

"Not a Compromise, or an Afterthought" — The 5 Things You Should Design Around a Sofa Bed That'll Make Guests Feel Way More Comfortable

Make a temporary setup feel like a thoughtfully designed space so guests can sleep easily

BY BECKS SHEPHERD PUBLISHED 8 NOVEMBER 2025 IN [ADVICE](#)

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(Image credit: Swyft)

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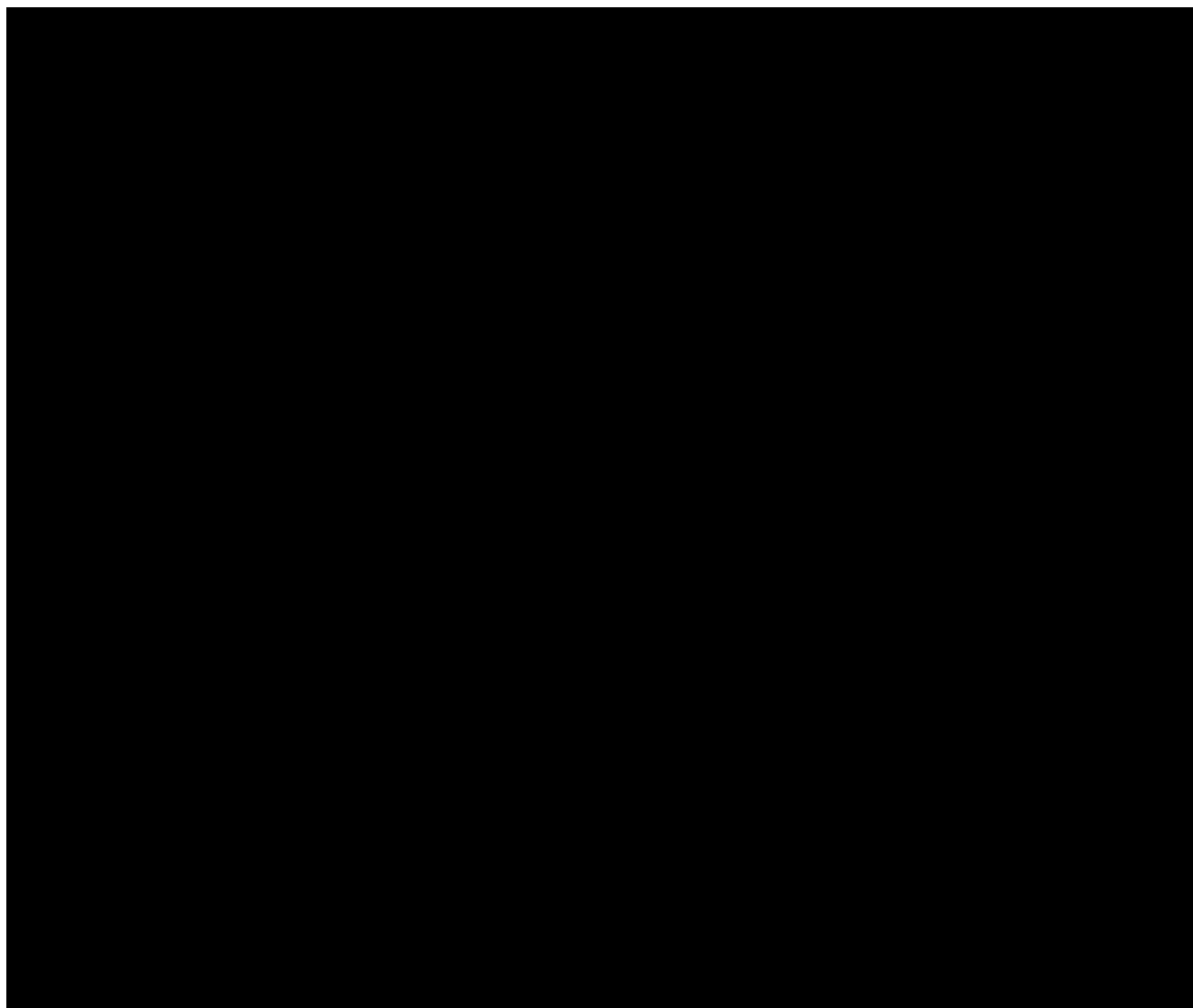
Sofa beds often get a bad reputation for being as temporary as the weekend guests they host. However, this need not be the case. What's more, according to interior experts, there are a few things to design around a sofa bed that will help guests feel more at home — and as though the sleep set-up is more intentional.

