



Seating Position

Do you take your position seriously? When practising safety on the roads it is easy to forget your seating position. Read our Seating Position guide for tips on how to avoid putting extra strain on the spine whilst driving.

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Slouching behind the steering wheel on frequent trips or for long periods can prove to be problematic for the spine and is one of the central causes of bad backs in later life.

The British Chiropractic Association states that 32,000 people each month visit one of its members with a back problem linked to driving posture. It says that even shorter journeys such as the 'school run' can also place the back under immense strain.

Additionally, a recent research report funded by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) described back disorders as the most common form of ill health at work. The exact cause of back pain is often unclear but back pain is more common in jobs that involve driving, especially over long distances or over rough ground.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Motorists are more likely to adopt a poor posture due to not adjusting their seat, which can cause long term stress to the joints and muscles in the lower area of the spine. Therefore, we have provided a simple checklist to assist you in obtaining the correct seating position.

Seating Checklist

- Is my spine in line?
- Is the base of my head restraint level with the base of my head?
- Can I depress the pedals fully without moving out of my seat?
- Is my seat supporting the full length of my spine?
- Can I reach all of the controls easily?
- Is the angle between my upper body & thighs $>90^\circ$?
- Am I holding the wheel at the '10 to 2' or 'quarter to 3' position?
- Can I see all the instruments & gauges without moving my position in the seat?

In general, the seating position should ensure that:

- Your head does not touch the roof
- There is no gap between the seat belt and the front of your shoulder
- The lumbar support (if fitted) gives only gentle support
- The steering wheel is free of your legs
- You are sitting in an upright position with your spine straight, not hunched over the steering wheel/not slouched in the seat

