus](#) if you’re a higher-weight sleeper and prioritize motion isolation. It’s one of the few mattresses that does both well.

Take a look at our [Bear mattress review](#) for more information.

## Plank Firm: Best Firm Mattress for Back Pain

### Plank Firm Mattress

BEST FIRM MATTRESS FOR  
BACK PAIN

9.3 Excellent

## Check Price

✓ We chose the Plank Firm as our pick for the “Best Firm Mattress for Back Pain” because its extra-firm rating provides exceptional support to prevent spine misalignment. It’s a good option for those who are higher weight or prefer a very firm bed.

- **Black Friday Deals!** 30% off sitewide with code BFRIDAY30

## Features

- **Price:** \$1,332 for a queen before discounts
- **Material:** Foam
- **Brand’s firmness rating:** Firm and extra-firm
- **Mattress height:** 10.25”
- **Trial period:** 120 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping
- **Warranty:** 10 years
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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## Pros and cons of the Plank Firm mattress

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## Our testing scores

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## Our expert take on the Plank Firm mattress

The Plank Firm mattress is one of the firmest mattresses on the market. Designed by Brooklyn Bedding, Plank stands out for its no-nonsense approach to back support. It delivers a flat, firm surface that promotes proper spinal alignment.

Its flippable design offers two firmness levels, firm and extra firm, allowing you to choose the best option for your needs. The flat surface encourages natural spine alignment, yet it doesn't offer the contouring that many back sleepers need to provide lower back support.

Due to its ultra-firm feel, lighter-weight and average-weight sleepers (130-250 pounds) may find this mattress too rigid, especially for back sleepers. However, our testers agreed stomach sleepers of all weight categories would benefit from the firm support of the Plank mattress, as it helps maintain proper spinal alignment and keeps the hips from sinking.

One feature of the Plank Firm we loved is its responsiveness. While many foam mattresses give a "sinking in" sensation, our testers found that the denser foam used in this mattress kept them on top of it. It also makes it easier to move and change positions throughout the night, which is a big plus for combination sleepers, too.

### “ Our tester on Plank Firm mattress:

“The plush quilted top is nice on this side, but still feels elevated; not sinking. Seems like it would be good for a heavier sleeper”

## Our mattress expert's take

Plank firm would be best for higher-weight sleepers and those who prefer a very firm mattress. Back and stomach sleepers may find that this mattress helps them maintain proper spinal

- Higher weight sleepers who need extra support
- Those who prefer a very solid foundation to sleep on
- Combination sleepers will enjoy the ease of movement on this mattress

### Who may want to avoid it

- Sleepers who prefer a plushier feel
- Lighter-weight sleepers may find this mattress too firm

## Customer reviews

The Plank Firm has a 4.7-star rating out of five, with more than 3,300 reviews on the brand's website. Most positive reviews raved about how firm this mattress was, though some found it far too firm.

“Perfect firmness and comfort. Just what I was looking for in terms of a good nights sleep every night! Best purchase I made this year.”

— Jee L., verified buyer on 10/06/2024

“The mattress is 2-in-1. I am glad one side is extra-firm, and the other side is firm. Extra-firm was what I aimed for, but end up being too firm for me, so I end up using the firm side.”

— Richard T., verified buyer on 10/06/2024

We also came across some negative reviews. As we expected, not everyone loved the super-firm feel of this mattress.

“Too firm and I never thought I would say that about a mattress. Didn't get a good night of sleep once on this and woke up in pain and uncomfortable often.

For more information, read our complete [Plank Firm mattress review](#).

# Titan Plus: Best Mattress for Heavier People With Back Pain

## Titan Plus

BEST MATTRESS FOR HEAVIER  
PEOPLE WITH BACK PAIN

9.3 Excellent

### Check Price

- ✓ We chose the Titan Plus as the “Best Mattress for Heavy People With Back Pain” because it’s specifically designed to support higher-weight sleepers (more than 250 pounds) and offers good pressure relief for most types of sleepers. It should be a durable option for those with back pain.
- **Black Friday Deals!** 30% off sitewide with code BFRIDAY30

## Features

- **Price:** \$699 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Hybrid

- **Trial period:** 120 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping
- **Warranty:** 10 years

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### Pros and cons of the Titan Plus mattress

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### Our testing scores

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### Additional Information

## Our expert take on the Titan Plus mattress

The Titan Plus is our top choice for higher-weight sleepers (more than 250 pounds) looking for a firmer mattress that supports the body yet relieves pressure from joints. Our testers found its surface bouncy with above-average edge support, making this mattress relatively easy to move around on. It is important to consider if your back pain is associated with changing positions or getting in and out of bed.

