



Independent Living Centre
Moray Resource Centre
Maisondieu Road
ELGIN IV30 1RX

Tel: 01343 559461

CHOOSING AN ARMCHAIR

Before you buy a new chair, have you considered options for adapting your existing one? Adding cushions to a chair can make it more difficult to get up from, but raising it from beneath with chair raisers can make it easier for you to get in and out and will be far less expensive than replacing your chair.

If you still wish to purchase a new chair, these are some points to consider before you buy;

- With your back supported does the seat fit the length of your thigh leaving a small gap (about 2 fingers) behind the knees? Cushions added later will alter everything. This will help to maintain good posture and back support.
- With your back supported and wearing indoor footwear, do your feet rest comfortably on the floor, without pushing your knees up? When you are seated, are your hips and knees in line? If your knees are higher than your hips, the chair is too low, and will be more difficult to get out of. Cushions added later will alter everything.
- Is the back rest wide enough for your shoulders and high enough to support your head if you want a sleep?
- Is your spine fully supported along its' curves, particularly at your lower back?
- Is the seat wide enough? You need room for winter clothing, pockets and a bit more, but not too wide that it does not provide support.
- Do your arms rest comfortably on the armrests, allowing your shoulders to rest in a neutral position?
- Can you stand up easily from the chair? Is it steady when you get in and out?

- Is there space beneath the seat to allow you to push your feet backwards? You may stand up easier if you can get one foot slightly behind the other.
- Wooden ends on the armrests can help you to get a good grip while you sit and stand, rather than soft wide arms.
- Can you imagine yourself reading, watching TV and having a snack in your 'new chair'?
- What is the maximum weight limit of the chair? Is it best to buy a chair that will allow for some increase in weight?
- You may become a little stiffer or weaker as you get older. If so, have you thought about buying a riser/recliner chair?
- Have you sat on the chair for about 30 minutes before deciding? Five minutes may be very comfortable but 30 minutes will give you a true picture. If comfort is a real problem, chairs with a pressure-relieving seat are available.
- Would a neck/head cushion be a useful addition? Can the company provide one?
- How much will it cost and when will it be delivered and would you prefer a good second hand chair?
- Consider the chair covering. Will leather cause you to slide if you struggle to maintain your sitting position? Do you need to have a waterproof covering on your chair if it may be exposed to spills or continence issues.
- Can the company do any alterations to the chair to make it fit you any better?
- Many sofa and armchairs are the wrong shape for a good sitting position. Are you keeping your spine in a good natural S shape (not a C shape). You should be sitting on the bones of your buttocks and not on the bottom of your spine, in a slouched position.

For further information please contact us on **01343 559461**

email: info.ilc@moray.gov.uk .

OR look on www.moray.gov.uk and search for Independent Living Centre