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Recliner Size & Suitability Guide

Finding the right fit

Choosing the right recliner is about more than overall size. A well-fitted chair should feel comfortable, support the body properly, and suit how the chair will be used day to day.

This guide helps OTs, clients and families understand what a good recliner fit looks like, and which options may be worth considering.



Functional goals

What does the user need the chair to support each day?

This might include comfort, positioning, leg elevation, easier transfers, or simply being able to sit for longer periods throughout the day.



Body size and safe working load

The user's height, weight and body proportions will all influence how the chair feels and performs. The chair must also remain within its safe working load.



Motor configuration

Consider whether a Single, Dual, Triple, Quad or Five Motor Chair may suit the user's needs and how much adjustment they are likely to use.



Home environment

Consider the space around the chair, including wall clearance, walking areas, and how the chair fits into the room.



Transfers and independence

Think about how the user gets in and out of the chair, whether lift assistance may help, and whether the controls can be used safely and confidently.

A good fit looks like



6 KEY MEASUREMENTS

- 1 Back Height
- 2 Armrest Height
- 3 Heel Placement
- 4 Seat Height
- 5 Seat Depth
- 6 Seat Width

Why fit matters

A recliner that is not quite right can affect comfort, posture, pressure, and how easy it is to sit, reposition, or stand.

This guide supports initial product selection and trial. Clinical assessment and trial remain essential to confirm suitability, particularly where posture, pressure care or transfer needs are present.

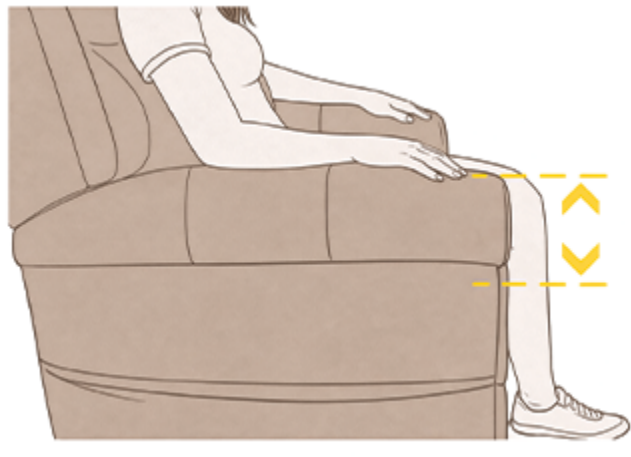
Things to watch for



Backrest height

A good fit looks like: The backrest supports the user's back and provides comfortable head support, including when the chair is reclined.

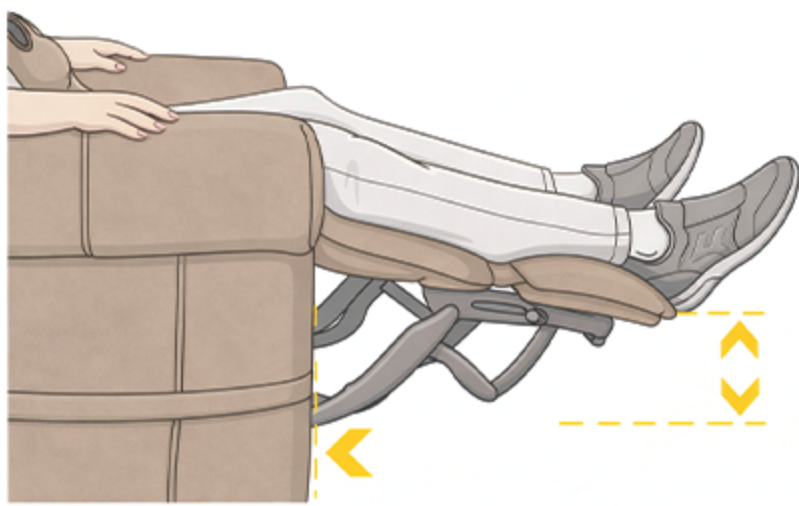
Things to watch for: If the backrest is too low, the user may not feel properly supported through the upper back or head.



Armrest height

A good fit looks like: The shoulders stay relaxed, with the elbows resting comfortably on the armrests.

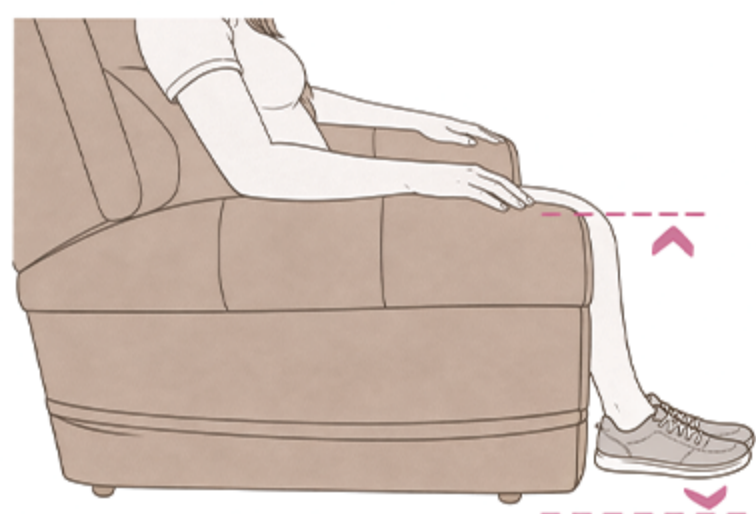
Things to watch for: If the armrests are too high, the shoulders may lift. If they are too low, the user may lean or rely more on one side.



