

The background of the top half of the page is a solid blue color with a repeating pattern of light blue office chairs. The chairs are arranged in a grid, with some slightly offset to create a sense of depth. A diagonal line of a lighter blue shade runs from the top left towards the center.

CMF Business Supplies

A Guide to Choosing the Right Office Chair

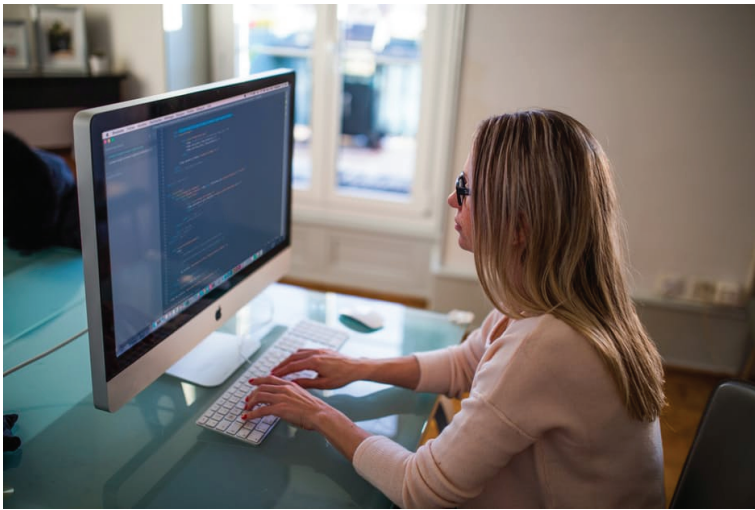


Introduction

Did you know that the average office worker will sit in their office chair for an average of 85,500 hours throughout their career¹? That amounts to more than nine years spent sitting in an office chair! That's why the right office chair is crucial to your work success and comfort. Having the most expensive and most attractive chair doesn't necessarily mean that it's the best chair for you. By knowing your wants, needs and what to look for, you can choose the best chair to invest in. In this guide we have outlined questions you should ask, features to look for, different types of chairs and how to test them out. Following this guide can assure you that the office chair you choose will be the right one for you.

¹<https://www.gentlemansgazette.com/desk-chair-office-guide/>

Why Having the Right Office Chair is Important



While working and sitting at an office desk all day it is important to be comfortable. If you ever feel uncomfortable at work, the pain and discomfort could be coming from your office furniture. Having the wrong office chair can have undesirable physical effects on your body. Due to this fact, studies have been performed that show prolonged sitting has been associated with musculoskeletal dysfunction². One of the solutions for this problem is having an office chair that can prevent abnormal strain on your body and aid in preventing future pain and discomfort.³

Aside from reducing skeletal pain, providing your office with the right office chairs can improve your employees' performance. Having the right office chair could lead to a higher rate of productivity and an all-around happier, healthier office⁴.

^{2,3,4} <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3552974/>

Questions to Ask Before you Shop

Before shopping for an office chair that is suitable for you and your office needs, it's important to ask yourself these vital questions.⁵

1. How much space do I have? Space is important when buying just about any office furniture so the needs are no different for office chairs. Knowing how much room you have available for a chair can avoid getting one that is too small or too big for your office space.

2. Who will be using the chair? If purchasing for many employees or just yourself it's essential to have the answer. This could determine differentiating between personal needs and a chair that is versatile for everyone at the office.

3. What is my budget? Knowing how much you are looking to spend will keep you in check when it comes to price point.

4. How long do I plan to use it? How long you're expecting to have an office chair can help determine how much you want to spend on it. If you're looking for a long lasting chair it may be worth it to pay for quality.

5. What style am I looking for? Take a look around your office. Figure out which styles and colors would flow with the theme of your room. This will ensure your office chair is both comfortable and aesthetically pleasing.



⁵ <http://furniture.about.com/od/buyingfurniture/a/beforebuying.htm>

Features



Once you have asked yourself those important questions, it's then time to focus on important and specific features you want your chair to have. Below is a list of important things to look for when picking the perfect office chair.⁶



Adjustable Seat Height: The ideal sitting position is to have your feet flat on the floor with your thighs and arms horizontal and even with the height of the desk. Because many office desks are different heights, it is a good idea to look for a chair that lets you adjust the height from 16 to 21 inches⁷.



Adjustable Seat Depth and Width: People come in many different shapes and sizes. This is why having an adjustable seat depth and width is also important. The average width size should be between 17 to 20 inches. The depth should be enough to allow you to sit with your back up against the chair's backrest with your knees 2 to 4 inches from the seat⁸.



Good Lumbar Support: When you are sitting in a chair your spine naturally curves in. If your spine isn't supported while doing so, you will slouch and your spine will be strained⁹. A really good office chair will have adjustable support to fit the exact inward curve of your back.



