



Together for a back-healthy life!



**Aktion Gesunder Rücken e.v.
Campaign for healthier backs**

DRIVING WITHOUT BACK PAIN: THE BEST TIPS AND TRICKS

Driving - let the pain subside!

Driving is convenient and allows us to get from A to B very flexibly. However, the problem is: If you sit in the car for a long time, your back can suffer a lot. Perhaps you've experienced this too: you get out of the car and feel downright stiff. You may even experience back pain, neck tension, pain in your shoulders or headaches. The reason for these complaints is often the sedentary and monotonous sitting in the car. Sitting in the same position for a long time puts a lot of strain on the intervertebral discs, back muscles and spine.

But we can avoid a lot of this! As in other areas of life, ergonomics determine how relaxed we arrive at our destination!

As Aktion Gesunder Rücken e. V., we have set ourselves the task of collecting information on healthy backs and ergonomics, summarising it in an understandable and everyday way and making the know-how accessible to everyone. Above all, we provide you with tips and recommendations for back-friendly behaviour: find out from us what you can do for your back - in your everyday life at home, at work or in your free time.

This brochure contains our tips, recommendations and exercises for ergonomic and back-friendly driving. Lots of well-being and driving pleasure!

Your



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Note: For reasons of better readability, the language forms male, female and diverse (m/f/d) are not used simultaneously. All personal designations apply equally to all genders. All texts have been carefully researched. Nevertheless, we reserve the right to make any errors.

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About Aktion Gesunder Rücken e.V.

Aktion Gesunder Rücken (AGR) e. V. (Campaign for healthier backs) has been promoting back health since it was founded in 1995. The independent association based in Bremervörde (Lower Saxony) awards the AGR seal of approval to products that are particularly back-friendly. This is done in cooperation with medical associations.

The Campaign for healthier backs works closely with independent health experts to train specialist retailers and therapists on the subject of ergonomics and back health and to inform consumers about how to avoid back pain.



The AGR seal of approval - you can trust it!

The AGR seal of approval and testing process were thoroughly examined by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and recognised as reputable and trustworthy in 2022. This means it is one of the few seals of approval to have received this prestigious international recognition as an EU certification mark.

Back-friendly from A to B: the ergonomic car seat



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The car seat forces the driver in particular into the same position for many hours. That's exactly what our backs don't like. Sitting motionless for long periods is one of the most problematic things you can put your back through. That's why a long car journey often causes back pain. A good, ergonomic car seat reduces these problems and helps to prevent back pain.

Adaptability is particularly important in an ergonomic car seat - and that you use all the adjustment options. The seat must support and relieve your body in the right places. This only works if it can be perfectly adapted to your individual body shape. We have put together a checklist to help you choose back-friendly car seats.

The most important tools for a good car seat

1. The basic structure of the seat must be stable and the backrest must follow the natural shape of the spine

The firm basic structure of your seat increases your safety and can provide sufficient support for your body. You can recognise that the backrest is shaped to suit the spine when you look at the backrest from the side. You should be able to recognise a slight S-shape here. Also make sure the backrest is high enough - your back should not protrude over the backrest.



© Volkswagen

2. Seat height, seat tilt and seat spacing must be adjustable with sufficient adjustment travel. The depth of the seat can also be adjusted

The basis for the adjustability of your seat is the seat height adjustment and the adjustability of the seat distance to the steering wheel. By adjusting the angle of the seat, you can also ensure that your thighs are well supported. It is also very important that you can adjust the length of the seat - also known as the seat depth. If you adjust the seat depth to your thigh length, the seat pressure is optimally distributed over your buttocks and thighs. This makes driving much more comfortable for you, especially on long journeys.



Electric or manual - the main thing is adjustable

Tip An electric adjustment further improves ease of use on your tour. Did you know that doctors recommend making small adjustments to the seat position for longer journeys? This would also be easy to do!

3. The headrest must be adjustable and should not rest against the head during the journey. It only has a safety function!

When you try out the seat, you will quickly realise whether the headrest can be adjusted to suit you. You should not feel that you have to tilt your head forward uncomfortably. We also recommend a 4-way headrest. You can adjust these not only up and down, but also forwards and backwards. If you decide in favour of a seat with an integrated headrest, we strongly advise you to try it out.



4. An adjustable 4-way lumbar support must be available. This supports the area of the lumbar spine at approximately the level of the waistline.

The 4-way lumbar support offers adjustments for height and depth. A tip: If you adjust the lumbar support slightly from time to time on longer journeys, this can prevent fatigue and help you arrive at your destination feeling more relaxed.

5. During the journey, all important controls must be within easy reach, including those for seat adjustment

You like it even more comfortable? Then our experts recommend the following additional functions:

- Massage function
- Memory function
- Climate package (seat heating/ventilation)
- Adjustable side bolsters on backrest and seat
- Seat dynamics system
- Backrest head adjustment

Tip Plan a break! Sure: You want to get to your destination as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, it is important to take breaks on longer car journeys, such as on holiday or to a business meeting, to get some exercise and fresh air in between. Therefore, plan a break of about 30 minutes every two to three hours! When travelling by car with a baby or small children, even more frequent breaks are necessary.



Poor fit, but it should not be a different car?

Would you like to buy an ergonomic car seat but not a new car? In this case, ergonomic retrofit seats are a good solution. The seats can be retrofitted to numerous models without sacrificing ride comfort and safety.



© Recaro

When selecting retrofit seats, it's not just the equipment features and adjustment options that should score well, also consider the following questions when making your decision:

- ✓ Has the manufacturer performed safety tests and Carried out crash tests with the seat?
- ✓ Is it possible to test sit in the vehicle?
- ✓ Is the staff trained to provide in-depth seating advice?

