

PRESS RELEASE

All recliners are not created equal...

David Crane, Vice President of International Sales for La-Z-Boy, offers some expert advice for consumers on what to look out for when choosing a recliner.

16 August 2012, Johannesburg: Recliners have come a long way since they were first introduced to the market almost a century ago. Although incredibly comfortable, the recliners of yesteryear were known for being bulky, and generally holding very little aesthetic appeal. David Crane, Vice President of International Sales for La-Z-Boy, says that the modern recliner of today should not only be comfortable, but it should also offer supreme quality, a lot of added extras and sleek good looks to boot.

It's not just Dad's chair...

Since their inception by La-Z-Boy in the 1920s, recliners have become increasingly popular, says David: "Globally, recliners are fast becoming more popular than stationery seating, and it is easy to understand why – they can offer the most comfortable spot in which to unwind and relax in your home, making them a firm favourite with the whole family. Their supreme comfort makes them the optimum choice for home theatres, gaming rooms, TV rooms or even reading nooks. However, they also offer great neck and lumbar support, which makes them suitable for those who suffer from severe back- or neck-pain, or for breast-feeding mothers. They are easy to operate and get in and out of, which makes them a great choice for the elderly or the frail and unwell."

David points out that an interesting growth point in the popularity of recliners has come from the women's market segment: "Traditionally, recliners have been most popular with men – they were widely known as a man's favourite chair in which he could watch his sports, play computer games or just sit back, put his feet up and relax. However, as recliners have evolved and become more aesthetically appealing, so has their popularity with women grown. More and more women are opting to invest in a recliner of their own – they are comfortable, offer great wellness benefits, and these days, they don't need to clash with the interior décor. La-Z-Boy's Norman or Houston models for example, offer sleek, contemporary good looks that would complement even the best-dressed contemporary homes."

Comfort built to last

Although there are plenty of recliners currently available in the market, not all brands boast the same quality. This often makes it difficult to make an optimum choice – especially if you don't know what to look for. Says David: "Quality is the most important aspect to consider when investing in a recliner. It is always best to choose a reputable brand that is well known for producing good quality furniture. This is especially true for recliners – due to their reclining movement, they have to be constructed in a manner that is specifically designed to

withstand the stresses and strains this movement puts on the construction of the chair. As such, it is highly advisable to invest in a brand that specialises in recliner chairs, and doesn't just offer them as an added sideline."

He notes that La-Z-Boy has been refining the art of recliner construction since they first invented them in 1927: "Our founders set out to create a quality product and nothing stands more true today. Even though modern engineering has helped us fine-tune the La-Z-Boy product, nothing has been changed regarding the mechanics since the inception of our recliners. To be honest, I can't think of anything, especially in the furniture business, that can say the same, which is a true testament to the quality and durability of the La-Z-Boy product. By using only the highest quality materials and ensuring a high standard of craftsmanship, La-Z-Boy recliners are designed, manufactured and tested to provide the best longevity possible."

To judge whether a recliner is of a high quality, David suggests that you check for the following:

- The recliner should boast resilient cushioning made from high-quality polyurethane foam for long life. La-Z-Boy recliners feature only the highest quality, custom-designed polyurethane foam for the most resilient and supportive cushions on the market.
- Upholstery should be durable – every fabric used to upholster any La-Z-Boy recliner for example, has been wear-tested and has to pass the highest standards for wear and tear before being La-Z-Boy-certified.
- Test the footrest several times to make sure it is easy to manoeuvre.
- The mechanism should be easy to access and operate.
- Listen for squeaks that may indicate loose parts or improper alignment.
- Focus on the frame construction by scoping the underside of the chair. Look out for heavy-duty screws, not small ones or even worse, plastic ones. The frame construction should be made from hard wood. La-Z-Boy's patented four-sided unibody is specially designed for lasting durability – making it truly unique to the market. Unlike the frames of other recliners that are simply screwed together, the superior design of La-Z-Boy's patented four-sided unibody frame actually helps absorb the stress on the reclining mechanism for smoother operation and longer life.

Tried and tested

"It is essential to sit in a recliner and give it a 'test drive' before making any purchase decisions," says David, "See how the recliner fits the contours of our body and assess how comfortable it is. Any recliner should be easy to operate and smooth in movement. A recliner should offer various sitting positions for optimum comfort and utilisation – the back and footrest of any La-Z-Boy recliner for example, reclines individually to provide a total of 18 different comfort positions. You can move from slightly reclined to a full layout position, with the footrest raised to elevate your legs and feet for improved circulation. They have one continuous reclining surface, which guarantees full body and lumbar support in all 18 positions. For added safety, its footrest can be locked in three different positions."

Any recliner you choose should suit your individual body shape, height and weight. David explains: “The level of comfort of any recliner is directly associated to the user’s measurements and weight. The patented La-Z-Boy mechanism for example, provides the smoothest reclining motion and allows you to adjust the reclining tensions so that you can customise the amount of effort needed to operate the recliner, based on your individual body type. They also boast an easy-action latch release that is set flush in the side panels of the recliner, as well as adjustable footrest tension for customised comfort.”

Make sure you measure the space you have in your home for the recliner before you go shopping, and take your measuring tape with you, advises David: “Some recliners are huge, while others are quite compact. As such, when testing out your recliner, be sure to measure how much space you will need when the recliner is fully extended. The designers at La-Z-Boy understand that residential space is often at a premium, and as such, they have engineered the La-Z-Boy recliners in such a way that they can be positioned only centimetres from a wall and still be fully reclined for space-saving convenience.”

Sitting pretty

David advises that since your recliner will be used daily, it is highly advisable to choose genuine leather upholstery: “Leather recliners are beautiful and durable pieces of furniture – they offer superior comfort, conformability, longevity and cleanability when compared to their fabric-upholstered counterparts. La-Z-Boy recliners for example, are upholstered in 100% genuine cowhide leather, which lasts up to five times longer than a piece of furniture upholstered in fabric.”

When investing in a recliner, make sure it is upholstered in genuine leather by examining the furniture tag, notes David: “See if it identifies the materials used in the manufacturing of the sofa. Faux leather can be identified in a number of different ways, including pleather, leatherette, naugahyde, corfam, ultrasued, fabrikoid, permeable leather, artificial leather or leather cloth. Faux leather is not nearly as durable or comfortable as genuine leather and as such, it should be avoided at all costs. Genuine leather on the other hand, should always be identified with a genuine leather symbol or the term ‘Genuine Leather’.”

Added extras

Top-end recliners should offer a range of added features to customise the experience. La-Z-Boy recliners for example offer the following special features:

- Brushed metal handle: If you want a new handle on comfort, try the sleek Arc handle design with a brushed metal finish.
- Extra tall base: For those very tall individuals, you can increase the height of the recliner by approximately 4cm.
- Elongated handle: For an easier reach of the reclining mechanism, La-Z-Boy’s elongated handle adds an extra 5cm to the overall length.
- Swivel base design: If you like doing 360’s, then a swivel base is a great option for a new spin on comfort.
- Extended legrest: For those with long limbs, La-Z-Boy offers extra long

legrests for added customisation.

- Left handle: Are you left-handed? If so, you can opt to purchase a recliner with the recliner handle conveniently positioned on the left-hand side.

ENDS

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