



Independent Living Centre
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CHOOSING AN ELECTRIC BED

Before opting to buy an electric bed, it is worth considering if your own bed can be altered to meet your needs first. Items such as bed leavers or bed elevators can be fitted to make it easier to manoeuvre and sit up in bed, whilst raising the height of the bed from beneath can make it easier to stand up.

If you still wish to purchase a powered bed, then you may wish to consider the following points:

- What do you need the bed to be able to do? Most beds will allow you to raise the head and foot end independently of each other, but this should always be clarified.
- Do you need the bed to be adjustable in height? This can be useful if you require carer assistance as the bed can be altered to minimise strain on their backs and also to the most suitable height for you to get in and out.
- What size of bed do you require, and what space do you have within your room? You will need to take into account space you need around the bed for carers and any equipment such as hoists or commodes.
- If the bed will not height adjust, you should ensure it is a suitable height for you to stand and sit. To work this out sit on the side of the bed with your chosen mattress in place, with both feet on the floor. If the bed is the correct height your hips and knees should be in line. If your knees are higher than your hips, the bed is too low.

- If you are hoisted in and out of bed, or may need this in the future the bed will need to have a minimum gap of three inches underneath which is free from bed feet or motors
- Have you tried more than one bed?
- Will you be sharing this bed with your partner? If so it may be worth considering a bed with split mattress to allow each side to be operated independently. You should also bear in mind that it is much easier and safer for a carer to provide help in a single bed as you can be easily reached from both sides of the bed.
- If you are of a large build, you may wish to consider heavier duty beds which can be increased in width by adding extensions.
- If you are tall you may wish to consider a bed which can have foot extensions fitted.
- Do you require any additional accessories such as side rails, or a turning function?
- Consider the type of mattress you require, and try several to find out what is right for you. Firmer mattresses can make it easier to get on and off the bed but may be less comfortable than a memory foam mattress to sleep on.
- You may also want to consider the covering if the user has continence problems.
- Advice can be sought from your district nurse if you require a pressure relieving mattress to protect your skin.
- You must ensure the mattress is suitable for use with an electric bed.
- Have you tried the bed you intend to buy for at least 30 minutes? Five minutes will not give you much of an idea of long term comfort.

- An electric bed tends to push you down the bed a little as you sit up, so the bed should ideally be 6” longer than the tallest user. Have you room?
- Has the bed base got 4 or 5 sections to support the head, back, bottom, thigh and calf? Less sections will not support you so well.
- When you sit yourself up in bed, will you be able to reach your bedside table?
- Are there separate buttons to work the leg section and the head section independently?
- Do you find the control easy to use?
- Where will you store the control when not in use? Can you easily get hold of it again when you need it, even in the dark?
- Although the bed may be comfortable, an electric bed may not help you to get in and out. Can you lift your legs onto the bed and move yourself into the middle?
- Is it a good height for bed making and will it be easy to fit sheets on to?
- Will you be able to move it around if necessary for cleaning underneath?
- How easy will it be to maintain? Who will do this? Does the company offer a service a maintenance contract? How long would it take them to respond to a call out?
- How much will it cost? Get more than one quote and buy from a reputable source.

For further information please contact us on **01343 559461**

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OR look on www.moray.gov.uk and search for Independent Living Centre