

The Refreshed Home



ORANGE • BOOM

Design | Listing Prep

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Field Guide of Furniture Sizes for Downsizees, Buyers and Renters

As someone whose entire career has been in the homes-life-spaces-pretty things business. I understand how we really live in our spaces. And I know the ins and outs from how/why models are set up and marketed, to the speed bumps consumers hit when they're deciding on, moving into, and furnishing these spaces.

This information was compiled to help downsizers, buyers and renters more easily evaluate a new space at showing. By having basic furniture sizes at the ready, they can more quickly assess what will fit where, weigh how to edit their existing furniture, or plan for potential new purchases.

While furniture can come in many different sizes, these are average sizes, for average circumstances, meaning things most people want, have or are familiar with, in average to perhaps more modest spaces.

Living/Family Rooms

Exterior depth measurement of most upholstery is 38"-44"; this includes any angle or outward curve on front or back line. Interior measurement of each 'seat' is typically 22-24" wide. Overall size differentials usually come down to exterior styling/arm detail.

- Sofas and loveseats: 82"-87" and 60"-64" respectively. But if you're buying new, pass on loveseat, go for individual chairs. More flexible, plus 2 people will sit on 2 chairs. 2 people on a loveseat is just too close.
- Fully upholstered non-extension chairs: 36"-40" square is average-to-generous.
- Leggy and wood-framed chairs: 30"-34" square
- End tables: Tables big enough to hold good lighting, 22"-24" squared. Make sure height is commensurate with arm of sofa, 24"-28" is good.
- Cocktail tables: Allow 16"-18" from edge of upholstery to edges of table so that it's reachable and there's walking space.
- TV size/placement. Ideally, distance from eyeballs to screen is double the screen size. (Ex. a 50" TV works best if eyeballs are 100" away from screen.)
- Articulating arms are very- nice- to-haves for wall-mounted flat screens. And for all the time we're locked onto these screens, consider a professional install to regulate/balance color, sound, and any other equipment.

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Sectionals could be a whole post or three by themselves. Most sectional tales of woe involve mismeasurement, confusion about arm placement, and picking an unsuitable fabric. So we should talk but a few quick points:

- Most popular sectional configuration as 3-corner-2. That is, 3 seats, a corner, and 2 seats. With a square corner, 8'x10' overall measurement gives you a lot to choose from.
- Curved corners in that same configuration probably to 9'+ to 11+'.
- It's not enough that it physically fits into the space. Furniture sizes are important because it has to get in the door, up the stairs, and around the corner.
- Since extended TV watching is usually the reason most order chaises or pop-up foot rests, make sure the TV will be comfortably visible (distance and angle) from these cherished seats.
- Last, the reason sectionals are almost always in a solid textured fabric is that pattern with any direction takes very badly to sectionals.

Dining Room

Bistro/Breakfast type tables: For 1 or 2 people, often hybrid eating space for light meals and occasional working space, usually in 36-42" diameter.

- Round or square diameter measure the same, but square has more surface area
- Glass tops are easy maintenance and look smaller than an opaque surface.
- Placing them in front of window visually dilutes size; tangent to wall (i.e. not floating in room) frees up walk space
- Pedestal base gives most flexibility, but make sure you can sit into it without crunching knees.
- Legs as close to edge of surface will give you the most sitting area, that is, space between table legs that you can pull chairs into

Traditional Dining Spaces

- Dinner plates are 12"; chairs about 20" wide. 2' of table frontage on table allows for beverages, silverware, and space to pull chairs easily in and out.
- See above notes re: base and legs
- If table extends, be aware if base/legs move with it, or if they are stationary. A longer table doesn't always correlate with lots more seating.



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- Consider number of leaves along with size of space and your overall goals. Older homes had bigger traditional DRs, so leaves on older (or new, higher-end) tables are anywhere from 15-20" to accommodate these rooms.
- Tables with 4-10" leaves would add gentler gradations for more modest spaces, but 2 of them would barely add 1 extra person on each side.

Bedrooms

Mattress sizes

So first, M&BS is industry shorthand for mattress and boxspring; and "bed" means any framework around it. Like all furniture beds are measured at their greatest dimension.

- Twin 39"x75" ; Twin XL 39"x80" Twin XL can be a free-standing M&BS, bottom half of a bunk bed set up, or half of standard King size
- Full 54"x75"
- Queen 60"x80"
- Cal King 72"x84"
- King 78"x80"

More modest space? Sleigh beds with high headboards/footboards and big curves will limit floor/walking around spaces. Bed with substantial side rails or that sits higher plus newer tall mattresses bring bed surface closer to the eye, making it look even bigger and heavier.

Tight stairs, turn-around space? Mattresses bend, but boxsprings don't. That's why King boxspring is standardly 2 Twin XLs. Queen, and sometimes Full can come with split boxsprings-that is 2 halves of reg size boxspring.

Pricier than one single piece (it costs more to make 2 separate pieces) but if it's what you need, it's what you need. Some bedding chains carry, maybe even stock them, but you have to ask.

BR Furniture

Like end tables, night tables should be big enough to hold a lamp along with other stuff. 24"-28" wide is comfortable. Make sure lamp + table height is commensurate with your mattress; when in doubt higher is better.

Dressers, chests, and armoires are usually 22-24" deep. In modest spaces, vertical (chest or armoire) with fewer but deeper drawers often works better than longer dressers.

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Rugs

Multi-family properties will typically require a certain percentage of floor coverage. Good for neighbors, and for you. They keep sound and creaks contained in older, wood-framed buildings, and add actual and visual warmth in ground floor units, and in more modern buildings with concrete ceilings/floors.

- Area carpet that disappears under edges of main upholstery visually unifies seating area and makes a modest space look bigger. It also defines separate areas within larger spaces, or spaces with open floor plans.
- Ditto for BRs. Carpets that disappear under bed and cover most of the walkaround space look and feel better, and are safer, too. 8'x10' to 9'x12' does the trick for most BRs
- DR Add 4' to each dimension of table size *used most often* to determine best rug size. For example, use an 8' round or square carpet for a 48" round table (48" for the table, 24" each side for chair pull out). Round up a 44"x66" table that seats 6, go with an 8'x10'.
- Don't fret about 2 or 3 holidays where you seat a houseful; buy for how big the table is the other 360 days of the year.
- Choose throw rugs carefully. Yes to entry to wipe feet, in bathroom as you exit shower. NO, just plain no at tops of stairs, around beds or other high-traffic area where slipping or tripping could happen.

Etc.

A few parting tips to help you make your own best choices

- Bring a tape measure, and use your phone to take a walk-through video. (You may think 'you'll remember, but you won't). Note locations of cable hookup and electric outlets, and capture inside of closets.
- If you're looking at furnished models, measure the furniture that's in there. (Is that a full, or queen size bed? A 78" or an 84" sofa?)
- If you're looking at a floor plan, understand most are not that accurate. Also, they measure open spaces at the widest. So things like bump outs for beams don't get included. And sometimes entry space will get rolled into LR or Dining space measurement.
- If you're looking at a site map be sure to understand the context. What's next to your building, and how close? What will your unit be facing, and is it north, south, east or west exposure?

Good luck!!