

SPOTLIGHT ON UPHOLSTERY



MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS WHEN BUYING A SOFA

% of consumers saying each is important	
Comfort	96%
Durability	91%
Quality	91%
Price	84%
Color	81%
Style and design	81%
Cover material (fabric/leather/faux leather)	76%
Stain-resistant cover	75%
Warranty	51%
Larger-sized sofa	50%
Made in the USA	40%
Smaller-sized sofa	28%
Made from eco-friendly materials	27%
Manufacturer brand	25%

Source: Furniture Today's Survey

PREFERRED SOFA COLOURS

Browns	67%
Neutrals	66%
Grays	48%
Black	38%
Blues	38%
Greens	30%
Reds	20%
White	14%
Purples	9%
Oranges	7%
Metallics	5%
Yellows	5%

Source: Furniture Today's Survey

Browns, neutrals and grays favoured for sofas

Is the sofa comfortable? Is the sofa durable? Is the sofa of high quality? These are the three leading questions consumers want answered when buying a sofa, according to new upholstery research from Furniture/Today. The data reveals that more than nine out of 10 consumers look for comfort, durability and quality when sofa shopping. More than eight out of 10 shoppers factor the sofa's price, colour and style into the buying process. The cover fabric and a cover that's stain-resistant are important to three-fourths of consumers.

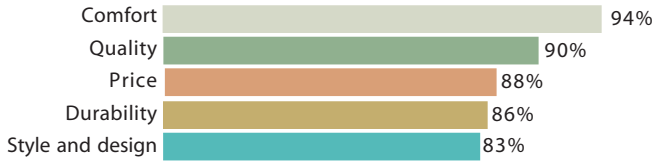
Millennials are more likely to prefer grays and black for sofas.

Generation X members are the most likely to prefer a brown sofa.

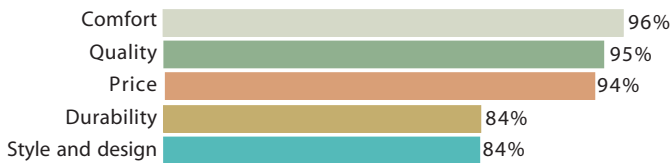
While most Baby Boomers like brown and neutral sofas, Boomers have a higher preference for blues and greens than other age groups.

TOP 5 FACTORS BY GENERATION

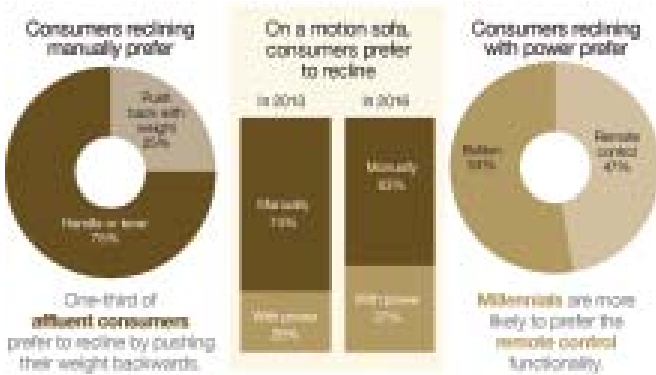
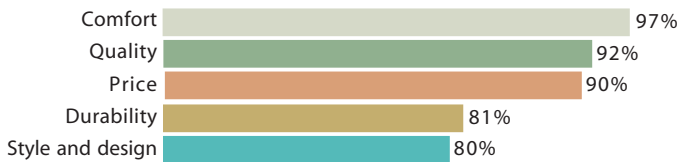
Millennials, ages 18 to 35



Generation X, ages 36 to 51



Baby Boomers, ages 52 to 70



According to Furniture/Today's latest Consumer Buying Trends Survey, 47% of 2014 sofa buyers purchased a fabric-covered sofa, while 33% bought a leather one and 20% bought one covered in faux or bonded leather. A solid-colour sofa is preferred by 85% of those responding to the 2016 Upholstery Consumer Survey. The majority play it safe with colour, however. As per the data, two-thirds want a brown or

neutral-colored sofa, such as beige, cream or ecru. Gray sofas are also popular, favored by nearly half of responding consumers.

Millennial buyers, with adults between the ages of 18 and 35, are more likely to go for a gray sofa. Members of Generation X, ages 36 to 51 this year, are the most likely to select brown sofas. And, while most Baby Boomers, between 52 and 71, prefer a brown or neutral-color sofa, Boomers have a higher proclivity for sofas covered in blues and greens. A smaller-size sofa, a sofa made from eco-friendly materials and the manufacturer's brand are the least important sofa attributes, with each attribute named by less than 30% of responding consumers.

