

FLEXIBLE AND FABULOUS

Sue Frendin, Founder and Managing Director of Fold Out Furniture, tells us how flexible furniture is not only the key to a multi-functional space, but is also truly fabulous.



HOW DID FOLD OUT FURNITURE COME ABOUT?

In 2015, when I was starting to look at setting up my own business in Tasmania, I didn't know much about wall beds or transformable furniture — but I did know that my small spare bedroom that was dominated by a double bed (for occasional guests and family) was not going to function as my home office very effectively.

I had vague memories of those great fold-out beds from the old movies, and so I set out to find one. Great videos were also emerging on Facebook at this time of these amazing pieces of transforming furniture and wall beds.

What surprised me was that there was very little information about wall beds. So my love of research, design and renovation took me on a discovery tour of wall beds, and after visits to Sydney and Melbourne — to see, touch and try all the wall beds I could find — I fell in love with the whole concept, and was very excited about their potential application in our lives here in Tasmania.

I identified the brands that I believe offer the widest range of wall beds in terms of styles, quality and affordability.

I also believe it's important for potential customers to have the opportunity to see and try these beds, so showrooms were important, and I set up my initial showroom in a friend's joinery workshop — Fold Out Furniture was born.

Now it is 2021, and we have learnt so much from our clients and the industry over these past six years.

We have seen how wall beds have provided a cost-effective solution to meet people's needs, whilst freeing up space in domestic; commercial, healthcare, and tourism and holiday home settings.

Through annual trips to the Milan Furniture Fair to meet my wall bed suppliers, I have also discovered many other wonderful space-saving furniture items which I have been proud to introduce as a part of our range — gorgeous transformable tables and multifunctional furniture has inspired us further.

I continue to be excited about transformable and space-saving furniture and will continue to expand our range over the coming months to meet the other emerging needs identified by clients.

We now have showrooms in Melbourne as well as in Hobart, and we continue to sell and support our sales across Australia.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY ADVANTAGES OF YOUR RANGE?

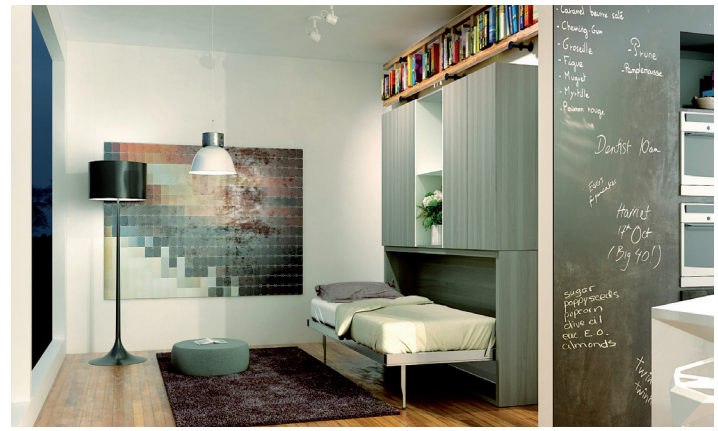
We source the best in transformable options from Europe to introduce to the Australian market.

Europe has expertise in this area as they have lived in smaller spaces for so much longer — Australians are only starting to consider downsizing from family homes or living in apartments. We can draw on the skill and expertise of the Europeans as Australians move away from the quarter-acre block and rethink living and housing options.

We have spent six years in business and have confidence in our products and only carry products that meet our quality standards.

On top of that, our range of transformable furniture allows for the flexible use of space and enables rooms to have more than one function (e.g. a guest room can also be a study, home office, craft room or yoga studio).

Wall beds also enable studio living by being able to be a sofa by day then bed at night —



but it's a FULL bed with a proper mattress, which is just as comfortable as a 'normal' bed.

Our transformable coffee to dining tables can go from a low coffee table to a table that seats up to six for a meal, and our console tables can be tucked into the side of a room, and then expanded out to seat up to 14 people. Versatility is the key.

YOU ALSO OFFER SOME FANTASTIC SMART BEDS — TELL OUR READERS MORE ABOUT THIS EXCITING RANGE.

Our Italian smart beds are designed to be more than just a bed.

Our swivel bed is an extremely innovative bed. We like to call it the James Bond bed! It looks like a bookcase, and then pivots within its width to reveal a full bed behind the bookshelves. It can also have a fold-out table on the front of it to provide a meals area, work table or craft table, all in one piece of furniture.

They can also double as a sofa or as a work desk. The desk is cantilevered so you don't need to remove anything off the desk before lowering the bed to use it for the night.

We also have freestanding wall beds — one with a study desk and a one with a lounge option — which are ideal if you are wanting to create a room divider or to use in a rented property.

WHEN CHOOSING A PIECE OF FOLD-OUT FURNITURE, WHAT SHOULD OUR READERS KEEP IN MIND?

Start by thinking how you would ideally like to use your space, and this will then help guide the decision as to what piece/s of furniture may work best.

These questions could be along the lines of, would you love to reclaim a bedroom to use as a home gym/yoga space or art studio? Do you need to take the pressure off the dining room table and need a study or home office? Or do you like to entertain but don't want the dining room filled up every day with a table for eight people?

Then there are budgets, colours and timeframes to consider. Would you like to make something yourself and start with just a wall bed mechanism or flatpack, or would you prefer a modular wall bed where installation is also included?

I have always sought to provide clients with a full range of wall bed and table options to suit a wide range of budgets and design preferences.

WHAT TRENDS ARE YOU SEEING IN FOLD-OUT FURNITURE AT THE MOMENT?

Working from home has seen many people reconsider how they use their space in their homes.

The 'Spare bedroom' is rapidly becoming a home office through the use of wallbeds with desks, helping take the pressure off the family dining room table.

The transformable tables are revolutionising the way people can use their dining room space. Having a table that can go from a work desk against a wall to expand to seat 12 people for the occasional dinner party means people can socialise as they choose without sacrificing precious living space. Our 'Slimmy' console table is 18 cm deep and fits behind a closed door when not needed. <https://easy-line.it/prodotto/slimmy/?lang=en>

WHAT'S NEXT FOR FOLD OUT FURNITURE IN 2022?

We are excited about our new flagship flexible space concept store in Richmond in Melbourne and will be introducing new displays with two new innovative product ranges from Italy in 2022.

We are also looking to partner with local businesses to run some interior design planning sessions and looking to increase local manufacturing, with some new innovative products on the drawing board. **BM**

For more information, check out our Hobart and Melbourne showrooms by appointment. To book or learn more information, visit foldoutfurniture.com.au

