

# Office Chairs

- 1 Try to Sit in Any Chair Before Buying If You Can**  
Even the best spec sheet can't tell you how a chair feels for your body proportions. If possible, visit a showroom or test a display model before committing to a chair for full-day use. If buying online, confirm the return policy so you have a practical path to return or exchange if the fit is wrong.
- 2 The Seat Depth Slider Is the Most Overlooked Adjustment**  
Most buyers adjust seat height and armrests but never touch the seat depth slider. If you find yourself either pressing your knees into the seat edge or sliding away from the back, you have a seat depth issue. Use the slider to set 1" to 2" of clearance between the seat edge and the back of your knee — this is the correct fit.
- 3 Lumbar Support Height Must Be Set for Your Body, Not the Default**  
Lumbar support set at the factory default height is correct for approximately the median user — which may not be you. Adjust the lumbar until it contacts the curve of your lower back at L4-L5 (roughly at belt line or slightly above). If it's contacting your mid-back instead of your lower back, it's doing nothing useful.
- 4 A Chair Mat Protects Both the Chair and the Floor**  
Rolling task chairs cause significant wear to carpet fibers over time, and hard floors develop scuffs and scratches from caster movement. A chair mat reduces friction on the casters, extends the life of both the chair and the floor, and makes rolling much smoother. Size the mat to cover your full range of motion, not just the area directly under the chair.
- 5 Big-and-Tall Chairs Aren't Just for Heavy Users**  
Big-and-tall chairs have wider seats and higher weight ratings, but they're also the right choice for tall, lean users who need a higher seat height or deeper seat than standard chairs provide. If you're over 6'2" and standard chairs feel cramped or have insufficient height range, a big-and-tall chair in the right width may fit better than any standard chair regardless of your weight.
- 6 Bonded Leather Looks Great — But Know Its Lifespan**  
Bonded leather chairs look excellent and cost significantly less than genuine leather, but bonded leather typically begins to peel and crack within 3 to 5 years of daily use. Budget-plan accordingly: bonded leather chairs are a medium-term investment. If you want leather appearance for a decade or more, budget for genuine leather or a high-quality polyurethane alternative.
- 7 Check the Cylinder Replacement Cost Before Buying**  
Chair cylinders wear out. On quality commercial chairs, they last 5 to 10 years; on lower-quality chairs, sometimes 1 to 2 years. Before buying, confirm that replacement cylinders are available for the model and what they cost. For standard cylinders, replacements run \$15 to \$40. Proprietary cylinders on some brands can cost \$100+ to replace — or require sending the chair for factory service.
- 8 Mesh Back Chairs Work Better in Warm Environments**  
If your office runs warm or you naturally run hot, a mesh-back chair is the practical choice regardless of aesthetics. The temperature difference between a mesh back and an upholstered back during a four-hour work session is tangible. For offices with strong HVAC or consistently cool temperatures, an upholstered back may actually be more comfortable.
- 9 Multi-Shift Environments Need Heavy-Duty Rated Chairs**  
Chairs used 16 or 24 hours a day (call centers, hospitals, 24/7 operations) need to be specifically rated for multi-shift use. Standard commercial chairs rated for single-shift use can fail significantly faster when used around the clock. Look for chairs explicitly rated for 24/7 or multi-shift use if your environment requires it.
- 10 Four-Leg Base Chairs Don't Belong in Full-Time Use**  
Chairs on four-leg bases rather than five-star caster bases are styling pieces for conference rooms and guest seating — not for full-time task use. A five-star base provides tip stability that a four-leg base doesn't. Any chair being used for daily primary task seating should have a five-point caster base.