



1st Choice Stairlifts

LIVE YOUR LIFE, YOUR WAY

How To Buy

What to know
before buying a
second-hand lift



Is it safe to buy a second-hand lift?

We understand how important it is for customers to be sure the second-hand product they're buying is safe and fit for purpose. Here at 1st Choice Stairlifts, we pride ourselves on being open, honest and respectful to our customers and so, we want to share some information to protect you from making an expensive mistake when choosing a pre-owned stairlift.



important tip

Buy your second-hand lift from a reputable company to ensure it's safe to use for years to come. If you buy a lift from a private seller there is no way to guarantee your lift is safe or fit for purpose!

There are many reputable lift companies out there selling second-hand stairlifts. However, there are also people selling products privately or through companies who do not have the proper qualifications and are not trained to install them safely. We don't recommend buying stairlifts privately as it may put your safety at risk and end up costing you more money.

We're going to share with you how to ensure that you're purchasing a lift from a reputable company and how you can be sure that your lift is going to serve you safely both now and for years to come.



The buying process

ASSESSMENT

An assessment will be carried out where you and your staircase will be measured. Your mobility and lifestyle will be assessed in order to choose the correct model to suit both your home and your individual needs.

REFURBISHING

The second-hand lift will be thorough checked over to ensure all safety features are in working order. Any damaged or visibly worn parts will be replaced. The lift will also be cleaned and sanitised ready for the new user.

QUALIFIED ENGINEERS

A qualified stairlift engineer will install the lift into your home and give you a demonstration on how to use it safely, they won't leave until they are sure you can use the lift with confidence.

WARRANTY

A refurbished lift will be given a warranty so you can be confident it will remain safe for use. You will also have the option to include an extended warranty.



Why do I need an assessment?



An assessment of you and your staircase is the most important step when purchasing a second-hand lift because it is essential for your safety.

During an assessment, a surveyor will take exact measurements

of your stairs for example, the height and width of your staircase and if there are any bends. The surveyor will also assess your mobility and take measurements of your weight and height. The reason for taking such precise measurements is because every stairlift model on the market is different. While one model may suit a user and their staircase perfectly this may not be the case for the second user.

Let's look at the factors that could affect how a stairlift will suit you and your home.

THE RAIL

Every rail is made to fit each specific staircase, whether it is straight or curved. Stairs in every home tend to vary in height, even if they have the same number of steps. The number of bends and the incline of the staircase can also differ considerably. When the surveyor takes the measurement of your stairs, the figures are sent directly to the workshop or manufacturer depending on whether you have a curved or straight staircase. Rails for straight stairs will be altered to fit your stairs, whereas rails for curved stairs are normally built and made to measure. If this is not done, you could be left with a lift that either does not fit your stairs or does not allow you to get on and off the lift safely.



YOUR MOBILITY

This is one of the most important parts of a survey because there's no use in having a lift that fits your stairs perfectly if you're not able to use it safely. If you have limited dexterity for example, we can choose a lift with a joystick that feels comfortable to use. We may also choose a lift where the chair or footrest fold up and down automatically if you are unable to bend over to do so. Without an assessment, there is no way to ensure the lift will be suitable for your mobility which could increase the risk of potential injury.



Buying a stairlift without having an assessment puts you at greater risk of injury and could also cost more money; if you buy a lift that's not suitable and then it needs replacing, you may end up spending more than if you had chosen a lift from a business who completes a thorough assessment on you as well as your stairs.

*Coral Affleck-Major
Managing Director of 1st Choice Stairlifts*



What's involved in a refurbishment?

When you are researching pre-owned lifts, we recommend using the term 'reconditioned' or 'refurbished' over 'second-hand'. Refurbishing and reconditioning means that a lift has been thoroughly checked over to ensure that all its components are in safe working order for example, the controls, batteries and safety devices.

The recommended lifespan of a stairlift according to manufacturers is 7-10 years from new. Once lifts are discontinued, or newer models have been made to replace the older version, parts that need replacing may be harder to come by. Many companies will no longer offer a warranty should your model past the 10 year mark and safety features may no longer comply with regulatory standards.

To avoid the risk of purchasing a lift that is obsolete, always check the age of the model and ensure that it has been thoroughly refurbished by a qualified engineer. Some companies may allow you to see your model in their workshop in order to see the quality of the recondition, if this is possible we highly recommend doing so.



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 on the inside as well as the outside!



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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

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The Importance of Qualified Stairlift Engineers

When having your stairlift installed or repaired, it's vital that you use a qualified stairlift engineer. There are many safety features on a lift that will only function if the lift is installed and maintained correctly.

Having a lift installed by someone who is not qualified may seem like the cheaper option, however if there is a breakdown or safety issue that is caused by incorrect installation or repairs, this could end up costing considerably more.

To ensure that you are hiring experienced stairlift engineers, we recommend checking whether they are NVO qualified and have been trained to install your specific model.



Get a Stairlift Warranty

Having a warranty in place protects you from unexpected repair bills. Many extended warranties will cover you for labour charges, parts and some may include an annual comprehensive service check. By choosing an extended warranty you could protect yourself from having to spend large sums on broken or worn parts and callout charges.

When purchasing a pre-owned stairlift, we recommend finding a company that will offer a warranty with their models and allow you to add an extended warranty as well. This means they have full confidence that their product has been refurbished to the highest possible standards.



All you need to know

Your key takeaways for purchasing a pre-owned 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!

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www.1stchoicestairlifts.com



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