



A Guide to Selecting a Stroller or Buggy

Assistive technology is a piece of equipment, device or system that provides people with practical solutions to everyday life activities. You can search our National Equipment Database www.askned.com.au to view a range of products online.

When selecting a stroller or buggy it is important to consider both the needs of the child and the people who will be responsible for maneuvering and folding the buggy.

It is advisable to consult your occupational therapist to help in the selection of an appropriate stroller/buggy for your child. Considering your child's needs and the environments of use will help identify the features you will need.

The needs of your child

- Do they require postural support?
- What style of harnesses do they require?
- How robust must the stroller/buggy be?
- How long will they be spending in the stroller/buggy?
- What activities will be undertaken while using the stroller/buggy? i.e. sleeping, mealtimes or taking medication.

Where and how will the stroller/buggy be used?

- Will it be used indoors or outdoors? Will the terrain be uneven?
- Who will be pushing the stroller/buggy?
- Does it need to be transported in a car? Will it fit in the boot?

Frame

- **Overall size and width:** will it fit where you need to go? e.g. shopping centre aisles, public toilets, hallways.
- **Load capacity:** will it cater for the child's weight as they grow?
- **Stability:** avoid anything that will easily tip. Check how stability is affected by adding carry bags or the usual items you would have with the stroller.
- **Folding technique:** how easy it is to fold and lift? Generally, the more supports you require for posture, the more difficult folding will be.
- **Weight:** Lightweight frames are easier to lift and maneuver.

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Wheels

- Larger wheels are easier to handle over uneven terrain and will provide a smoother ride for the child. However, they increase bulk when folded.
- Pneumatic (air filled) tyres absorb impact better than solid tyres. However, pneumatic tyres require regular pumping up and can puncture.
- Stroller/buggies with three wheels are generally more maneuverable but are less stable than those with four wheels.

Seating System

- Some buggies have separate seating systems that can be removed from the frame.
- How easy is it to remove the seating system?
- Can the seating system fit onto other bases if required e.g. Hi-Low bases?

Backrest

- Recline can be used when children are sleeping or resting in the stroller or for a change in position. However, it isn't generally recommended as it disrupts the position of the harness.
- An upright position is needed for engaging in play, communicating and feeding.
- Check the ease of adjustment and available reclining positions.

Tilt

- Seat tilt can be useful to change the position of the child to assist with head control, posture, transferring and positioning.
- Can allow the child to sleep or rest.

Brakes

- Brakes that are linked by a bar need minimal effort.
- Foot brakes reduce bending.
- Ensure they are easy to operate and are visually obvious.

Harness

- All strollers and buggies must have a harness for support and safety. The operation of the harness needs to be easy to manipulate for the carer but not by the child.



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Footrest

- Footrests reduce the chance of a child's feet being injured or dragging along the ground. They are also required for posture support.

Postural Support and Customisation

- **Postural supports:** Postural supports maybe optional, including head supports, thoracic trunk supports, and pelvic straps and hip guides. Check that these meet the needs of your child.
- **Inbuilt adjustability:** Some strollers/buggies have in-built growth and adjustability. Seat depth and seat width, footplate height and angle, backrest height, postural supports and recline can often be adjusted.
- **Customisation:** Some specialized prefabricated seating systems or custom-made seating systems can be fitted to some stroller bases.

Other Considerations

- Is the upholstery easy to remove for cleaning and can it be washed?
- Warranty details and ease of accessing replacements parts.
- Are accessories such as sun canopies, rain covers and under-seat baskets available?



Indigo has a large range of equipment on display and products available to trial. Our experienced health professionals can provide strategies and advice on the right product for you. Please contact us using the details below for further information or to book an appointment. Appointments can be conducted by phone, email, face-to-face or video call.

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