We also like that this mattress has a taller version (the Luxe) with an additional layer of foam padding for extra pressure relief. We recommend the Luxe for those who border on 250 pounds and may prefer more cushion around the shoulder and hip while sleeping on their side. This can also help maintain a more neutral spine position.

*We noticed how dense the coil and foam layers felt, contributing to this mattress's durability and firmness*

The Titan Plus is also surprisingly good at isolating motion. Despite its firm and bouncy surface, the memory foam layers and individually encased coils dampen motion relatively well. This makes it a good choice for light sleepers with restless partners. But it's not as effective as The WinkBed (specifically, the plus version designed to accommodate higher body weight), which could be a great alternative if motion isolation is non-negotiable.

Your mattress comes with a 120-night trial period and a 10-year warranty. Unfortunately, white-glove delivery is not available for Titan mattresses, so make sure you recruit help to avoid injury.

## “ Our tester on Titan Plus mattress:

“This mattress is ideal for people who weigh more than 250 pounds, but there is concern for pressure buildup at the shoulder and hip while laying on the side since it's so firm. If I were purchasing this mattress, I'd try it out and purchase a mattress topper if I need more pressure relief.”

type is important to prevent pain-provoking sag over time. Luckily, the Titan Plus is designed to support higher body weights, meaning it's more likely to last.

### Who may love it

- People who weigh more than 250 pounds
- Sleepers who find relief in a firm mattress
- Sleepers who prefer an extra boost in mobility when changing position or getting out of bed

### Who may want to avoid it

- People who weigh less than 130 pounds may perceive this mattress as too firm for most sleep positions
- Those who cannot personally haul the mattress into their home

## Customer reviews

The Titan Plus has a 4.7-star rating out of five and more than 2,500 reviews on its website. Many higher-weight people (including some who sleep with a partner) reported that it supported body weight while remaining comfortable, which is important for those with back pain.

“If you are a bigger person and need a supportive bed that keeps you cool, I highly recommend the Titan Plus. We bought this bed due to our aches, pains and wanted a supportive bed. I did more research than I ever had to find an affordable bed that works for the hubby and myself. This bed checked many boxes for us. It's supportive, keeps us cool, and it's so comfortable. We picked the medium firm Titan Plus and we love it.”

— Lorita M., verified buyer on 6/16/2024



good for both, but extra good for back sleeping. Definitely a very firm mattress but I'd rather have something that I can add a topper to if needed instead of something that's too soft. [...]"

— Savannah T., verified buyer on 4/29/2024

We also saw negative reviews, with some callouts similar to our testing findings. A common theme was the mattress's edge support. While it scored above average during our testing, it may feel too forgiving for heavier people and sink when sitting on the edge. If this is a concern, you should review our [top mattress picks for higher-weight people](#).

Review our [Titan Plus mattress review](#) for more information.

## Nolah Evolution 15": Best Mattress for Lower Back Pain

**Nolah Evolution 15"**  
 BEST MATTRESS FOR LOWER  
 BACK PAIN

9.4 Excellent

**Check Price**

- **Black Friday Deal!** 35% off sitewide + 2 free pillows with mattress purchase (no code required)

## Features

- **Price:** \$1,499 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Hybrid
- **Brand's firmness rating:** Luxury firm
- **Mattress height:** 15"
- **Trial period:** 120 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping; optional white-glove delivery (\$150–\$300)
- **Warranty:** Limited lifetime
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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## Pros and cons of the Nolah Evolution 15" mattress

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## Our testing scores

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## Additional Information

## Our expert take on the Nolah Evolution mattress

The luxury firm version of the 15-inch-thick Nolah Evolution may be one of the best mattresses for low back pain. During testing, this firmer medium mattress relieved pressure on the shoulder and hip, particularly in the side-sleeping position. This mattress is also one of the best for edge

The standout feature of this mattress is its double-zoned support. Nolah uses its own type of foam called [AirFoam](#), which is perforated more at the shoulder and hip to compress easily and relieve pressure. The foam at the center of the mattress is perforated less, making it denser and more supportive at the lower back. It also has a supportive coil layer targeting the low back for added reinforcement.