It goes without saying that investing in one of the [best sofa beds](#) should be your first port of call. But the second? Double-duty decor, like a side table that doubles up as storage, a bookshelf that serves as a divider, and purposeful nearby sockets that make charging tech easy. There should also be enough space to open out the bed, so it doesn't feel like guests are putting you out (instead of you putting them up).

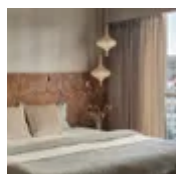
Instead: “Designing around a sofa bed simply requires treating the space in both scenarios equally,” says interior designer Jen Baxter. “You want it to feel like a proper guest room *and* a comfortable den or office — not a compromise or an afterthought.” So, without further ado, here are designers’ design must-haves to add around any sofa bed.

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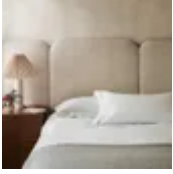
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5 Ways to Make Your Bedroom Look More Interesting, Without Completely Redecorating It — Simple Swaps That Make All the Difference

1. LAYERED LIGHTING



Side lights can help create a cozy atmosphere and help guests unwind in the space from dusk until dawn.

(Image credit: Loaf)

Whether it's your [garden room](#) or a small spare room that doubles as an office by day and a guest room by night, [lighting schemes](#) can make all the difference to the look and feel of a space. And when it comes to the room where your sofa bed is, experts suggest that the same rules apply.

"Use a mix of soft overhead light, bedside or floor lamps, or a dimmable option," suggests Monika Puccio, buying director at [Sofa Club](#). "Lighting defines comfort and flexibility. Guests may want to read, relax, or wind down — not be stuck with only harsh overhead lighting. So layered lighting creates a cozy atmosphere and gives them control over brightness."



H&M Home

Alvar table lamp

[£34.99 AT H&M](#)

In 2025, main lights are a no-go. Add a metallic accent to your guest space with this modern table lamp in a soft, mushroom-inspired shape.

Monika Puccio

Buying Director at Sofa Club

Monika has a deep passion for furniture trends, lifestyle aesthetics, and contemporary design, and she's focused on creating beautiful, trend-led sofas that blend style, quality, and affordability. And when it comes to sofas and sofa beds, she's an industry expert.

2. INCLUDE ACCESSIBLE SURFACES



Adding a small side table can make switching between the room's 9-5 function to its 5-9 purpose seamless.

(Image credit: Nicole England. Design: the Stylesmiths)

Modern bedrooms are designed a little differently from guest spaces. For starters, most guests won't need bundles of **wardrobe space** to store their clothing. Nor will they necessarily need a vanity unit to get ready at. However, there's a 99.9% chance they will need some accessible surfaces to place their prized possessions, like their phone, glasses, and a glass of water.

This is why Monika recommends including a small side table or shelf, a basket or drawer for personal items, and easy access to outlets for charging devices.

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“Guests feel more at home when they can keep things organized and within reach,” she notes. “Even a small nightstand or trunk at the foot of the bed adds practicality and makes the space feel intentional, not temporary.”



Pisces Bedside Chest of Drawers

[£498 AT ANTHROPOLOGIE](#)

Whether they are staying for a night or three, help guests keep their personal items in sight and in reach with a side table that doubles up as surface space and storage.

3. ADD COMFORTING LAYERS AND TEXTURES



Whether it's a rug, throw, or cushions, these additions help define a space and make guests feel right at home.

(Image credit: Lulu & Georgia)

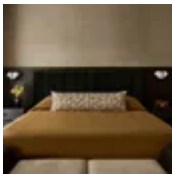
Now that the temperatures have dropped, you can never have enough layers to keep guests cozy and comfy.

So, along with adding the [best bedding for a guest room](#) (like a mattress topper, fresh linens, pillows, and throw blanket) and soft furnishings around the sofa bed — like a rug underfoot and additional cushions — Monika also suggests mixing and matching your textures.

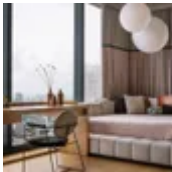
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“Sofa beds can feel utilitarian; so layering comfort transforms them,” she says. “Plush textiles, good sheets, and tactile warmth signal care and turn the space from ‘makeshift guest bed’ into a ‘restful retreat’.”

And interior designer [Jen Baxter](#), founder of Baxter Hill Interiors, agrees. “Layering textures, like grasscloth walls, a wool rug, and a chunky throw, adds warmth and comfort without clutter,” she says. “When the bed is open, everything still feels intentional and inviting, designed to make guests feel at home.”

The good news is that there is no shortage of places to [buy bedding](#). There are also a variety of [affordable alternatives to high-end bedding](#), like [Amazon’s Bedding](#) range that looks expensive (but actually isn’t).

