

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Two's company**

*14 October 2014, Johannesburg:* When one thinks of a lounge, the first thing that comes to mind is a sofa. It's the main furniture piece in any living room, and as such, it should be chosen with care, but it's not the only item that should be carefully considered. Anton Odendaal, from leading furniture manufacturer Rochester, shares some inside info on how to decorate around this staple furniture piece using other key elements.

“Conventionally consumers had the option of buying a 3-2-1 lounge suite, but now they can purchase individual pieces from Rochester. As a result we're seeing more and more people purchasing 2-division sofas first and then decorating around it, as it's a more modular and individualized approach which is better suited to decorating smaller spaces, allowing for added personalisation, and it is also easier on the pocket, as you can collect and add to the décor scheme whenever you can afford it,” affirms Anton.

### **Choosing your sofa**

“Your sofa's size matters,” nods Anton. “Make sure that you choose one that not only fits in your lounge, but also complements the shape and scale of the room in question.” Anton suggests pulling out a tape measure, pen and paper, and drawing up a basic floor plan with the correct dimensions. “Take this with you when shopping for a sofa so that you can play with various options and see what works,” says Anton.

### **Positioning you sofa**

The living room is the social hub of most homes – it is the place where we gather with friends to watch a sports game or have book club meet, where we relax with a good book or a movie, or play with the kids. And so, it's of the utmost importance that your lounge feels welcoming. But how does one achieve this? “It's all in the furniture placement,” nods Anton, “starting with your sofa.”

“First and foremost, determine your focal point - whether it's a crackling fireplace, an endless view outside, or the television – then orient your sofa in that direction,” suggest Anton. Alternatively, position your seating parallel and facing each other, with the focal point at the top or bottom of the seating arrangement.

Either way, what is important here is to ensure that you create a space that is intimate and facilitates conversation. This may mean pulling your sofa away from the wall so that it's not miles away from your focal point. “Most people tend to push all their furniture up against the walls, but if the back of your sofa and the wall behind it are in good shape, then it's perfectly okay to give them some breathing space. This kind of

arrangement will instantly make your room look and feel more cosy and inviting,” says Anton.

### **Arranging the rest of the décor elements**

Once you’ve positioned your sofa, it’s time to layer the space with other elements that complement your chosen suite. It could be an armchair or two, some side tables, an ottoman, or lamps. Whatever items they are, their placement requires as much consideration as your sofa.

- **Seating:** The main aim of introducing additional armchairs into your living room is to accommodate guests and create an easy conversational space where people can sit and converse at a comfortable distance. “Your seating should face each other, but make sure that it isn’t too far or too close to each other,” says Anton. “Ideally you want to leave enough room for people to easily move around the space without feeling cramped, but you also want to create a sense of intimacy so that people don’t have to shout to hear each other.”
- **Side tables:** “If you have the luxury of space in your living room, then side tables are a must,” says Anton, pointing out that they’re the ideal place to add side lamps for some ambient lighting, or stash some reading material. According to Anton, one would ideally put a side table on either side of the sofa and one between two armchairs. “Whether you can accommodate several side tables or just one in your lounge, be sure that they’re roughly the same height as your seating’s arms. In this way people can easily access the side tables without having to get up or strain,” notes Anton.
- **Coffee table:** “If you don’t have space for side tables, then a coffee table is your best bet,” nods Anton. Typically placed in the center, in between all the chairs and the sofa, coffee tables should ideally be positioned roughly 45cm away from seating to allow for ample legroom, whilst letting people easily lean over and put down their drinks or the remote. “Make sure your coffee table is not more than 10cm taller or shorter than the bottom cushions of your seating. And whilst coffee table sizes vary, it definitely shouldn’t be longer than your sofa,” notes Anton, who suggest using a bench, an ottoman with a tray on top of it, or a nest of smaller tables for a more modern approach to the traditional coffee table.

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