*When testing mattresses, we note lumbar support by determining whether there's a gap between the mattress and the lower back. When one of our testers tried to fit her hand under her back, it was pretty difficult, which means the mattress is making solid contact with her body to provide support.*

Our team also recommends this mattress to couples because it has good motion isolation, similar to the Titan Plus. Our testers only felt larger bouncing movements, like getting into bed. But smaller movements are subtle. Couples may also like this mattress because it's comfortable for most body types and sleep positions. You and your partner will likely enjoy this mattress, even if you have different sleep preferences or injuries.

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love this mattress, you can remove the trial period and save up to \$100.

## “ Our tester on Nolah Evolution 15” mattress:

“The Nolah Evolution is soft yet supportive. It’s easy to switch positions because I’m not fighting the material, and standing from the edge is simple due to its height. Overall a great mattress, ideal for any average-weight person (130–250 pounds) who sleeps in any position.”

## Our mattress expert’s take

The Nolah Evolution provides balanced support, making it a great choice for people with lower back pain. Those with soreness at the hip may also appreciate its high-scoring pressure relief during back and side sleeping.

### Who may love it

- People of various body types and sleep position preferences
- Couples who value motion isolation
- Those who want a supportive mattress to manage lower back pain
- Sleepers who prefer an extra boost in mobility

### Who may want to avoid it

- People looking for a mattress on a budget
- People who need a lower surface may find this mattress too tall for getting comfortably in and out of bed

mention the mattress's impact on their back pain and sleep quality.

“We love our Nolah, we both wake up rested with much less aches and pains.”

— Ondria G., verified buyer on 10/4/2023

“I appreciate this company directed what bed for different weight people. I bought the recommended Luxury Firm. No more back pain. It cradles while at the same time is supportively firm.”

— Rainbow T., verified buyer on 11/14/2023

We noticed some negative reviews too, although they seemed few. One reviewer weighing 180 pounds reported early sagging over time, while others expected the mattress to feel softer. If you're concerned about sag due to your body type, consider a firmer mattress or one designed to support higher-weight people, like the Titan Plus.

Review our [Nolah mattress review](#) for more information.

## Birch Natural: Best Mattress for Back Pain and Mobility Issues

### Birch Natural

BEST MATTRESS FOR BACK PAIN  
AND MOBILITY ISSUES

8.9 Very Good

## Check Price

✓ The Birch Natural is our pick for the “Best Mattress for Back Pain and Mobility Issues” because it has one of the highest functional support scores compared to other mattresses we’ve tested due to its great surface support, edge support, and bounce.

- **Black Friday Sale!** 27% off sitewide + 2 Free Eco-Rest Pillows with a mattress purchase when you use code NCOA27

## Features

- **Price:** \$1,374 for a queen-size before discounts
- **Material:** Hybrid
- **Brand’s firmness rating:** Medium-firm
- **Mattress height:** 11”
- **Trial period:** 100 nights
- **Shipping:** Free shipping, white-glove delivery available depending on location (starts at \$129)
- **Warranty:** 25 years
- **Offers financing:** Yes

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## Pros and cons of the Birch Natural mattress

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## Our testing scores

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## Our expert take on the Birch Natural mattress

We think the Birch Natural is one of the best mattresses for people with **mobility issues and back pain**. During our testing, this mattress had a high functional support score, which means it required less effort to move on the surface compared to other options.

Our team noticed that this mattress had a bouncy and responsive surface to help us gain momentum as we got out of bed. Also, its edge support pushed us back toward the center of the mattress as we approached the lip. The only downside is the mattress's 11-inch height, which is shorter than others on this list. If you find it easier to stand from a taller mattress, you can upgrade to the Luxe, which is 11.5 inches, for about \$300 more. The Luxe also offers extra comfort layers and zoned coil support, which can come in handy for side sleepers who may find the Birch Natural too firm at the shoulder and hip.

