



Article Side

The History of Mattresses by [Ashish Pandey](#)

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Thousands of Britons change into their pyjamas, turn off the bedroom lights and go to sleep on a mattress every single night. Millions of people across the world take for granted how crucial and indispensable mattresses are to have a great night sleep. Fundamentally they are large thick pads which humans go to bed on but more importantly they are a key home product which Britons need to sleep peacefully on. Mattresses are filled with tough resistant materials to support the head, back and body weight evenly for health reasons and sometimes they include coiled springs.

There is a vast array of ranges available on the mattress market to create a comfy, soft lying space but where did such a vital daily household item originate from? The Odd Mattress Company has the info. The history of the invention derives from the Arabic word "matrah" meaning "to throw down" "mat, cushion." It is reported that the concept of sleeping on cushions thrown on the floor came about during the Crusades, when religious wars took place with the goal to restore Christian access to the holy places in and near Jerusalem. Europeans allegedly adopted this Arabic method which stemmed into Middle English from the language of ancient Rome.

But even before then in the Stone Age the citizens made their beds out of fallen leaves and covered themselves with dead animal skin. And in Genesis, the first book of the bible, Jacob took a stone, laid it under his head as a pillow and went to sleep. Nowadays mattresses have evolved and are placed on top of bed bases rather than the ground. Early mattresses were filled with whatever natural materials Brits could find like feathers, horse hair, leaves and straw; whereas these days mattresses contain modern fabrics such as latex, foams and fibre. Some special odd size mattresses can be filled with air or water.

Mattresses can come in varying sizes and styles to suit the user and a mattress can even feature breathing holes to circulate the air within, keeping the sleeper cool when in the summer and warm in the winter. Even though many firms use revolutionised technologies and equipment now, there are still some that produce handmade mattresses with the best quality materials and traditional English craftsmanship. The quality mattress fillings give it that deep luxurious feel. A recent survey showed that half of British adults suffer from sleep problems and that they struggle to fall sound asleep.

Research by the University of Glasgow revealed that not getting enough good quality sleep affects how people function the next day and that 77% of people have problems concentrating and 64% feel less productive at work. Without the innovation of sleeping on mattresses, it can be argued that even more Brits would find it difficult to get a good night rest. Imagine if society still slept on leaves and used rocks as pillows? Civilisation has come a long way inventing luxury mattresses but it is useful to look back at its history to determine how far mankind has really progressed.

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