

Office/task chairs need to fit a wide range of employee sizes and shapes. Employees' heights can vary significantly. In addition to height, differences in torso and leg lengths are part of what makes each employee unique. Because of these differences, one size or type of chair doesn't fit all employees. It's necessary to understand the differences in your employee population before purchasing new chairs. Most times, new chairs must fit into preexisting desks or workstations. This presents additional challenges. For example, it's common to find chair armrests prevent employees from getting close to the desk, forcing employees to sit with their low backs unsupported which leads to fatigue, discomfort, and pain.

Good quality chairs are adjustable to accommodate most employees, but it's difficult to know what the right amount of "adjustable" is. A brick-and-mortar furniture vendor can help you sort through the options and can assist you with navigating through adjustability features, different work tasks, and office environment. The personal attention and service they provide make a significant difference for employees and ensure the best fit and use of the chairs.

**Benefits** of working with vendors include:

- Ability to trial different chairs before purchase.
- Provision of service and warranty expertise.
- Employee education and training on chair setup and adjustments ensure awareness of how to adjust chairs for the best fit.
- Expertise on considerations such as bariatric chairs or chairs for those with special medical conditions.

**Must haves** for an effective and durable task chair:

- A five or six caster base.
- Flooring specific casters (e.g., hard floor casters, carpet casters, etc.).
- Height adjustability for approximately 15-21 inches from the ground to accommodate most workers. Look for chairs that allow a relatively inexpensive change-out of shorter and taller cylinders to fit all workers comfortably.
- Depth adjustment of the seat pan. This is one of the most overlooked chair features and it causes multiple issues with fit and comfort when the chair lacks this adjustability.
- Backrest depth and height adjustment.
- Back tilt and tilt lockout to allow posture variation.

**Additional features** to consider for optimal comfort:

- Tilting seat pan to promote lumbar support.
- Synchro tilt, which allows the backrest to recline with the seat pan, at an increased rate.
- Height and width adjustable armrests to support the upper extremities.