



Choosing a Comfy Armchair

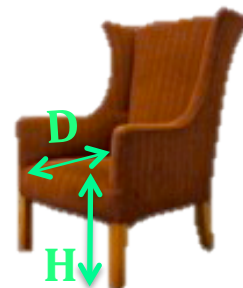
Ageing bodies change shape and our favourite seats may not be suitable anymore. Believe it or not, having the right armchair may make the difference between **staying independent or not!**

If you find it hard to get out of a chair once in it, you're less inclined to get out of it, until you have to. Getting in and out of chairs helps keep our legs strong, assists us to keep our sense of balance and encourages exercise, which is good for most of our bodily functions.

When choosing an armchair consider these things:

a) Height: For comfort and ease of getting out of the chair:

- allow a 90° angle at the hip, between the thigh and body
- feet need to rest comfortably on the floor
- have enough heel space under the chair for standing.



b) Width: There needs to be a space of 2-3 fingers either side of the body to allow wriggle room and to keep the armrests are comfortable.

c) Depth: The depth needs to ensure a good upright posture and for ease of getting out of the:

- user's bottom needs to be at the back of the chair while feet still on the ground
- seat edge needs to slope down slightly
- space between chair and back of the knees needs to be a 2-3 fingers space to avoid pressure behind the legs

d) Back rest: Needs to:

- support the lower spine, neck and head
- be wide enough to support shoulders
- lean back only slightly

e) Arm rests: Need to:

- support the forearms and hands without raising the shoulders
- allow a 90° angle at the elbow, between the forearm and upper arm
- be firm enough to help with standing

f) The chair surface needs to:

- be comfortably firm, for ease of getting out
- easily cleaned
- a fabric that won't cause sweating

It's important to have the main user sit in the chairs for some time and get out of it a number of times before deciding which to purchase.

If you need any advice on purchasing a suitable chair our friendly physios and occupational therapists can help, contact us as follows:

Ph: 03 377 5280

Email: admin@tpl.nz

Website: www.therapyprofessionals.co.nz