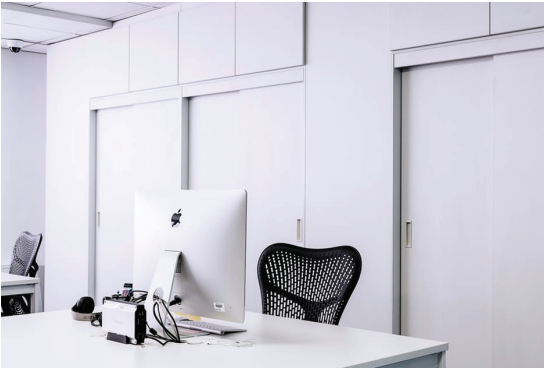
Seat Material: The kind of material your chair has is important when picking the best option for you. If possible you should choose a chair with a cloth fabric that allows it to breathe. It is also important to pick a chair with enough padding to make sure it is comfortable for long periods of sitting.



Armrests: If your neck is ever tight while sitting in your office chair it could be because of your armrests. Having adjustable armrests make sure that your arms are comfortable which then relaxes your shoulders.

^{6, 7, 8, 9} <http://www.prodigyfurniture.com.au/resources/the-importance-of-having-the-right-office-chair-in-melbourne/>

Different Types of Office Chairs



Office chairs are classified on the basis of height and backrest, the presence of adjustable features and the presence or absence of wheels¹⁰. Once you start looking for office chairs you might be surprised at the wide range and features available. To give you a better idea of what you're looking for, we have broken down four specific types of chairs: task, executive, ergonomic and guest.

Task chairs are usually the most common chairs in the office.¹¹ If you're looking for a chair that can be utilized by many different people, task chairs are a good option for you. The design is basic which usually includes wheels or castors at the bottom. This gives you the opportunity to swivel and rotate in every direction. The height is easily adjustable which ensures every user can reach their optimal comfort level. Task chairs are reasonably cheaper than most other office chair and this fact also adds to their popular appeal.¹²

Executive chairs are similar to task chairs due to the wheels and casters both being attached to the base. This bottom feature, much like the task chair, also allows for executive chairs to rotate and swivel. However, this design differs by having a higher backrest and more padding on the seat and armrests. The chair has an adjustable backrest which can ultimately make the chair much more comfortable to sit on. They are usually upholstered with leather and because of this can be higher in price range. The chair is referred to as an executive chair because it was made for just that, an executive to sit on.

Ergonomic chairs have been gaining popularity due to the growing market of people who experience back pain while sitting in a chair at work. Ergonomic chairs were designed to help prevent this problem and provide maximum support to the back. If you're someone suffering from spine or back problems, this chair could ease your pain at work. Even if you don't suffer from these problems, if you are sitting for a long period of time, an ergonomic chair can help you feel more comfortable. What sets these chairs apart is their ability to adjust the height of the armrest, backrest and headrest along with many other features. Ergonomic chairs offer support to your lower back which can help you maintain the right posture while seated.¹³ Due to the level of adjustments and support you can receive from this chair, the comfort can hardly be matched.

Guest chairs are made for guests or visitors who are visiting your office for a brief period of time. You can usually find these types of chairs located in a waiting room or outside of an office space. These chairs are non-mobile, non-adjustable and not intended to be used for a long period of time. These chairs can be made of wood, plastic, or an assortment of materials. The good thing about guest chairs is that they can come in a wide array of styles, colors and designs. This means you can dress up your waiting area for a relatively cheaper price.

^{10, 11, 12, 13} <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/types-of-office-chairs.html>

Testing the Chair Before you Buy

Would you ever buy a car without testing it out first? The same rule should apply when it comes to your office chair. Before buying any chair you should make sure the store you are getting it from gives you the option to test it out. Due to the flooring and environment in your office space, the chair could perform much differently in your office than in the store. In those first few days you will discover if it's suitable or missing crucial things. Here are a couple key things to look for:



- An office chair should be able to glide easily around any office space.
- The armrests should not prevent you from getting close enough to your desk.
- There should be no discomfort, no gaps and no feeling of wanting to get back up anytime soon.¹⁴
- The seat should be measured by fitting two or three finger lengths between it and the back of your knee.
- Armrests should gently cradle the body allowing your shoulders to relax, reducing any strain.

Finding a chair that completes this check list could ultimately mean your office chair is suitable for you and your specific work environment.

¹⁴ <https://www.gentlemansgazette.com/desk-chair-office-guide/>

Conclusion

There are multiple factors to choosing the right office chair. Having the right office chair can reduce physical strain and increase employee productivity. Before you buy any chair you should ask yourself to answer the list of questions above. Since there are so many types of chairs it is important to know the differences between them and what features to look for. Once you have decided on a chair remember to always test it out to ensure comfort will be provided in your office environment. Once you have purchased the right chair, sit back, relax, and enjoy the new found comfort at your office!

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