



FQR Made in Britain



The Story Sofa

Grant Sofa and Ecrú Double Border Linen Scatter Cushions By Nuttall

With her advice on choosing the perfect sofa, **Amber Aikens** proves she is one hot couch potato

ASK ANYONE from the Nuttall family which is their favourite sofa and there's a clear winner – bought by our parents about 30 years ago, it's down-filled with deep scroll arms, covered in cushions and is the perfect location to curl up with a book, to hide out or hurl yourself over the back of when playing “catch” as children. This “home” in our home has been re-covered several times to match new interiors but its framework and springs are still the same. If this sofa could talk... well, it's probably best that it doesn't!

Longevity has to be the key when on the lookout for a new sofa. Most people invited to your home will experience the delights of your sofa and what better to welcome guests than a comfortable, chic, timeless old friend? As with all friends, it's an investment. It's no good admiring the beauty on the outside only to discover hastily hammered-together frames and rigid cushions that no amount of bottoms will soften up.

A Nuttall showroom favourite is the Grant. Its classic shape looks fabulous in chintz with a billowing fringe next to a roaring fire in a country house or in a plain grey cashmere with contrast red piping in a modern city flat. It is like that friend we all have who has the ability to look as fantastic in something picked up in a charity shop as in a Chanel suit. The Grant is generous in both depth and comfort with its pure down-filled, slightly domed top-seat cushions. When it comes to seat cushions, go for fattest; they look so much more inviting than flat, foam-filled cousins. Enjoy being enveloped and made to feel secure by your sofa.

shines through the layers and continues through the legs. A tapered leg lends an architecturally clean line, and if a new piece is hand polished and perhaps finished with hand-aged castors, it is lent an air of authenticity. Castors are like an elegant pair of shoes befitting any shapely leg, not just a means of manoeuvrability – but if you're not an ankle lover or if the chosen location for your new sofa is in an already rather “leggy” room, consider a skirt – whether full or pleated it should always be tailored to fit seamlessly into the surroundings.

Fill your sofa with finest down – yes, occasional plumping is required but for the sake of such comfort why would you consider any thing else... perhaps to save pennies? At least a down wrap, then! The front edge must be sprung – why would you want the backs of your legs to feel the hard line of wood?

Don't be afraid to go for a classical shape. The perfect classic models attain a contemporary feel when dressed in carefully selected fabrics. Take a navy Loro Piana linen, hand-stitched and beautifully pinned to honour the lines of your chosen frame, full rounded seats padded with down, and the classic shape will take on a new air of divine simplicity. A scrolled back and shapely sides mean this sofa can be admired from all angles.

Once in a showroom, your eyes having locked onto a particular piece – you like the shape but is it proportionally right for your room? An enormous sofa will swamp a small room. And don't cram in the furniture: give each piece space to speak for itself. Now, take a seat and your time. Is it comfortable? If it's for a formal drawing room you won't want it too low, deep or piled with cushions; but perhaps for the TV/cinema room you want all those things. Do you like the fabric? The contrast piping? Perhaps a kick-pleat skirt will add softness? Take a slow walk around her, admire her from all angles, be sure you want her to move in with you now and that you can see yourself taking her

Issue 8: Summer 2010

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