

Are you Sitting Comfortably: Part 3

Does Your Seat Suit Your Hips and do Your Hips Suit Your Seat?

Sitting at a computer / desk periods leads to one important practical question: Is your seat right for you? More importantly, can your hips accommodate your chair's sitting position or do you need to use a wedge / change your seating? Luckily there is an easy test to do at home to work out how well your hips move into a sitting position.

Start Position: Lying on the ground on your back, test the right hip first. Place your right hand on the bony bit at the front of the pelvis on the right side. This is above your hip, around your waist level. This hand is monitoring when the pelvis starts to move as we go through our test. The other hand can lie down by your left side.



Movement: Bend at the hip and the knee on the right and slowly bring the knee up towards your chest. The rest of the body should stay relaxed. Feel the bone at the front of the pelvis with your right hand. When the bone starts to move towards your tummy, stop moving your leg.



Outcome: How far did the thigh bend up towards your chest before your hand felt the pelvis bone start moving? Did it get to a right angle? Did it move past a right angle? If so, this is a good outcome as regards any chair that you might be sitting in. Did the pelvis start to move before the thigh became perpendicular to the floor? If so, note the rough angle that it reached. Now complete the test on the opposite side.



Why is this important? If the thigh moved through a right angle and past perpendicular, then the range of movement available at the hip can accommodate a chair that has you sitting upright, with the hips at a right angle. You can practice sitting from standing properly and can adjust your bottom sitting position using the 'booty scooch' without issue.

This is advice about how to sit. Everybody's body is different so if you are still having pain or discomfort, or trying to sit better gives you pain or discomfort please contact us for an assessment.

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If the pelvis moved before the hip went to a right angle (it did not get perpendicular to the ground) then trying to sit in a chair that needs the hips to be at right angles to have your weight on the right bony areas of the pelvis will not work. As you go into the sitting position, the pelvis will tilt backwards (as if you were smoothing a skirt under your bottom as you sit) and you will land on the fleshy parts of your bottom, rather than your sitting bones. If the pelvis starts to tilt backwards, our low back is pushed into the chair back. We are progressing towards a slumped posture. There is a strain being put through the lower back that, if maintained, will cause the body tissue in this area to become painful. Your hips are not letting you achieve a comfortable sitting posture on that particular chair.

If there is a restriction in your sitting due to your hip movement (or lack of), then you need to adjust the chair, or use a wedge to achieve the thigh angle at which your pelvis began to move in your test. Your bottom needs to be higher than your knees when you are sitting. If you have a whizzy chair that allows adjustment, then tilt the chair seat forward slightly to allow for this lack of hip movement but do not tilt the back of the chair forwards or you will be leaning over the desk. If you do not have a whizzy chair, wedges can be easily purchased online for minimal amounts so please invest as it is an investment in your body rather than money being frittered away.

If you are yet to read the first 2 parts of how to sit comfortably then this is the time to do so. It is important to have the foundations of sitting sorted before we think about the torso and the upper body.....

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