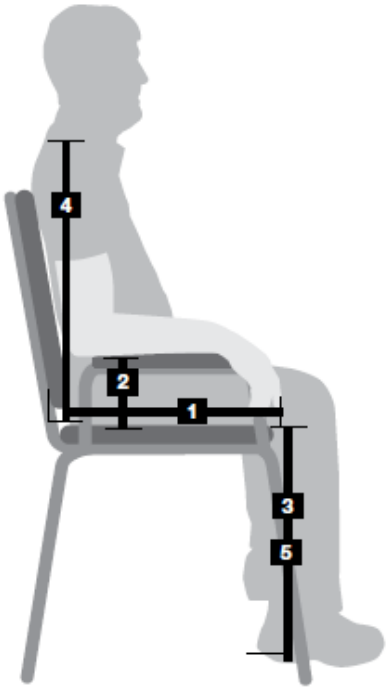
How To Determine Which Wheelchair Is The Best Fit

Achieving a proper fit for a user in his or her new wheelchair can be extremely critical to the patient's health and wellness. It can make the difference between either promoting recovery or causing further injury. Some of the issues that an improper fit can cause for the user of the wheelchair are:

- Posture issues
- Breathing problems
- Sores
- Discomfort
- Pelvic issues
- Hip problems

Measure for a perfect fit



1 Determine Seat Size

- Seat width should be determined by measuring from hip to hip in a straight line. Add two inches to this measurement.
- Seat depth should be determined by measuring from the back of the hip to the back of the knee of the user while seated. Subtract one inch from this measurement.

2 Determine Arm Type and Height

- If the user is going to be standing up to do pivot transfers, they will require a full-length arm on the chair to help support them as they push off to stand.
- Desk-length arms are suggested for ease of use with tables and desks.
- Determine the height of the wheelchair arm by measuring from the elbow to the seat of the chair while the user is holding their arms up with their elbows bent at a ninety degree angle. Height adjustable arms are suggested when possible.

3 Determine Footrest Style

- Elevating leg rests are always suggested when patients are required to raise their legs for conditions such as edema, swelling or injury.
- Determine the length of the footrest by measuring from the back of the knee to the heel of the foot.
- In taller patients, consider using articulating leg rests. These leg rests extend longer as the elevating portion of the leg rest rises.

4 Determine Back Height

- Determine the measurement from the patient's scapula or collarbone down to the seat while the user is sitting in a chair.
- Taller back heights may be required for patients that require upper trunk support or other support devices that may be installed for the user.

5 Determine Floor to Seat Height

- Determine if the user will need to use his or her feet to propel or move. Measure the distance between the back of the knee to the heel to determine the seat to floor height.

6 Determine Wheelchair Weight and Weight Limit

- Determine the patient's weight in order to choose what weight capacity wheelchair will be required.
- Determine the level of upper body strength in the user. Weaker patients will require lighter wheelchairs.

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Hip to Hip: _____” Hip to Knee: _____”

❷

Elbow to Seat: _____”

❸/❺

Back of Knee to Heel: _____”

❹

Collarbone to Seat: _____”

❻

Weight of user: _____ lbs.