

How do I choose a sofa ...

**... THAT'S MY IDEAL MATCH?**

No matter how tempting an online sale may be, "don't buy a sofa without sitting on it first," says decorator Alex Papachristidis. The dimensions should suit your height for napping and perching. For supreme comfort, go with a loose-back style (aka one with nonattached cushions, above). "The back pillows should be filled with down so you sink into them, and seats should be made with foam wrapped in feathers—they're long-lasting and require minimal fluffing." *Linen Brooklyn sofa, West Elm, from \$1,299/74"; westelm.com.*

... FOR A SMALL SPACE?

"Good proportion is the most important factor," says Papachristidis. Lean arms and exposed legs lend your furniture a lighter feel and will make a room appear larger. A cohesive, tonal color scheme generates a sense of openness and harmony, while a distinct contrast can overwhelm tight quarters. "A sofa that pops out too much instantly seems heavy," he warns.

**... AND STYLE IT PERFECTLY?**

When it comes to accessorizing, Papachristidis prefers a bohemian groove to a matchy, tailored approach. "I'll often mix prints with solids and cotton with velvet, silk, and wool," he says. How many pillows you add depends on the type of couch. "Use fewer on a loose-back sofa since you already get a cushioned effect from the furniture," he says. If you have a more structured shape, give it an inviting air by piling on the poufs—and toss a cashmere throw over the arm to keep things cozy. *Linen-blend Jirwan pillow, John Robshaw, \$160; johnrobshaw.com. Velour and linen Berlingot pillow, Iosis, \$100; usa.yvesdelorme.com.*

**... IF THE BACK WILL BE VISIBLE?**

"Search for something with an interesting shape to it, such as a curve," suggests Papachristidis. Or, if you have room, put the space to work with a desk or console that sits slightly lower than the sofa's top edge. "Decorate the surface with one or two lamps, a sculpture to create height, or stacks of books," he says. You can also design a pulled-together look by placing a vintage screen behind the couch (it should be about a half foot taller than the furniture). Go to Chairish.com to find a wide array of styles that have been listed by preapproved sellers and vetted by a team of in-house curators.

