

Chair Set-up

Some basic guidelines to look for:

- Back/lumbar support (see note)
- Adjustable height and backrest
- Fitted to body size
- Removable/adjustable armrests

Basic Chair Set-up

Height

While standing, adjust the height of the chair so the highest point of the seat is just below your kneecap. This should allow your feet to rest firmly on the floor when seated. If you feel pressure near the back of the seat, raise your chair. If you feel pressure near the front of the seat, lower your chair. The goal is to evenly distribute your weight. In some cases a footrest may be needed to further enhance positioning.

Back Support

When sitting, adjust the height of the backrest so the lumbar pad supports the natural curve of your lower back (lumbar curve). The tilt of the back support should allow you to sit with your upper body slightly reclined (110 degrees is usually recommended).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some people are comfortable sitting forward and not using the chair back for support. If posture and comfort are good, this is fine. In fact, alternating positions (using the lumbar support / not using the lumbar support) is preferred by many individuals.

Seat tilt

Seat tilt can be adjusted to improve your comfort. This will also affect your weight distribution. A tilt of five degrees is usually recommended; however, some people are comfortable with zero degree of tilt.

Depth

When sitting, the seat pan (part of the chair you sit on) should allow you to use the back support without the front of the seat pressing against the back of your knees. If the seat is too deep, try a back support such as a lumbar roll, rolled towel, or other item to reduce the size of the seat pan. If a chair has an adjustable seat pan, the adjustment lever is usually located under the front of the chair (much like the lever that moves the seat forward and backward in a car).

Width

The seat pan should be wide enough so it does not apply pressure to your thighs. Conversely, the seat should be narrow enough to be able to reach armrests (in those cases where armrests are recommended).

Armrests

When possible, use a chair without armrests so that you will have room to move your arms freely. However, if armrests are desired they should be adjustable and not prevent the chair from being drawn close to the desk, nor restrict natural movements. If armrests cannot be adjusted properly, then consider removing them.

