

ERGONOMIC CHAIR BUYING GUIDE

PURPOSE

This guide identifies key ergonomic chair features, why they matter, and their relative impact on posture and comfort. Not all chairs must include every feature; priority should be given to adjustments that most directly reduce musculoskeletal strain.

HIGHEST IMPACT

Feature	Why It Matters	Recommended	Avoid
Seat Height	Leg posture, circulation	16–21 in (floor to seat)	Fixed; max < 20 in
Seat Depth	Thigh support, knee clearance	15–18 in, 2–3 in knee gap	Fixed depth
Seat Width	Fit and comfort	18–22 in	< 17 in
Lumbar Support	Low-back strain	4–6 in vertical, 1–2 in depth	Fixed pads
Recline	Torso support	90°–110° (to 120°)	Single position

SECOND TIER IMPACT

Feature	Why It Matters	Recommended	Avoid
Armrest Height	Shoulder load	7–11 in above seat	Fixed / too high
Armrest Width	Neutral arm posture	2–4 in per side	Fixed width
Armrest Pivot	Task variation	20°–30°	Non-pivoting
Tilt Tension	Controlled movement	User-adjustable	Single tension
Forward Tilt (opt.)	Task support	3°–5°	Not available

THIRD TEIR IMPACT

Feature	Why It Matters	Recommended	Avoid
Cushioning	Pressure distribution	2–3 in foam / mesh	Overly soft
Materials	Heat control	Breathable fabric / mesh	Vinyl*
Base / Casters	Stability	5-leg base , floor-rated	4-leg base
Weight Capacity	Safety	≥ 250 lb	Unrated
Controls	Adjustability	Labeled, reachable seated	Tool-required

* Vinyl acceptable where cleanability is required (e.g., labs).