John Lewis

Aria Reversible Quilted Bedspread
in Terracotta

[£180 AT JOHN LEWIS](#)



The more throws, the better. And this lightly hand-quilted floral bedspread, which is made from 100% linen, will look good draped over your sofa bed during the day and after dark.

Jen Baxter

Founder and designer at Baxter Hill Interiors

Jen is the founder of Baxter Hill Interiors, a boutique design studio specializing in heritage-inspired, layered residential interiors. Known for her refined use of natural materials and artisanal craft, Jen enjoys incorporating vintage and heirloom rugs into her projects, using layering techniques to add depth, warmth, and a sense of personal history to a space.

4. ADD A CURTAIN FOR PRIVACY



Clever design details, like curtains, can help guests reclaim some privacy in a multi-purpose space.

(Image credit: Meraki Design)

From bookshelves to plants, clever design additions like these can help multi-functional spaces feel more intentional and private. If space allows, you could always take some inspiration from Eris Koutsoudakis, co-founder at [Meraki Design](#), and add a [doorway curtain](#).

“The room in the image was designed with guests in mind, which is why we added a curtain — it allows the space to be closed off for privacy and creates a cocooning feel when used as a guest room,” Eris says. “There’s also a small sink and cupboard tucked away for guests to use, so it functions as a comfortable, self-contained space when needed.”

5. INCORPORATE THOUGHTFUL DETAILS



"For this project, my client needed an occasional bed — both for visiting family and for his business partner," Sonia Lazowski, founder of [Virajo](#), says. "I chose the 'Princesse' daybed from Caravane, which fits perfectly with the slightly bohemian-ethnic spirit the owner wanted to preserve in this part of the room."

(Image credit: Sonia Lazowski | VIRAJO)

The last design detail to add to your guest's space? Thoughtful additions, such as artwork, lamps, rugs, books, and flowers, make a space with a sofa bed more inviting.

“These touches bring life and personality, ensuring the space feels harmonious rather than improvised,” Sonia Lazowski, founder of [Virajo](#), a Paris-based interior design studio, says.

"In this design, to make the area comfortable for overnight guests, I added a caravane coffee table to hold a lamp — creating a sense of intimacy and offering a practical surface for personal belongings," the expert explains. "The result is a warm, inviting corner, ideal for relaxing or even an afternoon nap."

So, as you can see, a guest room with a sofa bed doesn't have to feel stark, desolate, or void of personality. In fact, it should feel the complete opposite so that it feels like a home away from home.

That said, there are a few [common guest room mistakes](#) to avoid to ensure you're not contributing to a cluttered, poorly planned sleep space.

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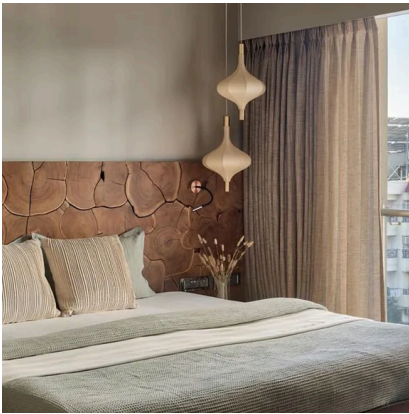
[Becks Shepherd](#) FREELANCE WRITER



Becks is a freelance lifestyle writer who works across a number of Future's titles. This includes Real Homes, Top Ten Reviews, Tom's Guide, TechRadar and more. She started her career in print journalism at a local newspaper more than 8 years ago and has since then worked across digital and social media for food, fashion and fitness titles, along with home interior magazines. Her own interior style? She's big on creating mindful spaces in every corner of her home. If it doesn't spark joy or happiness, it has no place here. When she's not writing, she's reading and when she's not reading, she's writing.