The sofa is command central

Question: What do consumers do on sofas, besides sit?
 Answer: A whole lot! Of course, they watch TV and relax on sofas, but consumers also read, eat, sleep, text, use laptop computers and tablets and more. Sofa activities differ by age, with younger individuals doing more. Millennials are much more likely than their older counterparts to use social media, text, have sex and use a laptop for work and pleasure on a sofa. Furthermore, Millennials more often sleep on the sofa and listen to music.

Generation X members are the most likely demographic group to read on the sofa. Gen X and Millennials are equally as likely to eat and drink on a sofa, email and play video games there. Even though younger generations are more prone to specific sofa activities, Baby Boomers also do more than sit on the sofa. Eighty-six percent of Boomers watch TV on the sofa; 75% read; 56% sleep; 54% eat and drink; 43% use a tablet; and 42% text while on the sofa. Recent product trends support these lifestyle habits and both enhance the activities and solve potential consumer problems. The rise in popularity of the motion sofa is a great example of adapting to these consumer behaviours. Motion sofas provide additional comfort for



sleeping, watching TV and reading. Other features include storage for TV remotes, trays for supporting laptops and dinner plates and docking stations to charge smartphones, etc.

Consumers want lumbar support

Today's sofas are on the move. In fact, retail sales for motion sofas have increased 22.1% over the last five years to an estimated \$5.7 billion in 2015. Those impressive figures make motion sofas the fastest-growing furniture category,



WHAT CONSUMERS DO ON THE SOFA (BESIDES SIT & TALK)

Millennials, ages 18 to 35

Watch TV	92%	Use tablet/iPad for fun	49%
Relax	86%	Email for work	47%
Text with friends/family	76%	Have sex	41%
Eat and drink	75%	Play video games	41%
Read	75%	Text for work	34%
Sleep	74%	Play board games/ other games	25%
Use laptop for fun	73%	Use social media for work	25%
Use social media with friends/family	72%	Use tablet/iPad for work	24%
Email with friends/family	64%	Play cards	18%
Listen to music	56%	Sewing/arts and crafts	1%
Use laptop for work	51%		

Generation X, ages 36 to 51

Watch TV	94%	Use tablet/iPad for fun	27%
Relax	88%	Email for work	43%
Text with friends/family	66%	Have sex	26%
Eat and drink	74%	Play video games	42%
Read	82%	Text for work	37%
Sleep	65%	Play board games/ other games	20%
Use laptop for fun	63%	Use social media for work	22%
Use social media with friends/family	61%	Use tablet/iPad for work	24%
Email with friends/family	64%	Play cards	13%
Listen to music	49%	Organizing	1%
Use laptop for work	41%		

Baby Boomers, ages 52 to 70

Watch TV	86%	Use tablet/iPad for fun	43%
Relax	82%	Email for work	16%
Read	75%	Play video games	15%
Sleep	56%	Use tablet/iPad for work	13%
Eat/drink	54%	Text for work	11%
Text with friends/family	42%	Have sex	10%
Email with friends/family	41%	Other*	5%
Listen to music	40%	Play board games/other games	5%
Use laptop for fun	40%	Use laptop for work	17%
Use social media with friends/family	35%	Use social media for work	5%
Play cards	4%		

*Includes banking, playing/snuggling with pets, folding laundry, sorting things and wrapping gifts

besides mattresses. Which motion sofa features are buyers most interested in? Overall, 77% of respondents are interested in lumbar and upper back support and 73% want a motion sofa that requires little clearance from the wall to recline. More than half desire lay-flat capabilities and 47% are interested in one with an adjustable head rest.

There is a generational divide when it comes to desired features. While the research shows little difference between the desires of Millennials and Generation X consumers, there is significant variance between Baby Boomers and younger buyers. Cup holders, built-in storage consoles, smartphone docking stations, audio speakers and Bluetooth connectivity are more important to consumers under age 52, those younger than Boomers. Nearly four out of 10 consumers want to recline with power, while six out of 10 would rather recline manually. In 2013, Furniture/Today asked consumers which reclining method they favored, with 26% choosing power. The preference for power has grown by 11 percentage points as 37% select power today. For consumers on team power, 53% want to use a button to recline and 47% like a remote control. For consumers favoring a manual recline method, three-fourths prefer to use a handle or lever and 25% like to push backwards using their own weight. ■

Source: Furniture Today's Survey