*Latex (the sandy layer under the tester's hand) is a natural soft layer, offering the resilience of springs with the pressure relief of memory foam.*

Our testers agreed with the brand's medium firmness rating (6.5 out of 10), which is the best firmness for those with back pain. But we think this mattress offers the best pressure relief and support for back sleepers and combination sleepers who weigh less than 250 pounds and often sleep on their stomachs.

The Birch Natural mattress is made with organic wool, natural latex, organic cotton, and steel coils. These natural materials prevent off-gassing and may be best suitable for those with allergies or reactions to certain materials.

The Birch Natural has a 100-night trial period and a generous 25-year warranty. White-glove delivery may be available in your area, but you'll need to check on the product page by entering your ZIP code. This service starts at \$129 for in-home set-up, but if you need additional services like old mattress removal or adjustable base set-up, it can cost up to \$398.



standing up are relatively easy from this mattress. It's not very springy, but I don't sink too much, making it much easier to stand."

## Our mattress expert's take

Those with back pain associated with moving in bed benefit from the Birch Natural the most. It may also be a good natural option for those who are more sensitive, like people with fibromyalgia and chemical sensitivities.

### Who may love it

- Those who prefer an extra boost in mobility when changing position or getting out of bed
- Back sleepers of any body type and most combination or stomach sleepers, particularly those who weigh less than 250 pounds
- People who want a natural, eco-friendly mattress

### Who may want to avoid it

- Most side sleepers won't receive enough pressure relief unless you upgrade to the Luxe
- Higher-weight stomach sleepers will likely find it too soft
- Those who have a hard time standing from a shorter mattress (consider upgrading to the higher-height Luxe)

## Customer reviews

The Birch Natural has a 4.6-star rating out of five with more than 4,500 reviews on the brand's website. While analyzing reviews, many people mentioned that the mattress positively influenced

firmness for me. I used to have occasional lower back pain with my previous mattress but none at all with the Birch! Highly recommend.”

— Sara A., verified buyer on 11/16/2023

“Bought a Birch mattress a couple weeks ago and wanted to test it out before leaving a review. Honestly, I’m very happy with this mattress. I haven’t been consistently waking up with my allergies going off or my back hurting like I did with my old mattress [...]”

— Dallin Y., verified buyer on 1/18/2024

But we also found a few negative reviews. Many people reported feeling disappointed because the mattress wasn’t helping their aches and pains. A mattress could influence pain, but it’s not the best tool for pain management. Always discuss treatment options with your doctor.

Check out our [Birch Natural mattress review](#) for more information.

## How we test mattresses for back pain

Our Reviews Team has dedicated more than 1,000 hours to researching the mattress industry, consulting with at least ten health care professionals, and testing roughly 40 brands and 130 unique mattress models for quality and comfort. We’ve also interviewed 16 older adults who recently purchased a mattress and surveyed more than 3,200 recent mattress buyers to understand their experiences shopping for a new bed.

Each mattress undergoes a rigorous 36-page testing procedure to score its different characteristics, including firmness, support, and other aspects most shoppers consider. We choose the best mattresses for back pain based on the scores of the relevant criteria. See how we tested the most important considerations for this review below.

### Functional support

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with five being the most helpful for movement in bed.

Our survey revealed how 79.4% of respondents said their pain affects their ability to move or get out of bed. For this reason, most of the mattresses in our review have an above-average functional support score.

## Firmness

Like most mattress brands in the industry, we use a one-to-10 scoring method when testing firmness, with 6.5 being the true medium-firm. Our testers rate this by lying on the surface and comparing the feel to other mattresses we've tested. Material density and coil strength influence firmness the most.

We narrowed down the best mattresses for back pain by selecting medium-to-firm mattresses, which are the most recommended.

## Pressure relief

We rate pressure relief on a scale of one to five, with five being the most pressure-relieving. We consider how it feels and use a pressure map with sensors to visualize pressure points around the body. Blue and green pressure map results show great pressure relief, while yellows, oranges, and reds indicate pressure buildup.

According to our survey of recent mattress customers with back pain, 68.8% of respondents already experience disturbed sleep from their back pain, which leads to tossing and turning throughout the night. Since many people with upper and lower back pain can also experience associated shoulder and hip pain, we included some mattresses with the highest scores in this category.

## Spinal support

pressure map results. Maps with mostly white space at the lower back show how the mattress isn't making contact with the area, which means the mattress isn't supportive.