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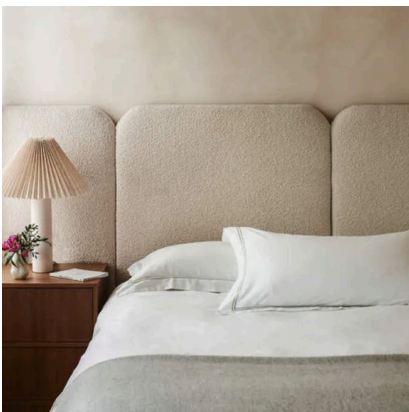
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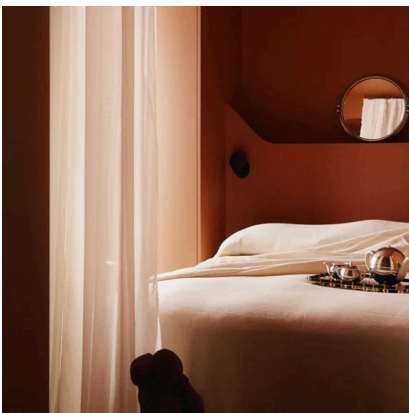
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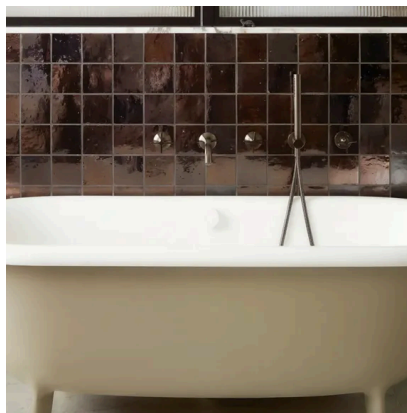
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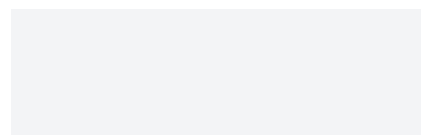
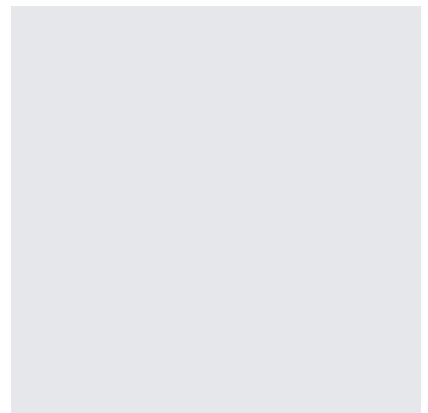
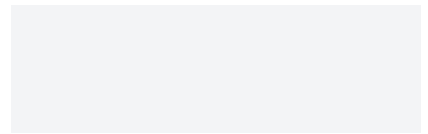
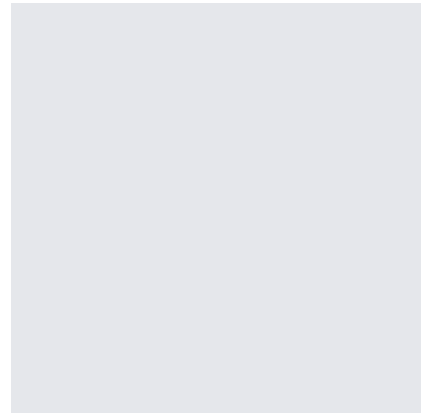
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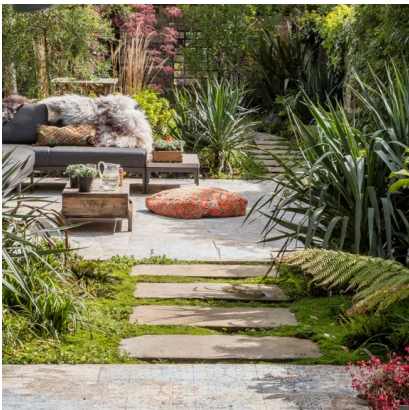
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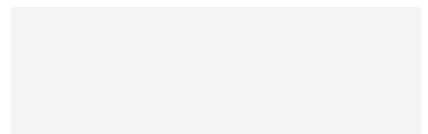
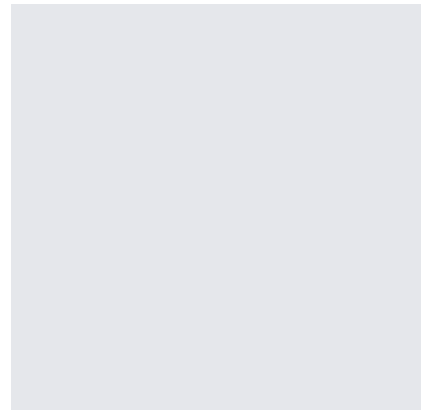
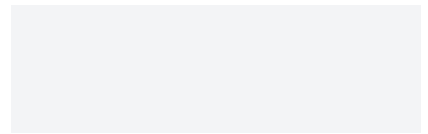
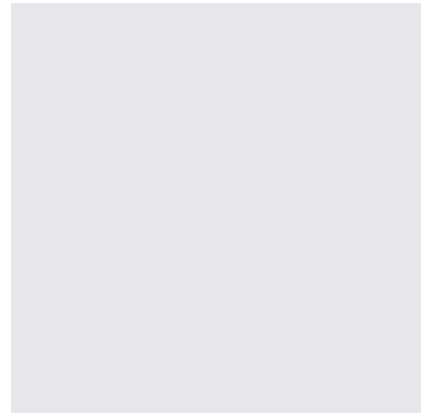
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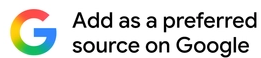


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