

Workplace Seating

In the workplace appropriate seating is essential, particularly for workers who are seated for a large proportion of the day.

When selecting an office chair, the following key features should be considered to ensure that the chair meets the individual needs:

Base

- A five point star base is recommended for stability

Seat Pan

- Seat width – should be wide enough to support the hip width also allowing some movement.
- Seat depth – should support the length of the thigh without contacting the back of the knee.
- The front edge of seat pan should curve down towards the front in a “waterfall” edge.

Seat Height

- Seat height – should adjust sufficiently to enable the user to be positioned at a desk with hands, wrists, and forearms roughly parallel to the desk.
- Some customised office seating can customise heights for particularly tall or short users.

Backrest Height

- The level of back support required will depend on the individual needs of the user.
- When completing computer-based work, it is important that the backrest does not limit the movement of the arms and shoulder blades.
- The backrest should be height adjustable to enable the lumbar support to be positioned correctly in the hollow of the lower back.
- If the chair does not have sufficient lumbar support a rolled up towel or a removable back support cushion can temporarily provide support to maintain the natural curves of the spine.

Backrest Angle

- Adjusting the backrest angle enables some variation in sitting posture throughout the day.
- Backrest angle between 90 degrees and 110 degrees is recommended to reduce strain on the lower back.

Armrests

- Adjustable armrests can be positioned at a suitable height for the user.
- The armrest should be an appropriate height so that elbows are bent to around 90 degrees and shoulders are relaxed.
- Desk length armrests can prevent contact with the desk.

LifeTec Queensland

BRISBANE
Level One, Reading Newmarket
Cnr Newmarket & Enoggera Roads
(PO Box 3241), Newmarket Qld 4051
Phone: 07 3552 9000 or 1300 885 886
Facsimile: 07 3552 9088

Email: mail@lifetec.org.au
www.lifetec.org.au
Independent Living Centre
Association of Queensland
Incorporated trading as LifeTec
Queensland ABN 25 773 960 273

TOWNSVILLE
Shop G-3A, Domain Central
103 Duckworth Street
(PO Box 8280), Garbutt, Townsville Qld 4814
Phone: 07 4759 5600
Facsimile: 07 4759 5688





Alternative Seating

Saddle Seats

These chairs are designed to separate the legs and maintain the natural curvatures of the spine. The seat securely holds the pelvis in position, allowing the body to bend and move from the hips rather than the waist.

Saddle seats are often used in work environments where free movement of the upper body is important. For example, hairdressers, dentists and factory workers may use a saddle seat as it allows them to be seated while still allowing free movement.



Kneel-Sit Chairs

These chairs are designed to minimise strain on back, neck and shoulder muscles by distributing body weight between the seat and knee supports.

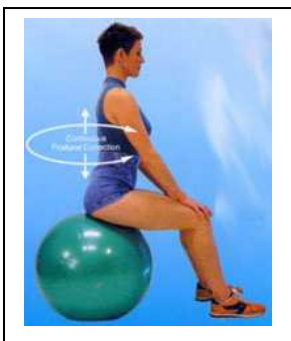
Kneel sit chairs have a variety of adjustments including seat height and angle, and knee rest height and angle. Some models may have a backrest and some have castors for mobility.



Sit-Stand Stools

These chairs are designed to allow the user to perch on the chair, with the majority of weight distributed through the feet and a smaller proportion through the buttocks.

These are commonly used for people completing high bench work and production line work. They may also be used by hairdressers, bank tellers and kitchen staff.



Fitness Therapy Balls

Fitness balls can encourage and upright posture and help to strengthen muscles. When using a fitness ball for sitting, the body uses muscles in the thighs, buttocks, back and abdominal region to stabilise and maintain balance.

Fitness balls are generally not recommended for use over extended periods, but can be used for shorter periods to help to strengthen postural muscles.

NEED TO KNOW MORE?

Telephone, fax or e-mail your enquiry to obtain further information from one of the therapists about products. Alternatively, you can make an appointment to trial the equipment at our display centres or through our outreach service. Please phone LifeTec Queensland for further details.

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