While a supportive mattress is recommended for people with back pain, some may not like the feel of strong support. Our team selected mattresses with various types of support, including targeted support at the lower back with different materials, to provide a few options.

To learn more about our testing and scoring methods, review our [sleep methodology](#).



Our research and testing are ongoing, so our reviews evolve over time. We test new mattresses monthly to give you the most up-to-date information possible. Check back regularly for updates.

## How to choose a mattress when you have back pain

The top factors to consider when choosing the right mattress include firmness level, spinal support, pressure relief, white-glove delivery, and a trial period. To find out what factors were most important, we spoke to [focus groups for sleepers](#) with back pain.

### Firmness

The right firmness level for someone with back pain is whatever feels most comfortable and allows for uninterrupted sleep. Medium-firm mattresses work the best for many people, but firmness is subjective—everyone has a different interpretation.

How you feel a mattress's firmness depends on your body type. A person who weighs less than 130 pounds will perceive mattresses as firmer than someone who weighs more than 250 pounds.

## Spinal support

A supportive mattress fills the gaps between your body and the surface, providing reinforcement in the areas where you need it most. Many clinicians use the term “spinal alignment” to describe how a mattress supports the spine in a neutral position, which is comfortable for most.

While a perfect spinal alignment doesn't have to be the goal for everyone, a supportive mattress with targeted reinforcement at the lower back (also known as zoned lumbar support) can ease tension for some people with general back pain. Many mattresses we recommend for back pain offer zoned support for this reason.

## Pressure relief

It's important to consider a mattress with good pressure relief to avoid tossing and turning as you find a more comfortable position. Most options with high-pressure relief are foam-dominant hybrids or all-foam designs.

People with upper back pain may benefit most from a mattress with good pressure relief at the shoulders. Those with lower back pain may benefit most from a mattress with good pressure relief at the hips. Stomach sleepers typically require a firmer surface to support the body in a neutral position, so pressure relief isn't always a priority. But if you have a larger chest, you may opt for a more forgiving surface to conform to your body's shape and avoid discomfort from direct pressure. Otherwise, you may lie at an odd angle, influencing your back's position and spine's alignment.

Mattresses with poor pressure relief can disrupt your sleep and negatively impact your recovery. If you have tender areas sensitive to force build-up, you may need to consider a mattress with as much pressure relief as possible, like the Bear Elite Hybrid. But you may need to trade some responsiveness and bounce to get it.

## White-glove delivery

Unfortunately, most online mattress companies do not offer white-glove delivery (free shipping and setup of new mattresses and removal of old mattresses). Instead, they offer free shipping to your home, but you must carry the mattress into your home and set it up. The only brand on our list that does not charge extra for white-glove delivery is Saatva, which is one reason it's often at the top of our picks. If you have lower back pain, our team highly recommends looking into

## Trial periods

The industry standard trial period length is 100 nights. Our list only contains mattresses that meet or exceed the industry standard, so you have ample time to try your mattress in your home. Most mattress companies have clear return policies within the trial period, and some have exchange programs to help you find the right option. If you're unsure which mattress is best for your back pain, we recommend looking into WinkBeds and its generous [exchange policy](#).

## Ask the sleep experts

### How can I improve the quality of my sleep?

“There are many ways to improve sleep quality, including controlling your environment. Get enough daylight in the morning to cue your circadian rhythm, dim the lights as nighttime approaches, keep your bedroom cool and comfy, and set a digital curfew to remove screens before bed.”

— [Harneet Kaur Walia](#), MD, director of sleep medicine at Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute and chief of clinical transformation for Baptist Health Medical Group

“I recommend the following three strategies. First, follow a consistent sleep schedule, even on days off or weekends. Second, ensure you have an adequate wind-down time before bed (about 30–60 minutes). And third, if you or a bed partner have noticed snoring, excessive movement in sleep, or other unusual activities during the night, contact your doctor for a sleep specialist referral.” — [Deirdre Conroy](#), PhD, clinical professor of psychiatry and clinical director of the Behavioral Sleep Medicine Clinic at the University of Michigan

