

# SOFA SO GOOD

A stylish sofa can act as the focal point of any room, getting it right is about striking the balance between style and comfort

**F**rom sleek and modern styles to traditional period looks, there is plenty of choice out there when it comes to finding your dream sofa, but there are myriad factors to consider before making the splurge, so we've spoken to the experts to get some tips on how to get it right.

## AESTHETICS

The first factor to consider is the colour, fabric, and overall aesthetics of your sofa. The palette of the space from the walls to the artwork can all make a massive impact on a colour scheme - pick colour inspiration from paintings, and draw out tones found in rugs. So what styles are trending this season? Charlie Marshall, founder of furniture brand Loaf, has noticed a dramatic increase in bright colours, which he attributes to the rise of social media. "A few years ago, it was all about neutrals, but I think with sites like Instagram, there's plenty of good inspiration out there making it easier to get stronger tonal colours right," he says. "We're noticing that our customers are becoming much bolder with colour and gone are the days of 'greige.'" Charlie points out that grapes, berries, and mulberry shades are increasingly sought after.

When thinking about the hue of the cushions, Claire Hornby, creative stylist at Barker and Stonehouse suggests: "for the ultimate in creative expression, style your sofa with primary colour pops", with opposites on the wheel making a real impression, like oranges with bold blues, or dusty pinks with greens.



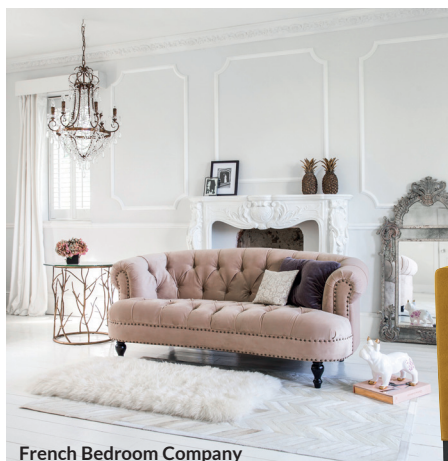
## DURABILITY

A sofa is a solid investment that you ideally want to last a lifetime so considering the hardware and durability is key. Charlie recommends that customers: "should check that the sofa has a solid beech frame that is held together with screws and dowels - not glued and stapled chipboard versions which break easily and won't last." Be sure to ask about materials and consider the coils as metal coils can break. This may mean paying a higher price, but buying cheap will inevitably involve re-buying later down the line. Ultimately, a sofa has to be right for the residents of the house too. According to Charlie: "For a family, I'd always suggest a clever fabric as they're easier to clean should anything get spilled!" Claire also recommends leather for family spaces: "Leather is a wonderfully versatile and

practical material that looks great." For homes with pets, Claire advises against materials such as velvet: "The key idea to picking a durable sofa is research, not only should it complement your décor but your lifestyle as well."

## ARRANGEMENT

Remember to think about the space you are filling, Claire points out: "It's important to consider the style and function of a room before choosing your sofa." Perhaps it's a high-ceilinged period house, or a small lounge area where you're working to create an illusion of space, this all influences the model you should be selecting. "Petite designs that take inspiration from mid-century silhouettes look wonderful in smaller, formal spaces," says Claire, "While much larger, open-plan living rooms allow for greater opportunity to experiment with coordinating sofa and armchair collections, and even corner sofas," she adds. L-shaped sofas can work well to increase the space in a restricted setting but they're not just for corners, and can create a cosy hub. Charlie reminds us to measure up carefully - both the room and any doorways you need to get the sofa through. [F&L](#)



## **OVERMATTER**