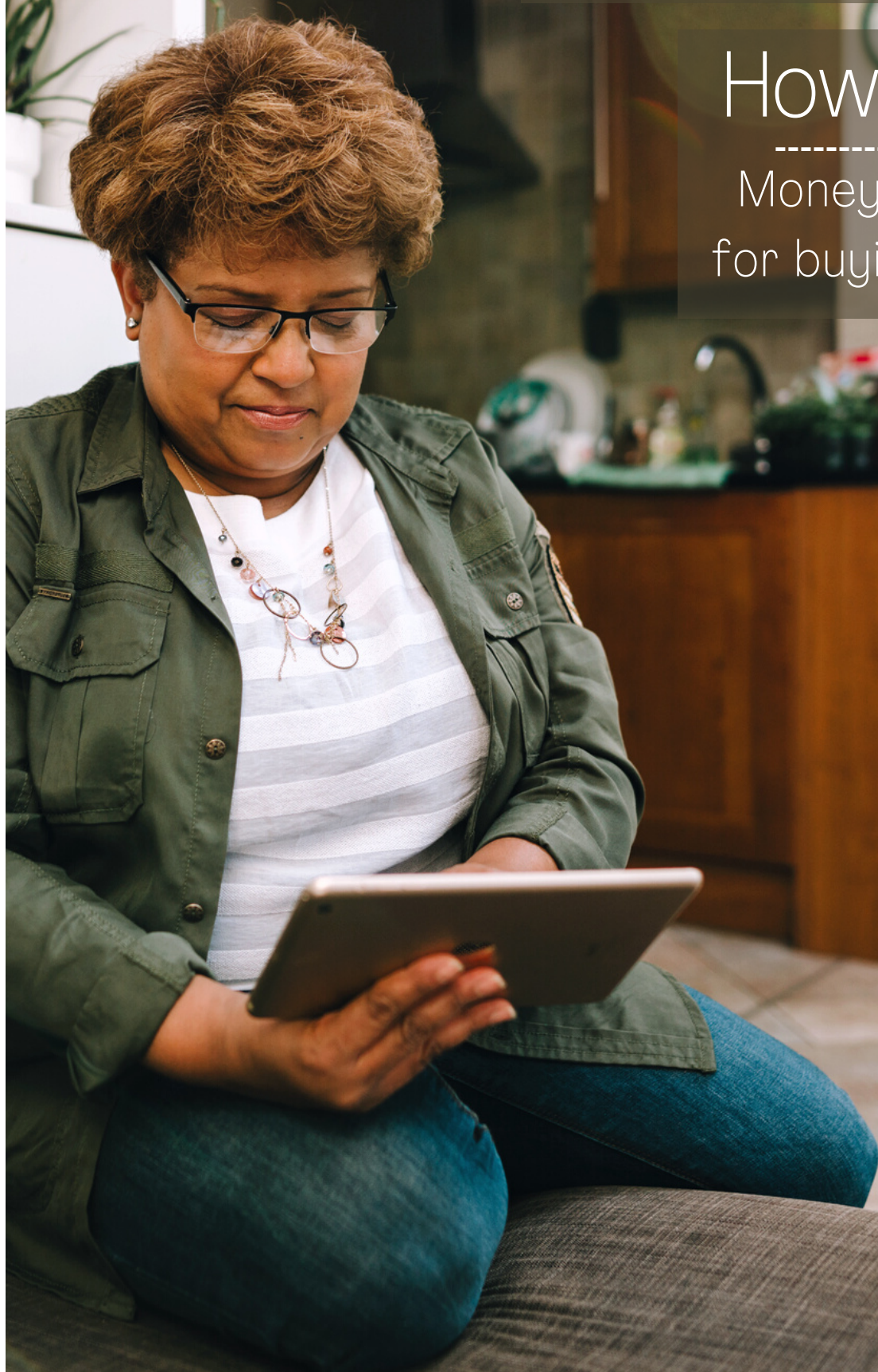




1st Choice
Stairlifts
LIVE YOUR LIFE, YOUR WAY

How To Buy

Money saving tips
for buying a stairlift



Intro

Buying a stairlift can be a big investment, not only for your pocket but also for you and your home. In order to make the process as simple and stress-free as possible, we wanted to share with you all the information you need about the costs of having a stairlift installed.

- How much does a stairlift cost?
- What can affect the cost of my stairlift?
- How can I save money on a stairlift?
- How could I get a stairlift for free?



important tip

Here's just a few things that can affect the cost of your stairlift:

- how many bends you have on your staircase
- if you have a narrow staircase
- if you need a power point fitting to provide power to your lift
- what kind of aftercare service the provider offers

How much does a stairlift cost?

