

OFFICE CHAIRS: 10 Tips For Picking The Best Office Chair



The angles of your hips, knees and ankles must be comfortable at 90 degrees. If your hips are not at 90 degrees, the chair is either too short or too tall for you.

Good Office Chairs Have a Full Back

“Office chairs are essential for productivity and reduction of lost hours due to injury,” said Dr. Scott Schreiber, “Office chairs should be comfortable and have a full back. They should provide a multitude of adjustable positions, including lumbar support, height, and recline settings.”

The Best Office Chairs Have Waterfall Seats

The New Jersey Department of Labor says the best office chairs will have “chair seat edges that are rounded (sometimes referred to as waterfall).”

Your Joints Should be Comfortable at 90 Degree Angles

According to Dr. Matt Tanneberg, “Common signs that an office chair isn’t the right fit for you is if the angles of your hips, knees and ankles aren’t comfortably at 90 degrees. If your hips are not at a 90 degree angle then the chair is either too tall or too short for you. Same goes for your knees and your ankles. All of your joints should ideally stay at 90 degrees.”

Don’t Ignore the Upholstery – Breathable is Better

An office chair’s upholstery must be comfortable to the touch if you’re going to sit on it all day. You don’t want it scratchy, pokey, or something that will cause your to overheat. Even the

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A good office chair must be adjustable in all directions. The seat must adjust up and down as well as tilt side to side.

Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP), which advises the Department of Defence and Federal Government, recommends a “breathable, medium texture upholstery.”

Your Office Chair Should be Adjustable

“The key to a good office chair is that it must be adjustable in all directions,” says Dr. Matt Tanneberg “The seat must adjust up and down, as well as tilt side to side. This is necessary to achieve proper posture when you’re sitting all day.”



Adjusting Your Office Chair Should Not Require Tools

Recognizing the importance of adjustable office chairs for worker health, New Jersey Department of Labor further recommend that “chairs should be easily adjustable without a tool.” Don’t be afraid to ask for a demonstration or try adjusting a chair for yourself before purchasing.

A Good Office Chair Supports You, Even When You’re Being Bad

“Your chair should support your back as you sit,” according to the University of New Hampshire. “It’s okay to recline the chair back slightly, but too much can strain the neck as you try to right your head to view the monitor if you are using a computer.”

The Seat Must Fit You For the Backrest to Work

“If the seat pan is too big or the seat is too high,” says Iowa State University, “Even where the chair has a backrest with lumbar support workers may continue to be exposed to static loading be-

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cause they cannot take advantage of the backrest. Many employees respond by sitting forward, instead of against the backrest, so that their feet can be on the ground, thus pressing the spine out of the natural curve and placing pressure on the discs.”

Top Office Chairs Should Encourage You to Move

The pioneers in ergonomic office furniture at HermanMiller say “Moving, and an ergonomic office chair that encourages it, helps keep blood and oxygen flowing.” The best office chairs not only let you move but “let you move while giving you the support your body needs.” So when you try out a chair, really give it a test drive.



Don't Forget About Your Arms and Shoulders

Both of the chiropractors that we interviewed said it is easy to overlook how a chair feels to your arms and shoulder. Dr. Tanneberg said “Another common sign a chair isn't right is if you have to shrug your shoulders to get your elbows on the armrests.” Similarly, Dr. Schreiber said that a chair's “arm and hand positions” should offer the same flexibility to avoid “developing pain in the shoulder, elbow, and wrist.”

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