

Mattress Face-Off: Avocado Green vs. Avocado Green Pillowtop

When comparing top-rated mattresses from the same brand, does a pillowtop get you a better mattress?

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Avocado Green (left) and Avocado Green Pillowtop mattresses.

Pillowtop or no pillowtop? That's often the question when you're weighing a brand's basic mattress against its more premium version, which adds a cushier layer of material on top and might have implications for the type of sheets you buy to fit: A pillowtop tends to make the mattress several inches taller and several pounds heavier. It might also make the mattress softer.

We brought the Avocado Green Pillowtop (above right) into our mattress lab and decided to test how well it would compare with the brand's flagship model, the Avocado Green mattress.

Avocado, a bed-in-a-box startup that launched in 2015, uses natural latex materials rather than more typical petroleum-based polyurethane foam. The brand offers several mattresses, such as the Green and the Green Pillowtop, and even a new "vegan" mattress (it replaces an internal wool layer with a cotton one).

Curious how the Avocados compare with the rest of the competition? Check out CR's ratings of more than 130 mattresses from brands such as Casper, Sealy, Sleep Number, and Tuft & Needle. CR members can read on for detailed ratings and reviews of both the Avocado Green and the Avocado Green Pillowtop.

Specs

Both the Green and the Green Pillowtop are innerspring mattresses with four grips on their sides for easier maneuvering. The Green,

CR QUICK TAKE

85

RECOMMENDED

Avocado Green

AVERAGE BACK SLEEPER

AVERAGE SIDE SLEEPER

STABILIZATION

CR QUICK TAKE

79

RECOMMENDED

Avocado Green Mattress Pillowtop

AVERAGE BACK SLEEPER

AVERAGE SIDE SLEEPER

STABILIZATION

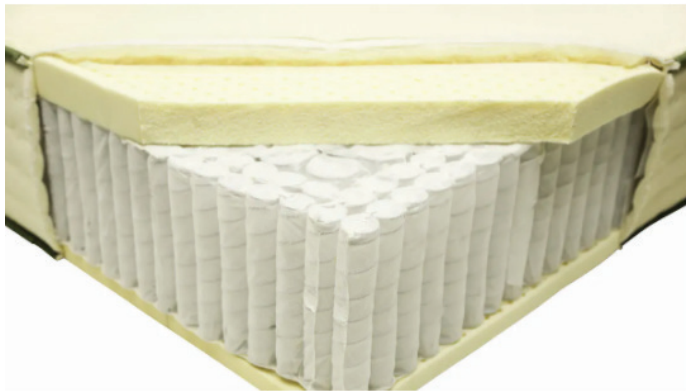
\$1,400, stands 11 inches tall. The Green Pillowtop, \$1,800, stands 2 inches taller than the Green, at 13 inches. (Prices listed are for a queen-size mattress, the size we test.) The Green weighs 119 pounds; the heavier Green Pillowtop weighs 130 pounds.

Both mattresses have an internal section of pocket coils (small coils enveloped in fabric) under a layer of natural latex. The Pillowtop has an additional 2-inch layer of latex for its topper. In our test, the Green has a firmness rating of 7 out of 10 (with 10 being the firmest) and the Green Pillowtop is less firm, with a score of 5.

Sleep Support

In our support tests, we use human subjects of small and large stature to formulate a rating for each. (We also average the results of both to produce a rating for average-sized sleepers.)

The Green earns ratings of Excellent for every size and style of sleep, with one exception: It earns a rating of Very Good for petite side-sleeper support. The Green Pillowtop earns lower support



During testing, we cut into each mattress to document its construction. Here, the Avocado Green.



This cutaway of the Avocado Green Pillowtop mattress reveals a similar construction with a 2-inch foam topper.

ratings across the board: Very Good for side and back support for all sizes, save one. For large/tall back sleepers, the mattress earns a middling Good rating.

Firmness, Stabilization, and Other Results

Our tests find that the Green Pillowtop traps more body heat and might make you feel warmer as you sleep. This could be due to the extra layer of foam in the topper—in our tests, foam seems to contribute to trapping and retaining heat.

It's no surprise that the Green Pillowtop mattress is softer, earning a firmness rating of 5, whereas the firmer Green scores a 7 (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the firmest).

Both earn a middle-of-the-road stabilization rating, meaning you might feel your partner shift on the mattress during the night. They also rate similarly for durability, or their ability to retain support after eight to 10 years of simulated use by using a 308-pound roller that passes over each mattress 30,000 times.

Last, because the Green Pillowtop is 2 inches taller than the Green, you'll have to find sheets that can fit a 13-inch-tall mattress (the height of the Green Pillowtop). Our recent testing of cotton bed sheets found that a few sets we tested could not fit a 14-inch mattress after less than a year's worth of washing.

The Winner

"Both mattresses do very well in our tests," says Christopher Regan, the CR engineer who oversees our mattress tests.

"Ultimately, though, the Avocado Green without the pillowtop provides better support for more body sizes and sleep styles—and might give you more satisfaction in the long run."

Indeed, it's hard to argue with the test results. The Avocado Green, with an Overall Score of 85, sits in the top spot of our innerspring mattress ratings. (It earned the top spot one year ago after ousting the previous champ of three years, the Charles P. Rogers Powercore Estate.)

The Green wins in our crucial support test because it provides better spine support for almost every body size and sleep style. That said, the Green Pillowtop still ranks above dozens of other innerspring mattresses in our ratings (it takes the third slot out of more than 70 innerspring models).

If you prefer your mattress to be a little softer and/or you don't mind sleeping a little warmer—and don't mind paying a little extra for the added layer—then perhaps the pillowtop version is for you. The Green Pillowtop is still a great mattress with an Overall Score of 79, behind the Avocado Green and the Charles P. Rogers Powercore Estate.

For more mattress options, see our mattress ratings of more than 130 adjustable air, foam, and innerspring mattresses.