## What is most important for getting a good night’s sleep if you experience back pain?

“Pain is a concern for many. Things like back pain and pain associated with prior trauma are commonly reported. Optimizing your sleep can improve your ability to live, work, and play with the pain that is present for many. Optimizing sleep can be as simple as focusing on maintaining a cool, dark, and quiet environment. A comfortable mattress and bed linens can make a significant difference in sleep quality. You should address it with your primary care provider or sleep medicine specialist if you find yourself waking up frequently for unknown reasons or if you have been told you are a loud snorer, witnessed to have choking/gasping during sleep, or noted to stop breathing during sleep.” — [Dr. Philip Alapat](#), assistant professor of sleep medicine at Baylor College of Medicine



It can feel frustrating if you need to adjust your preferred sleep position due to lower back pain. Your current sleep position is rarely the root cause of pain, but making small adjustments or changing your position temporarily can help your sleep quality and overall recovery. For example:

- **Side sleepers** can try placing a pillow between their knees to keep the spine and hips more neutral. Adding a well-placed pillow helps reduce the strain on the lower back and can help with proper alignment over time. Using a pillow of the right firmness for this purpose can also help.
- **Stomach sleepers** can try placing a pillow under their hips (and it may be more comfortable to place another pillow under their head) to relieve pressure on the lower back. Elevating the hips helps maintain spinal alignment and prevents the lower back from sinking too far into the mattress.
- **Back sleepers** can try placing a pillow under the knees to make the hips and lower back more comfortable. Placing a pillow to support this position encourages the spine into its natural curve, promoting relaxation in the lower back.
- **Combination sleepers** should use pillows for support as they change positions. Keeping a pillow to support your body during position changes can help sleepers maintain spinal alignment and reduce pressure points.

If you have upper back pain, try a [pillow for neck pain](#) to better accommodate the neck and upper spine. Side sleepers benefit from puffier pillows to fill the space between their head and the mattress, while back sleepers will likely feel more comfortable with something flatter. Unless you're using a pillow under the stomach to accommodate lower back pain, stomach sleepers often don't need a pillow. But if you prefer one under the head, a flat down/feather pillow is best.

Although these strategies can help, make sure you're working with a physical therapist to address the main issue.

| Sleeping position    | Ideal firmness level                  | Best pillow height pairings |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Back sleepers        | Medium-firm (6.5 out of 10)           | Medium loft                 |
| Side sleepers        | Medium (5–6.5 out of 10)              | Medium to high loft         |
| Stomach sleepers     | Medium-firm to firm (6.5–9 out of 10) | None or low loft            |
| Combination sleepers | Medium-firm (6.5 out of 10)           | Medium loft or adjustable*  |

*\*Some pillows have adjustable lofts. This means you can change how much filling is inside the pillow, which influences its height.*

## What is the best type of mattress for back pain?

The best type of mattress for back pain doesn't exist. In fact, no single treatment strategy works to resolve back pain for everyone. Back pain—especially chronic back pain—requires a tailored approach with special attention to the whole person, including lifestyle and mental health. This can include addressing stress, activity level, and nutrition.

Research does point to a few mattress characteristics that seem helpful to people with back pain. For instance, medium-firm mattresses and zoned support tend to positively affect sleep quality and comfort throughout the night for those with general back pain. Our team has noticed how many of the mattresses with medium-firm comfort levels and zoned support are hybrids, which is why our review lists many [hybrid mattresses](#).

An innerspring mattress can also be a good choice for someone with chronic back pain. These mattresses contain individually pocketed or layered steel coils that support the back, maintaining a neutral spine. Many of the mattresses are contained in a quilted or pillow-top cover, balancing out the firm support with cushion at the surface that contours to the curves of the back.

comfortable sleep is such an individual experience, the ability to make the slightest adjustments to the support or firmness of your mattress can play a big role in decreasing your back pain.

But if you prefer the conforming feel of memory foam, look into Nolah. This brand incorporates zoned support in its unique foam. The Nolah Signature made our list of the [best memory foam mattresses](#) for this reason. You may also want to look into latex mattresses, a [natural alternative](#) to foam, which tend to feel forgiving yet supportive. Latex has a naturally buoyant feel with gentle contouring, and it evenly distributes body weight to support natural spinal alignment and ease lumbar and pressure point pain.

Your sleep position should also be considered when shopping for a mattress for back pain. Different firmness levels work better for certain positions to allow for better support or more pressure relief. Sleep positions often influence what type of pillow you may need to help maintain a neutral spine position throughout the night, which can be less painful on the upper and lower back.

