



## Stair Lifts

**A stair lift will ensure that you can still move independently around your own home.**

### The Facts

*1. For many people losing the ability to move around their own home can be very difficult to come to terms with.*

*2. The installation of a stair lift can restore the ability to independently move around your home and enable you to maintain your quality of life.*

*3. There are different types of stair lifts including:*

- *Seated stair lift*
- *Standing stair lift*
- *Perched stair lift*
- *Wheelchair lift*

### Curved or straight

The design of your stairs will determine whether you require a straight or curved stair lift.

A straight system is the easiest to install and the most cost effective and the tracks can be purchased in standard lengths to suit most stairs.

If your stairs are curved are an L or U shaped will require a system that suits the configuration of the stair. In some cases this may need to be custom made and as a result may cost more and take longer to install.

### Components and features

Whether you are considering a seated, standing or wheelchair lift there are a number of things to take into account when making your choice.

### Controls

Stair lifts are generally operated by a toggle or joy stick mounted on the lift. When pressure is applied the lift begins to move and stops again when the pressure is released or the lift reaches the end of the track.

A call button can be mounted at the bottom and top of the stair or a remote can be an added feature.

## There is a stair lift design to meet most needs, internal or external.

### Rails

It is generally assumed by most people that the stair lift rails need to be fitted to a wall where in fact with most models they are fitted to the stair tread.

The rails are made of either steel or aluminium depending on the design of the system.

Where the rail is required to cross a door opening there are systems available with hinged sections of rail to allow the rail to bend out of the way when the lift is not in use.

### Power

Most stair lifts available today are battery powered. One advantage of this is that the lift will still operate in the case of a power failure.

Battery operated units are also generally quieter and provide a smoother ride than mains powered systems.

The unit can be recharged in a number of different ways. Charging station can be located at the top and bottom of the stair that charge the lift between trips or a flexible station can be located anywhere along the rail.

Other methods include a 'travel cable' or 'charge strip'.

Some people prefer to send the lift up a few steps when it is not in use so it out of sight from living areas, however, this may not be an option when using static charging stations.

### Swivel seat

For seated systems where the seat travels at a ninety degree angle to the wall, a seat that can be swivelled at the landing can assist with transferring to and from the unit.

Seat belts can be fitted to add extra safety and support for those people that may have a balance problem whilst the unit is in motion.

Most systems also have a safety override that ensures the units will not move unless the swivel seat is locked in position.

### Speed

The majority of systems have a soft start motion so that the user is not jolted as the unit starts moving and a soft stopping motion at the other end.

The motion of the unit should be smooth and consistent throughout without any jerking or rocking.

### Other considerations

Some other points to consider when selecting your stair lift may include:

- The weight of the intended user and the capacity of the system
- The height of the user – some systems come with adjustable components.
- Will the user be able to transfer on and off the unit by themselves?
- Does the width of your stair affect the type of unit you can install?
- Is there an area at the top and bottom of your stair where you can alight safely?
- Is there a handrail or other obstruction that may affect the installation of a lift and can it be modified?
- Where will the unit be when not in use – does it obstruct the stairs?

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