A Which? review in May 2021 found that on average a new stairlift costs on average £2,845 and £4,217 for straight and curved lifts, respectively. However, Which? mostly surveyed those who had bought from well-known brands.

You may find that if you buy from an independent dealer, such as ourselves, you could pay less to have one installed. Here is a guide of our starting prices:

- New straight stairlifts from: £1650
- New curved stairlifts from: £4000
- Reconditioned straight stairlifts from: £1000
- Reconditioned curved stairlifts from: £2800
- Rental straight stairlifts from: £350 initial payment + £50 per month onwards
- Rental curved stairlifts from: £1800 initial payment + £75 per month onwards

We say the prices are "from" because there are a lot of variables when pricing an installation.



What can affect the cost of my stairlift?

Stairlifts are normally tailored to fit your stairs and your needs. For example, if you have a curved staircase, the rail will be bespoke and made to measure your stairs. To get an exact cost of an installation, a survey will need to be carried out. Factors that may affect the cost include:

- the configuration of your stairs
- which model will fit on your stairs
- the features needed
- pre-installation work
- who you buy from

important tip

Compared to the cost of moving home or going into a sheltered or care home, lifts can be a cost-effective solution to staying independent in the home you love.



Don't forget that when purchasing a stairlift there are a number of costs involved. These include:

- The product itself
- The installation
- The warranty (including parts)
- Repair callouts
- An annual service

Installations normally take around 3 - 4 hours; the costs may be more if you have particularly

complicated curved stairs or multiple flights that takes longer to install. Let's explain in more detail what factors will influence the stairlift price.

Factor 1: The shape of your stairs

If you have a straight staircase with no twists and turns in it then your stairs will be the cheapest to purchase a stairlift for. With many dealers, straight stairlifts will already be in stock and then the rail is cut to size by a qualified stairlift engineer. This means that installations can be quicker where the order to installation date is often just a few days.

Curved stairs however, are a bit more tricky. The rail is made specifically for your stairs by the manufacturer. Because of this, curved models are significantly more expensive and often double the price of a straight model. Curved models can also vary in price due to the number of bends on your stairs, you can expect to pay an extra few hundred

pounds per bend. Stairlift costs also depend on how far the rail has to travel; if you wanted the lift to go up multiple flights, for example in a townhouse, extra rail would need to be made.



Factor 2: What model will fit

There are eight stairlift manufacturers based in the UK, meaning there's a good choice of models available. However, only three out of these eight manufacturers sell directly to customers as well as dealers. In order to gain access to the most manufacturers and their models, we recommend using an independent stairlift retailer/dealer.

Each stairlift model will suit you differently, such as how comfy the seat is, how well the lift suits your height and how you are able to work it. By doing research and trying out different models, you'll be able to see which will suit you best. Many retailers have a showroom where you can try before you buy.

Similar to how car models can vary in price due to the make, stairlift models can also vary depending on manufacturer. Some manufacturers have advanced or even patented technology built into their products which can affect cost. Also, some manufacturers may have higher quality parts or styling that could affect the cost of the outcome.



Unfortunately, we've had a number of cases where we have been called out to rectify an incorrectly installed lift, commonly a DIY situation that has been extremely dangerous and has led to some serious near-misses. Often we have to remove the lift and re-install a replacement with the cost being charged to the customer.

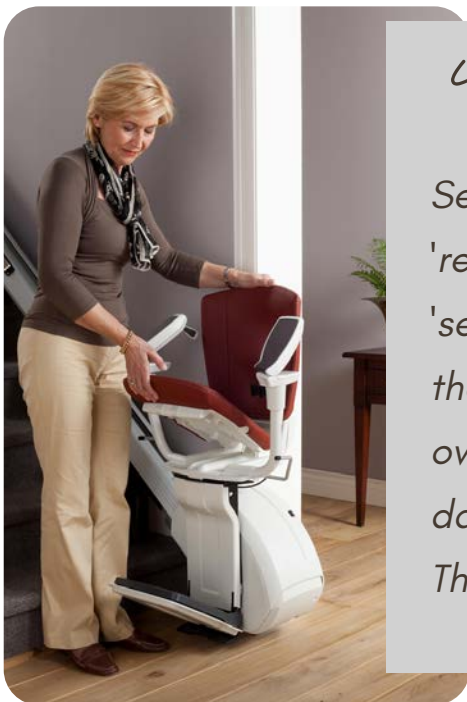
*Peter Frost
Engineering Supervisor at 1st Choice Stairlifts*



Factor 3: What features are needed

The starting prices mentioned in section one are based off of our basic models. There are various options and upgrades available that you may want, or need, that can affect cost.