Legrest and heel clearance

A good fit looks like: When the legs are elevated, the legrest supports the lower leg while avoiding pressure through the heels. The legrest should reach the back of the ankle so the heel sits just past the edge rather than resting on the legrest.

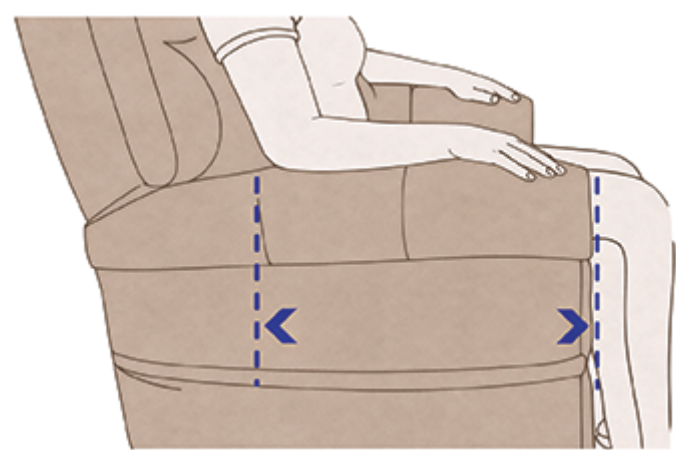
Things to watch for: Heels pressing into the legrest, poor support under the calf, or a legrest length that places pressure directly through the heel.



Seat height

A good fit looks like: With the user sitting fully back, the thighs are supported and the feet rest flat on the floor, helping with stability and easier transfers.

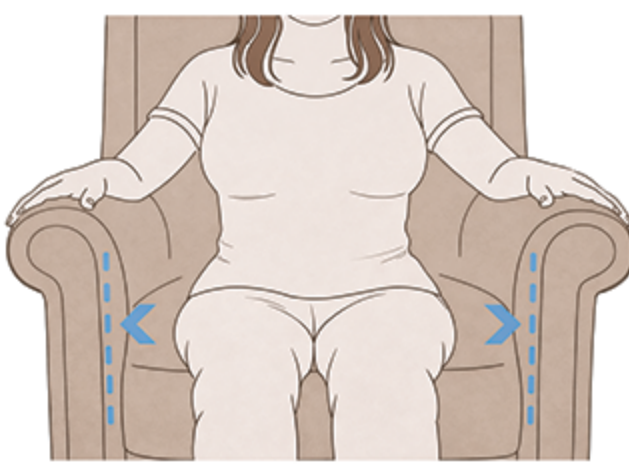
Things to watch for: Feet not reaching the floor, too much bend at the hips or knees, or a seat height that makes standing feel harder.



Seat depth

A good fit looks like: The user can sit with their bottom fully back in the chair while keeping the feet flat on the floor and avoiding pressure behind the knees.

Things to watch for: If the seat is too deep, the user may slide forward, lose positioning, or experience increased pressure.



Seat width

A good fit looks like: The chair provides enough room for comfort, while still allowing the armrests to support the arms naturally.

Things to watch for: If the chair is too narrow, it may feel restrictive. If it is too wide, the user may lean to one side to find support.

Understanding motor options

Motor configuration affects how much the chair can adjust, and how easily the user can change positions throughout the day.



Single Motor Chair :

Backrest and legrest move together allowing for simpler control
Suited for: users with cognitive or usability considerations.



Dual Motor Chair :

Backrest and legrest adjust independently.
Suitable for: users needing flexibility between sitting, leg elevation and reclining.



Triple Motor Chair :

Backrest and legrest plus one additional comfort function.
Suitable for: users needing more tailored positioning or added support.



Quad Motor Chair :

Backrest, legrest, lumbar and head support all adjust independently.
Suitable for: users needing more precise positioning and comfort over longer periods.



Five Motor Chair :

Includes all Quad Motor functions, plus **tilt-in-space**.
Suitable for: users who may benefit from pressure redistribution, improved posture, or managing swelling during longer periods of sitting.

Fit is just one part of the decision

A recliner can be the right size, but still not feel right in everyday use

It is also worth considering:

- ✓ how much adjustment the user actually needs
- ✓ whether simpler or more advanced controls are more suitable
- ✓ whether lift assistance would make transfers easier
- ✓ how long the user spends sitting each day
- ✓ whether leg elevation or tilt-in-space may be helpful

Need help confirming the right fit or trial options?

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