It's the attitude that counts: how to adjust the seat correctly

Unfortunately, a good car seat is of little use if you don't take the time to adjust it optimally. Even if it may be unfamiliar the first time, you will quickly get a feel for your optimum seat position. But what do you think of them?

Step 1 Adjust the seat distance to the pedals



- a) Back with your buttocks as close as possible to the backrest.
- b) Now adjust the seat forwards or backwards so that your legs are still slightly bent when you press the pedals and your buttocks are still in contact with the backrest.

Step 2 Adjust the distance to the steering wheel and backrest



- a) Lean back relaxed against the backrest so that your sternum is ideally raised and your back is stretched.
- b) Adjust the angle of the backrest so that you can hold the steering wheel with your arms slightly bent and your shoulders relaxed.
- c) Do you also have shoulder contact with the backrest during steering movements? Great, then it fits.

Adjusting the seat height

Step 3

The rule here is: sit as high as possible to improve your view in all directions. In addition sitting high leads to a more upright position of the pelvis. There should still be a hand's width of space between your head and the roof lining.



Adjusting the seat angle

Step 4

Now adjust the seat angle. If your thighs are fully and loosely on the seat and you can pedal without exerting too much force, you have found the right setting for you.



Adjust the length of the seat (seat depth)

Step 5

You can adjust the seat length at the front of the seat. Ideally, there should be a space of two to three fingers between the back of your knee and the front edge of the seat. This prevents uncomfortable pressure on the back of the knees and the thighs are well supported.



Step 6 Adjust the lumbar support (lumbar support)



a) Set the lumbar support to the lowest position.

b) Now move the support upwards to the point where you notice that the pelvis tilts slightly forwards due to the support and the whole upper body becomes more upright as a result. In this position, the lumbar support can optimally fulfil its purpose. As an orientation: this point will be approximately at the height of your trouser belt (this is

where your upper, rear iliac crest is located).

c) You can then adjust the curvature of the lumbar support. Feel your back and pay attention to how strong the support should be.

Note: We often set the lumbar support too high intuitively. This means that it only fills the area of the spine above the iliac crest. If you proceed as described above, the lumbar support will automatically and effortlessly bring you more upright.

Step 7 Adjust the headrest



a) Is the upper edge of the headrest at least level with the top of the head?

b) Is the distance to the head about two to three centimetres?

If you can answer yes to both questions, your headrest is correctly adjusted. The headrest is not designed to support you, but to protect you in the event of an accident. If you lean your head back while driving, this can promote tiredness and therefore microsleep.

Check

Step 8



Finally, check your settings again in the same order. Then the seat fits.

Tip If several people are travelling in the same car, a memory function is very helpful. This saves the settings of the individual persons so that they can be restored at the touch of a button.



Get to your destination fit and safe! Exercise during the car journey

1. Shoulder circles



2. Move shoulder up and down



3. Move shoulders forwards/backwards



4. Raise and lower the sternum



We recommend carrying out these exercises during breaks (red traffic lights, railway barriers, traffic jams, motorway service areas). This stimulates the circulation and allows you to continue your journey with more concentration.

5. Move the pelvis forwards/backwards



6. Raise left/right buttock half



7. Toe and heel stand



8. Alternately "squeeze" and "pull apart" the steering wheel (10 sec. each)



Gymnastics for the rest area

1. Stretching and lolling



2. Shoulder circles



3. Stretch your neck muscles



4. Head swing



Perform all stretching exercises for each side for approx. 30 seconds.

5. Shoulder blades contract



6. Stretch your chest and back muscles



7. Stretch the thigh muscle (front)



8. Stretch the thigh muscle (back)

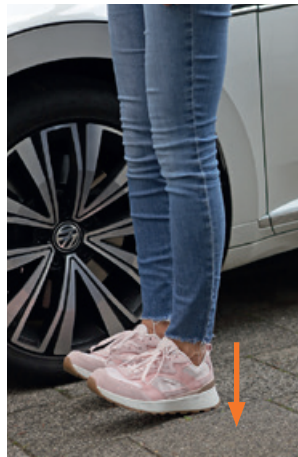


Perform all stretching exercises for each side for approx. 30 seconds.

9. lateral trunk muscles



10. Toe and heel stand



12. Stretch calf muscles



Perform all stretching exercises for each side for approx. 30 seconds.

Back massage while driving

Massage systems for car seats are another benefit for comfort and back health. These can be integrated or retrofitted to the car seats in the form of a mat. A good massage system offers you various advantages, you can feel good and enjoy the massage.

Please always pay attention!

- ✓ Only a well-rested driver can drive safely.
- ✓ After an hour and a half, or two hours at the latest, a regeneration and exercise break is essential for body and mind.
- ✓ Massage pads in the car can help to relieve back pain, but should not be seen as the sole solution. They are no substitute for regular exercise.



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You can find more information and what to look out for when buying on our website at www.agr-ev.de/en/car-seat-massage-systems



AGR-tested products

Some manufacturers have had their particularly good and back-friendly car seats and massage systems labelled with our AGR seal of approval:

Car seats and car racing shells



Seats in light commercial vehicles



Car seat massage systems





So if you are looking for a high-quality and ergonomic car seat, visit our website. There you will find a detailed list of all certified seats and further details and information about car seats, the AGR seal of approval and many other exciting topics.

It's worth stopping by!

Here you will find detailed information about Aktion Gesunder Rücken e. V.:

www.agr-ev.de/en



Overview AGR-tested car seats:

www.agr-ev.de/en/car-seats



Overview of AGR-tested seats in light commercial vehicles:

www.agr-ev.de/en/seats-in-commercial-vehicles



We are committed to the health of
people's backs - from prevention
to targeted help with complaints.

Together for a back-healthy life!

