

Please note, any items purchased specifically for use at home in the UK need to comply with domestic fire regulations, such as the use of CMHR foam.



THE OFFICE CHAIR – A BUYER’S GUIDE

What features should a good office chair include? This buyers guide will help you to invest in your and your employee’s musculoskeletal health, well-being, and productivity, whether WFH or the office.

BASIC ADJUSTMENTS AND FEATURES

For an office chair to be DSE compliant, it must have these features and adjustments available:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ SEAT HEIGHT
An office chair should be adjustable in height to ensure you can position it suitably for the working surface height. | ☐ TILT
The back rest should adjust in angle, to help support variable working postures. Even better if it can lock into the various positions, particularly if you do not like the chair to move. |
| ☐ STABLE, WITH FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT
A 5-star base can help to enhance stability. Chairs on castors can help to enhance the user’s freedom of movement. | ☐ BACK REST/LUMBAR HEIGHT
The back rest or lumbar support should be height adjustable to help align the curves of the chair to the curves of your spine. |

FUNCTIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

To help ensure an office chair can be adjusted to fit everyone, a chair benefits from these features and adjustments:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ SEAT DEPTH
We should ideally have full thigh support when sitting, with a small gap at the back of the knees. If the physical length of the seat is too short, a depth adjustable seat can help to bridge the gap. Equally, check that the seat depth is not too long for your thigh length. | ☐ INDEPENDENT BACK REST
Ideally, a back rest should move independently to the seat when adjusting its angle. This is so that both the seat pan and back rest are set comfortably and supportively, without compromising one or the other. |
| ☐ SEAT TILT
When sitting, our hips should be higher than our knees to help keep the pelvis in its most neutral position. Getting a chair with a seat tilt adjustment can help the user to gain control over the most comfortable seat angle. | ☐ LUMBAR SUPPORT
The amount of lumbar support required can be quite subjective, depending on the user’s build, discomfort levels and perhaps medical condition. Therefore, having a chair with adjustable lumbar support (in both depth and height) is helpful. |
| ☐ ARM REST HEIGHT
If a chair features arm rests, they should be adjustable in height to ensure they do not elevate the users’ shoulders or impede access to the desk. | ☐ ARM REST DEPTH
To further help reduce the risk of arm rests impeding desk access, it is often beneficial to ensure that arm rests are depth adjustable, so that you can bring the chair in close to the desk with your arms supported by your side. |

☐ **ARM REST WIDTH**

To help increase comfort and support, it is often beneficial to ensure that arm rests are width adjustable, to help position them directly beneath the shoulders and elbows.

EXTRA ADJUSTMENTS

Those with certain musculoskeletal aches or pains may benefit from extra adjustability:

☐ **NECK REST HEIGHT**

If a chair features a neck rest, it should be height adjustable to ensure correct alignment.

☐ **NECK REST DEPTH/ANGLE**

To help increase comfort and support, a neck rest should be depth adjustable to suit the user's spinal curvature.

☐ **MOVEMENT MECHANISM**

We are not designed to sit still for too long, chairs with movement mechanisms can help to encourage active sitting to stimulate circulation and reduce the risk of muscle fatigue and joint stiffness.

SUPPLIER/PRODUCT BENEFITS

These options can be incredibly worthwhile, and may help you to decide between two close options:

☐ **WARRANTY/REPAIR**

Some chair manufacturers offer separate warranty on moving parts to structural parts. Some warranties are also not valid if the chair is used for more than a certain number of hours a day. The bigger and better the warranty, the better your investment (and peace of mind).

☐ **TRIAL PERIOD**

Some chairs may look great online and may appear to be suitable, but after a few days of sitting in them you notice something that isn't quite right. We would always recommend obtaining a chair that you can easily return if needs be.

☐ **DELIVERY/SET-UP SERVICE**

There are some suppliers that are able to offer a delivery and set up service with trained professionals, who will talk you through the features of your chair to make sure you get the most out of it. This can be invaluable.

☐ **REPLACEMENT PARTS**

There are a few chair models that have been designed in such a way that their component parts can easily be swapped or replaced, should they need to. This could save you from having to purchase a whole new chair!

☐ **ENVIRONMENTAL CREDENTIALS**

A lot of manufacturers list their environmental credentials now, which is great to help consumers do their bit. A number of chairs are now made from recycled parts.

ERGONOMIST APPROVED

If in doubt, ask!

☐ **DO YOU HAVE AN IN-HOUSE ERGONOMIST OR AN ERGONOMIC PARTNER?**

We understand that there is a whole host of information available online regarding chairs, and that not all of it is helpful (some perhaps even more confusing). The definition of an ergonomic chair is one that *suits the user, their tasks and their environment*. Therefore, outside help may be needed.

Please contact info@inspiredergonomics.com for further assistance