Upgradable options should be identified by a surveyor, should you need them to operate your lift effectively. For example, a basic stairlift model comes with a manual swivel seat with levers at the side of the chair. To operate this, you press down the levers and use your feet to turn the chair, much like you would with an office chair. If you are unable to do this, a powered swivel option is available where the chair turns automatically when you get to the top of the stairs. Other powered options include powered folding footplates and powered hinge rails. Hinge rails are suitable for those with a doorway or open hallway at the bottom of the stairs while folding footplates are suitable for those who are unable to bend to unfold them manually. All stairlift models have particular weight limits, so depending on your weight, you may be limited to certain models which will affect the cost.



important tip

Search for 'refurbished' or 'reconditioned' lifts as opposed to 'second-hand'. This way you can ensure the lift has been thoroughly checked over and that any visibly worn or damaged parts have been replaced. The lift needs to be as good as new.



Factor 4: What work is needed

Your stairlift will need a power point nearby. Although all lifts are are charged by being continuously connected to the mains. If you don't have one nearby, one will need to be installed. You may have a radiator that sits in the way of where the chair will park, if so, which case, it would need to be move or replaced with a smaller one. Lift companies should have contractors to do this kind of work for you, saving you wont have the hassle of having to organise it yourself. Any work organised through the stairlift company will be charged extra and stated on your quote.



quote from keiran (customisation)

*Peter Frost
Engineering Supervisor at 1st Choice Stairlifts*



Factor 5: Who you buy from and the service they offer

Be sure to check what kind of aftercare service a company can offer. It's important to have an aftercare service that you can rely on. By choosing a company that can offer 24/7, 365 emergency repairs, you can rest assured knowing you're always going to be taken care of. If you are looking for a reputable company to install a lift, we advise looking out for a British Healthcare Trades Association or Which? Trusted Trader Member.



important tip

Search for 'refurbished' or 'reconditioned' lifts as opposed to 'second-hand'. This way you can ensure the lift has been thoroughly checked over and that any visibly worn or damaged parts have been replaced. The lift needs to be as good as new.



How can I save money on a stairlift?

Providing you qualify for “zero-rating”, you will be tax-exempt and won't need to pay VAT on a lift . This means there is zero VAT added to the cost of a product if:

You have a long-term disabling health condition that isn't going to get better e.g. arthritis, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, COPD, etc. A temporary disability like a broken leg won't qualify.

You live in a domestic property and you are using the product, not in a block of flats where there are multiple users.

It is for your use and you are not a business.

You are a qualifying charity.

If you are of 'old age' and don't have a specific health condition, this would not qualify for zero-rating; it would however, attract a 5% reduced rate VAT. If you are a business or are installing for multiple users, you will pay the current VAT rate of 20%. For more information, you can check out the HMRC website or ask your supplier. To claim the zero-rating, your supplier will give you a self-declaration form to fill in with your full name, address and health condition.



How could I get a stairlift for free?

If you need help with the costs involved in buying a stairlift, contact your Adult Social Care Services at your local council. There are also Disabled Facilities Grants available that will pay for your lift. These grants are means-tested so you'd need to check to see if you would qualify for one. You will also be asked for proof of income and savings so be prepared to disclose your financial information to the council. Normally, your needs would be assessed by an Occupational Therapist, you would then be placed on a waiting list ordered by priority. Before the pandemic, the waiting time for a grant to be approved would usually be between 6 and 18 months. Covid-19 however, has created more need for accessibility adaptations and there is also a backlog of applicants, therefore there is heftier waiting list than there was before 2020. The Bureau of Investigate Journalism in 2022 found that the waiting list is far longer than the government rules of 18 months; it is taking longer for people to be seen by an Occupational Therapist before they can even submit their application. Some councils have even reported an average wait time of 2 to 3 years. We recommend checking the wait times with your local authority. Based on these wait time you may consider waiting for a grant approval or, in order to avoid any wait times, you could purchase or rent a model privately.



All you need to know

Your key takeaways for saving money on your stairlift:

- Have an assessment
- Ensure your lift is refurbished
- Always use a qualified stairlift engineer
- Get a stairlift warranty

To ensure you're purchasing a safe, refurbished product, we recommend looking for businesses who are **Which? Trusted Traders** or **BHTA certified**.

We hope that this has helped you with all the questions you have about buying a refurbished lift. If not, you can check out our website, or even give us a call. We're always happy to have a friendly chat!



Thank you!

Call us now for a quote on your refurbished lift. We also offer free, no-obligation assessments!

01249 814528

www.1stchoicestairlifts.com



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