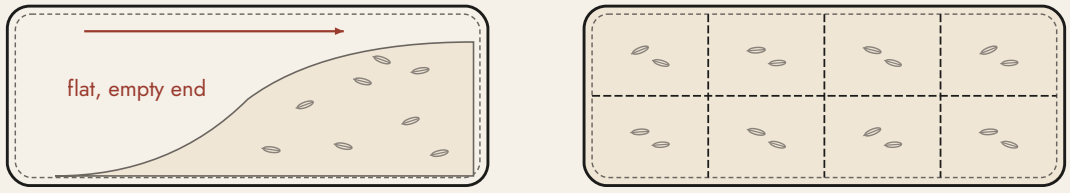
Feather and down in *upholstery*: ratios, labels and ticking

What feather and down ratios mean, how to decode a label against EN 12934:2025 as far as we could read it, down-proof ticking and chambers, plumping and sourcing marks.

AT A GLANCE

Composition (by weight)	Feel	Support and shape	Watch-points
100 % down	Softest and lightest; sinks deep	Least support; needs dressing every day	Needs the tightest ticking. Usually the dearest fill.
90 % down, 10 % feather	Very soft, with a little body	Low	As above. Ask the supplier to declare it in words.
50 % down, 50 % feather	Soft, with body	Moderate	A common middle blend.
40 % down, 60 % feather	A softer blend that our fills guide offers for a more enveloping seat	Moderate to good	Plump a little more often.
20 % down, 80 % feather	Soft top with structure: the blend our fills guide gives as its usual upholstery specification	Better; holds its shape between dressings	Quills are more likely to work through, so the ticking matters.
100 % feather	Firmer and heavier	The most supportive of these fills	Most likely to show quills; check the weave.

Trade convention, to be confirmed by the partner upholsterer; no standard grades feel. Composition is written in words because a ratio such as 80/20 is written both ways round. The 40 % and 20 % down blends follow our upholstery fills guide.



Fill slumps to one end and the top flattens.

Stitched baffles keep the fill in each compartment.
Dashed lines: baffle stitching

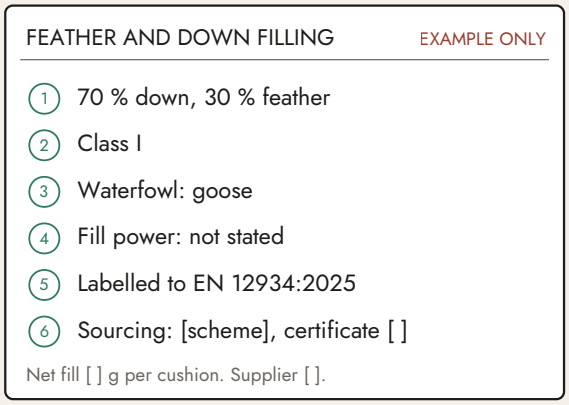
An open and a chambered inner case in section, schematic and not to scale. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

LABEL DECODER

On the label	What it tells you	What to ask
1 Composition	Share of down and feather by weight.	Which number is down: "80/20" is written both ways round. State both in words.
2 Class I to III	How much of the fill is other elements (summary: under 12.5 % Class I; 20 % or more Class III).	Separate from the ratio. The 1999 edition had seven classes.
3 Species	Optional: goose, duck or a blend.	A claim that needs a test.
4 Fill power	How far the fill lifts; new clause in 2025, optional.	Ask which method.
5 Standard and edition	EN 12934:2025 supersedes the 1999 edition.	Which edition is labelled to.
6 Sourcing mark	Welfare and chain of custody scheme, not part of the standard.	The certificate, scope and date.

Class limits and minimum-down figures are from a laboratory summary of the 2025 tables and are not checked against the standard text.

AN EXAMPLE LABEL, DECODED



1. **Composition by weight** — Which number is down?
2. **Class** — How much of the fill is other elements
3. **Species** — Optional claim: needs a test
4. **Fill power** — Optional; ask which method
5. **Standard and edition** — The 1999 edition is superseded
6. **Sourcing mark** — Ask for the certificate

An invented example label with its six lines numbered to match the decoder. Not a real label. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

FILL COMPOSITION

Fill: [goose / duck] feather and down, [ ] % down and [ ] % feather by weight (both stated in words), class [ ], declared by the fill supplier to [EN 12934:2025], new fill [yes / no]. Supply the declaration and a laboratory test report dated within [12] months with the shop drawings. Net fill [ ] g per cushion.

TICKING AND CHAMBERS

Inner case: down-proof ticking [ ], tested to [EN 12132-1 or equivalent: supplier to state the method, edition and result], double-stitched seams, [ ] chambers per cushion so that fill cannot migrate. Ticking, interliner and cover to be named on the build-up drawing and to be inside the tested composite.

SOURCING AND CARE

Down and feather certified to [RDS / Global TDS] with chain of custody: certificate [ref], scope [ ], valid to [date], to be supplied with the shop drawings. Plumping and turning instructions [frequency], and who carries them out, to be supplied in the operation and maintenance manual.

TERMS USED

Feather-to-down ratio
The proportion of feather to down in a fill. More down gives a softer, lighter, more expensive cushion and less risk of quills; more feather gives firmer, heavier, cheaper filling.

Down-proof ticking
A tightly woven inner case that stops feathers or down quills poking through the cover or leaking out. It sits between the filling and the outer cover.

Other elements
In feather and down labelling, the parts of the fill that are neither down nor feather, such as broken feathers, fibres and residue. The class on a label depends on how much of the fill they make up.

Fill power
How far a given weight of down or feather lifts when allowed to expand. It is mainly a bedding measure. EN 12934:2025 has a clause on labelling it.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- BS EN 12934:2025, Feather and down: Composition labelling of processed feathers and down for use as sole filling material: CEN, approved 6 January 2025, supersedes EN 12934:1999. Free preview read (cover, contents, foreword, introduction); scope and clauses not read: confirm against the current edition.
- EN 12132-1:1998, Feather and down: Methods of testing the down proof properties of fabrics, Part 1: Rubbing test: catalogue records only; Part 2 is an impact test.
- International Down and Feather Laboratory: European labelling standards (summary): a laboratory's summary of the 2025 tables, read 5 November 2026; not checked against the standard.
- Textile Exchange: Responsible Down Standard: page read 5 November 2026.
- FIRA and the British Furniture Confederation, Fire safety of furniture and furnishings in the contract and non-domestic sectors (2010, updated 2011): the filling and composite statements on the sister sheet.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/feather-and-down-in-upholstery. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.