

Chair

Before you buy, consider the points below

Buying a comfortable chair is not as easy as it sounds. When sitting centrally in a chair that is the right size for you, your weight should be evenly distributed through your feet, thighs, bottom, back and forearms.

To find the right size chair for you:

- Feet should be flat on the floor
- Your bottom should reach back of seat with spine in its natural line.
- Ankles, hips and knees should be at 90°
- Buttocks and thighs should be supported by the length of the seat, with a space behind knees of just 2cm – 2.5cm
- Top of thighs should be parallel to the floor
- Your bottom and thighs should fit the width of the chair with approximately 2.5cm each side for comfort
- Forearms should rest on both the armrests without hunching or dropping your shoulder

If a seat is too high: You will tend to slide your bottom forward to get your feet on the floor. This slide puts your spine into a 'C' shape with weight taken through the base of the spine

If the seat is too low: When seated in a low chair your knees will be higher than your pelvis, your pelvis will tilt backwards and spine will again take on a 'C' shape

If the seat is too deep: You tend to slide forward to get your feet on the floor. This slide tilts your pelvis backwards, your spine forms a 'C' shape and weight is taken through the base of the spine

If the seat is too wide: You will tend to slump to one side or the other when seated to reach the armrests leading to uneven pressure on your buttocks

If the armrests are too low: You lose your forearm support when seated, and get less support when standing up.

To make it easier to stand from a chair armrests should extend to the front edge of the seat cushion, and wooden ends are easier to grip

Other features to consider:

Cover: do you need wipe clean for convenience? Stretch cover for comfort or textured cover for grip?

Backrest style: button back for firmer support, waterfall cushion for a softer feel lumbar support curve or flat back rest, upright back or raked back?

Extra support: Head or neck support cushion, lumbar support for comfort, lateral inserts for postural support, footstool for leg support.

Guide price: £300

For impartial advice from an Occupational Therapist & information about equipment for independence, suppliers, prices and to try equipment at our demonstration centre contact:
The Independent Living Centre 01392 380181 Devon.cc/ilc