

Ergonomic Chair Shopping Tip sheet

What to look for when you shop:

The Store—

- A variety of chairs are available at commercial (or office supply) stores as well as brand name furniture manufacturing stores that specialize in commercial sales. These manufacturing stores include Haworth, Herman Miller and Body Bilt. Nearest available vendors in your area can be found at the following web sites.

www.haworth.com

www.hermanmiller.com

www.bodybilt.com

- When considering a chair, visit both type of vendors and compare price, quality, warranty, adjustability and other chair features. Remember that each of our bodies is unique so we each need a chair that accommodates our own physical attributes. This aspect of chair selection becomes even more important when multiple family members use the same computer station.
- Keep in mind that 15 minutes of sitting in a chair at the store will not give you the sense of whether or not this will be a good working chair.

The Price—

- Average price for a chair in or through a brand name furniture manufacturing store: \$650 and up
- Average price for a commercial (or office supply) store, for a chair with several adjustments: \$300 and up

Chair Features—

- Quality level needed—consider these questions:
 1. Will I spend more than one hour a day in this chair, or will I spend sustained periods of time sitting in it, even on an infrequent basis?
 2. Do I currently have any physical discomfort or problems that need additional support or are easily stressed by prolonged sitting?
 3. Will more than one person use this chair? Are any of these parties rough on furniture? Am I or are any of these people large framed?
- The seat pan should move forward and backward, and the foam of the seat cushion should be high quality (high grade) and dense to support the hips (you should not feel like you are sitting on a hard surface).
- A back that is adjustable up and down. Note that adjustable mechanisms that tighten with a turning knob wear out faster than locking mechanisms that go up and down incrementally. Consider your body weight and overall height, keeping in mind that hydraulic mechanisms of lower priced chairs may tend to wear out faster, especially if multiple people are using the chair.
- Arm rests need to go both up and down and inward/outward to fit and support the elbows in alignment with your desk.

- Will the chair's casters roll over flooring surfaces easily or is a floor mat required?
- Ask about the warranty—length of time of the warranty for parts and materials, and coverage for the mechanical aspects (the up/down features and other adjustment levers).