## Older adults and back pain: What to know

### The truth about back pain

Many of us experience lower back pain as we age, but it doesn't need to be the norm. Chronic lower back pain can feel limiting, preventing you from enjoying daily activities. According to an [analysis of more than 135,000 adults](#) age 60–102 years:

- An estimated 70%–85% of older adults will experience an episode of lower back pain at some point.
- Approximately 90% of these people will experience lower back pain more than once.
- The prevalence of lower back pain in older adults can be up to 75%, depending on the country, with Canada and the United States having the highest occurrence.

[Lindy Royer](#), a physical therapist and educator at Balanced Body in Centennial, Colorado, highlighted the importance of sleep and what happens if we don't get enough. "Our body's healing mechanisms are compromised, and we are less able to recover," she said. The relationship between pain and sleep is also backed by [research](#), which shows how brief and unrestful sleep can leave you more vulnerable to painful experiences. Pain can disrupt your sleep, creating a vicious cycle. If you're experiencing poor sleep quality, ask your doctor if you'd benefit from a referral to a sleep specialist.

to working with a health care professional, you can try these 10 ideas to manage your back pain at home:

1. **Get a referral to physical therapy.** Your [physical therapist](#) will perform a thorough evaluation and provide activities, exercises, and stretches to help manage pain at home.
2. **Improve your sleep hygiene.** As Royer stated above, sleep is essential for recovery. If you're waking up throughout the night or having trouble falling asleep, you may benefit from talking to a sleep specialist, but you don't have to wait to start making positive changes. See our [Sleep and Aging](#) article to learn ways to track and improve sleep on your own.
3. **Stand often.** It's easy to lose track of time when working, watching television, or reading a book. It can be important to rest, but sitting for prolonged periods isn't beneficial. [Movement-based recovery](#) is generally more effective than bed rest because it keeps your body conditioned, which supports long-term relief.
4. **Start a walking program.** Start slow. Go for a walk you're comfortable doing, even if it's up and down your driveway. [Walking](#) is one of the simplest activities for back pain.
5. **Use self-massage.** Grab a massage tool, like a massage ball or foam roller, and gently roll out tender areas along your muscles for relief. But don't depend on gadgets like massage chairs—it's important to move rather than rely on these tools, which are only designed to provide temporary relief.
6. **Address your mental health.** Modern approaches to pain management focus on the whole person. This can include stress, anxiety, or depression, which can [increase pain](#). Seek a [behavioral health professional](#) who can provide exercises you can do at home to help address mental health conditions.
7. **Manage your diet.** Some [studies](#) show a link between back pain and a [poor diet](#). Making healthy choices at home can help support your recovery, but ask your doctor if you have specific questions regarding your [nutritional needs](#).
8. **Try cold and heat therapies.** Using hot or cold packs can temporarily relieve aggravated pain but shouldn't be a long-term pain relief strategy. Be careful not to overdo hot and cold

9. **See if medication is right for you.** Talk to your doctor to see if you can take an over-the-counter (OTC) pain medication from time to time. It's important to check whether new medications will interact with ones you're already taking, even if it's a natural supplement. Taking multiple medications can have potentially dangerous side effects, like increasing [falls risk](#).
10. **Keep doing the things you love.** Don't let pain stop you from gardening, cooking, or going on outings. Limiting activities can slow your recovery—physically and mentally. Ask your physical therapist for ways you can modify your favorite activities for the time being so you can continue to enjoy them.

## How to afford a new mattress for back pain on low income

Replacing an old, worn mattress with one comfortable enough to encourage better sleep can be expensive. The average cost of a queen-size mattress in this review is about \$1,900, which is a hefty investment, especially if you're on a fixed income or have other expenses.

While financing is an option, with any added interest, you could end up owing more than the original amount over time. Fortunately, there are programs available to help make a new mattress more affordable, including:

- **Furniture vouchers:** Certain organizations, like [Catholic Charities](#), provide vouchers to help reduce furniture costs. Most organizations are local, so it's best to Google programs in your area. For example, if you're a veteran in Southern California, you can contact [Heroes Warehouse](#) for assistance.
- **Medicare coverage:** In some cases, Medicare Part B may cover part of the cost of a mattress if it's prescribed by a doctor, qualifies as [durable medical equipment](#), and is purchased through a Medicare-approved supplier. Most mattresses you find from online retailers will not be approved.

