

## Read the Merchandise Tags Before You Accept Delivery of Items - Buyer Beware

July 17, 2017 - The vast majority of people have ordered furniture and had it delivered to their home. You may have walked into a store to place your order, or you may have done it online. But when it arrived at your house, did you closely inspect the tags on that merchandise? Most people don't. And as I found out the hard way, not reading the tags can actually lead to issues more important than just lost money.

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A few years ago my wife and I walked into a local mattress store, tried out several mattresses, and then ordered one that was made by a well-known manufacturer. We were quite happy when it was delivered almost immediately. When the delivery guys brought it in the door, I gave it a quick look. And it looked just like the mattress we had ordered.

Within a few weeks though, both my wife and I started to have some back problems. I told myself that it was just getting used to the new mattressâ€ which was fairly expensiveâ€ and so toughed it out. When the problems only got worse, I put a piece of plywood between the mattress and the box springs. That didn't help either.

Within six months, the mattress had visible indentations in it. Eventually, I called about returning the mattress but was told that I could only get a prorated settlement amount, there would be a restocking fee - a joke because they weren't going to resell it to anyone - and we would have to go through an inspection first to see if we actually qualified for the return. In the end, we decided it was more trouble that it was worth. So we kept it. And we had back problems for the next three years.

During that entire period of time, both of us were telling anyone who would listen that they shouldn't purchase the mattress brand that we had. In fact, we would both walk up to people in stores who were looking at that brand and tell them our tales of woe.

Last month, we decided that it was finally time to break down and purchase a new mattress. So out to the stores we went, testing out various brands but making sure that we didn't get the same brand as the mattress we were replacing. And when we saw other shoppers who were looking at that dreaded brand, we would both let them know what a lousy product it was.

Once we found a new mattress, we had it scheduled for delivery. On the day it was due to arrive, we pulled the sheets off

of our bed. And that's when I noticed it. It was a tag with a name that I didn't recognize. I actually thought the tag had the name of the model of mattress we had purchased. But I didn't see the brand name anywhere.

So I looked all around the mattress. I even lifted it up to see if there was another tag with that dreaded brand name on it on the bottom. There wasn't. It was at that point, I decided to Google the name shown on the tag. I was shocked by the search return results. It was a completely different brand - one I had never even heard of. And that brand was a lot less expensive than the mattress we had purchased.

I felt like a fool. Here I am trying to help consumers avoid being duped, and I got duped myself. I had also gone out of my way for several years to ensure that consumers looking for a new mattress didn't purchase one made by a company that, as it turns out, I've never slept on in my life. For that I am truly sorry.

Once my wife and I realized what had happened, we told the story to several people we know. And every single one of them responded the same way. They all told us that they had never looked at the merchandise tags on any furniture pieces that had been delivered to them. Not just on mattresses, but on anything else either.

So buyers beware. When you order an item from a store, and it is delivered to your house, look carefully at what is delivered. The mattress we purchased and the mattress that was delivered to us were indistinguishable to the untrained eye. They were exactly the same color and appeared to be the same size. But had I read the tags prior to signing the delivery receipt, I would have known right away that something was wrong.

byJim Malmberg

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