

# Working in a Sitting Position – Work Chairs Fact Sheet



## WHAT IS THE BASIC REQUIREMENT OF A WORK CHAIR?

A good work chair can support the body in a dynamic posture, while also being appropriate to the task or activity performed. This means it is easily adjustable into positions that support the spine and keep the body in a neutral position.

### What should I consider when selecting an office chair?

- Check that the adjustability range can accommodate the workers' body sizes.
- Select a chair that allows the worker to adjust the height and depth of the seat as well as the height and tilt of the backrest. An adjustable seat tilt is also desirable.
- Select a chair with:
  - a backrest that is shaped to support the lower back and does not give way;
  - a seat height that does not compress the underside of the thighs;
  - a front edge curved downwards;
  - non-slip, breathable fabric on the seat;
  - stable base (5 legs);
  - with arm rests (where practical)
- Use a footrest when feet cannot rest on the floor.



### What else should I consider when choosing a chair if my work involves both sitting and standing?

- Make sure the wheels (casters) are made of the right material for the floor where the chair will be used. For example plastic casters are best on carpets, while rubber casters are for hard surfaces (concrete, laminate, wood, etc.)
- If using a mat under a chair, be sure the mat is large enough to keep all 5 wheels on the surface (if a wheel sits off the mat, the weight in the chair will not be evenly distributed). Make sure the caster type matches the mat surface.
- Ensure that the chair has a wheel locking mechanism, when appropriate.
- Use a swivel chair with an adjustable seat height.
- Adjust workstation to the proper height.
- Adjust the chair seat height between 25 to 35 cm (about 10 to 14 in.) below the work surface.
- Use a footrest with a height of 40 to 50 cm (about 16 to 20 in.)



Example of a chair for sitting and standing



Example of a sitting and standing workstation

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