- **Visiting a Furniture Bank location:** The Furniture Bank Network collects lightly used furniture and redistributes items to those who need them. Find a [location near you](#) and ask if any mattresses are available.

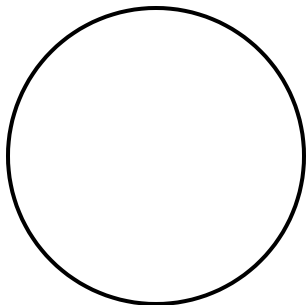
If your mattress is still in good condition but you want to try something new for your pain, purchasing a mattress topper could be a more budget-friendly solution. A mattress topper is a thin, cushioned layer made of memory foam or latex used to alter the mattress’s feel or protect the bed. It can make the mattress feel softer, firmer, more supportive, or more pressure-relieving. Price depends on the brand and size, but you can find mattress toppers for less than \$200 on Amazon.

## Compare the best mattresses for back pain as of November 2024

|                                | Helix Midnight Luxe         | Nectar Premier              | Saatva Rx                   | The 1               |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
|                                | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Che</a> |
| <b>Mattress type</b>           | Hybrid                      | Foam                        | Hybrid                      | H                   |
| <b>Brand’s firmness rating</b> | Medium                      | Medium-firm                 | Luxury firm                 | Luxi                |
| <b>Trial period</b>            | 100 nights                  | 365 nights                  | 365 nights                  | 120                 |

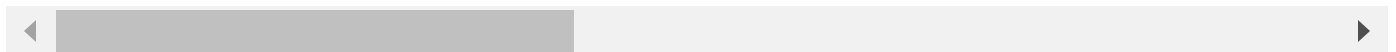
|                              | Helix Midnight Luxe         | Nectar Premier              | Saatva Rx                   | The 1               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
|                              | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Check Price</a> | <a href="#">Che</a> |
| <b>Warranty</b>              | 15 years                    | Limited lifetime            | Limited lifetime            | Limite              |
| <b>White-glove delivery*</b> | No                          | Yes                         | Yes                         |                     |

## From our focus group



Jack B.

With the goal of learning more about sleeping with chronic back pain and finding an ideal mattress to provide relief and improve sleep, we held a focus group to discuss mattresses with those experiencing back pain in their everyday lives.



During our focus group, Jack B., a 65-year-old side sleeper with chronic back pain, shared his experience in finding relief through a new mattress. “About 6 months ago, I realized I needed to make a change to help my pain and sleep quality,” Jack shared. “I’d be up a couple of times a night and would sleep for a couple of hours in my recliner.”



While his sleep quality and recovery have improved significantly, he continues to explore options, such as a knee pillow, for further comfort. His story shows how important persistence and a new mattress can be in getting a good night's sleep and improving chronic pain.

## Bottom line

Finding the best mattress for back pain can feel daunting, but it's important to talk to a health care professional to understand more about your unique pain management needs. Once you have an idea of what to look for, you can more easily consider your personal preferences, including firmness and mattress type.

We love the Helix Midnight Luxe with ErgoAlign because it accommodates an array of sleep positions, boosts your ability to move around in bed with less effort (and potentially less pain), and offers a medium-firm feel, which is known to best help manage generalized back pain. But every option in our list offers something slightly different, like extra support or more pressure relief, so you can find a mattress that works for you. If you still need help making a decision on the best mattress for your specific back pain, we encourage you to take advantage of trial periods—all models in this review exceed the industry standard of 100 nights—or opt for the exchange program from WinkBeds.

## **Additional resources for sleep and pain**

- [Best mattress for sciatica](#)
- [Best mattress for arthritis](#)
- [Best mattress for hip pain](#)
- [Best mattress for shoulder pain](#)

## Frequently asked questions

**What is a doctor recommended mattress for back pain?** ▼

**What mattress firmness is best for back and hip pain?** ▼

**Can your mattress cause back pain?** ▼

**Can a bad box spring cause back pain?** ▼

**Are memory foam mattresses good for your back?** ▼

Have questions about this review? Email us at [reviewsteam@ncoa.org](mailto:reviewsteam@ncoa.org).

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