



Power Wheelchair Comparison Guide



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6 Tips on Selecting the right PWC for you

Your Power Wheelchair (PWC) is probably the most expensive item of Assistive Technology you own, apart from your vehicle. For the average PWC user, the typical equipment lifespan is around 4-5 years, so it is critical that you make the right decision when selecting your equipment.

As a leading provider of PWC and other specialised equipment for clients with special needs since 1952, Astris PME is well placed to share some advice based on their experience. This simple guide has been put together by leading Equipment Consultants, with input from many PWC users across a wide range of conditions (clinical and physical needs), ages and geographic locations.

Before deciding on what model Powered Wheelchair to apply for funding for, we have put together a short checklist of 6 things we recommend.

1. **Get good advice.** Never rush a decision that will have an impact on you over a longer time frame. Ask your therapist what equipment they recommend, based on their knowledge of your situation and goals, and other factors. Connect with an experienced Assistive Technology Professional (ATP), and get their recommendations and advice. Remember cheaper is not always better, and you don't want to be stuck with a decision that is letting you down. Balance "value for money", with the right purchase decision for you. Trial before you buy!
2. **Consider your clinical needs.** Work with your therapist to ensure that the equipment will suit your needs, both now and in the future. If your needs are changing, you may consider hire option. Although this costs more than an outright purchase, it may suit you better if your needs are changing.
3. **Consider your goals.** Consider your education, employment and inclusion goals, and ensure that this investment will put you on track to achieve these goals.
4. **Consider your seating system.** A great chair with a poor seating system equals a bad investment. Make sure your therapist and ATP are making decisions as to your comfort and support, not just on the powered base.
5. **Consider post sale support.** A PWC has many moving parts, and things will go wrong. Ask about the warranty, about programmed maintenance packages, and about how your supplier looks after after-sale support (incl breakdowns). This is extremely important if you work away from home, or live in a remote area.
6. **Consider a MWC with Power Add-On.** Lastly, before you jump in and purchase a PWC, consider if a manual chair with a removable power assist or power-add on would better suit your needs. Discuss this option with your therapist and ATP.



Power mobility was revolutionised with the introduction of Mid-Wheel Drive (MWD) because it offered a small turning radius for improved manoeuvring in tight spaces. The need for Front-Wheel (FWD) and Rear-Wheel Drive (RWD) powerchairs was not diminished by this introduction because they offer completely different options and benefits.



FWD: Drive wheels are at the front of the wheelchair and two castor wheels at the rear. The front drive wheel provides a smoother passage when the chair transitions over obstacles.



MWD: Drive wheels are directly under the wheelchair with four castor wheels on the ground – two in front of the drive wheel and two behind the drive wheel. A tight turning radius means a MWD chair is ideal for indoor use.



RWD: Drive wheels are at the rear of the wheelchair and the two castors are at the front. Good outdoor performance. Provides anterior stability for straight tracking.

Note: Consideration should be given to the needs of the user, the environment the wheelchair will be used and clinician advice. Arranging a trial before deciding is advised.

Magic Mobility/Quickie Range



Model	V6	360	X8	V4 - RWD	V4 - FWD	Q500M	Q700M	Q700UP
Manufacturer	Magic	Magic	Magic	Magic	Magic	Sunrise	Sunrise	Sunrise
Drive	MWD	MWD	4WD	RWD	FWD	MWD	MWD	MWD
Turning Circle (mm)	580	555	1500	520	520	630	630	630
Base Width (mm)	655-710	610-660	710	670-710	670-710	620	620	620
Base Length (mm)	1050	983	1030	930	995	1280	1070	1070
Seat to Floor Height	17"	17"	19"	17"	17"	17"-19"	17"-19"	17"-19"
Seat Depth	16"-24"	16"-22"	16"-24"	16"-24"	16"-24"	15"-22"	15"-22"	15"-22"
Seat Width	12"-24"	12"-22"	12"-24"	12"-24"	12"-24"	16"-22"	16"-22"	16"-22"
Weight Capacity (kg)	155	160	155	155	155	136	160	120
Warranty	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months*	12 months*	12 months*
Note	Ideal for outdoors & capable indoor performer	3 interchangeable drive wheel types for different terrain	Perfect for outdoor adventures, explorers & rural workers	Everyday chair for indoors & outdoors	Everyday chair for indoors & outdoors	Superb indoor manoeuvrability with capable outdoor performance	Advanced suspension that keeps the chair on track	The power to stand wherever you want

*5 years on Frame/Cross-brace

Glide Range



Model	Centro	Electra	Centro - Bariatric	Centro - XT	Comfort
Manufacturer	Glide	Glide	Glide	Glide	Glide
Drive	MWD	RWD	MWD	MWD	RWD
Turning Circle (mm)	580	550	600	610	720
Base Width (mm)	620-740	600	740	740	670
Base Length (mm)	900	950	980	980	1150
Seat to Floor Height	18"	18"	18"	18"	18"
Seat Depth	12"-22"	14"-22"	12"-23"	12"-22"	15"-22"
Seat Width	12"-24"	14"-20"	12"-24"	12"-22"	15"-22"
Weight Capacity (kg)	175	150	250	175	175
Warranty	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months
Note	Robust build makes for a stable and trouble-free product	Folding power wheelchair with low seat to floor height	Great weight capacity with narrow base	Excellent drivability for grassed and off pavement driving	Particularly good for cushioning the impact of bumps and jolts

Permobil Range



Model	M1	M3	M5	F3	F5-VS	M300 - HD
Manufacturer	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil
Drive	MWD	MWD	MWD	FWD	FWD	MWD
Turning Circle (mm)	520	520	550	670	760	560
Base Width (mm)	610	610	635	610	650	660
Base Length (mm)	900	900	950	1020	1070	965
Seat to Floor Height	16"-18"	17.5"-19.5"	17.5"-19.5"	17.5"-19.5"	17.5"-19.5"	18"-20"
Seat Depth	14"-22"	14"-22"	14"-22"	14"-22"	14"-22"	19"-25"
Seat Width	14"-22"	17"-23"	17"-23"	17"-23"	17"-23"	19"-25"
Weight Capacity (kg)	136	136	136	136	136	204
Warranty	12 months	12 months	24 months	12 months	24 months	12 months
Note	Low-cost power wheelchair with Tilt in Space	Superior programmability and seating features	Best in class driving experience so you can sit for longer	Compact size & agility makes for easy manoeuvrability	Fully programmable power-standing sequence	Built to withstand the rigors of a heavy-duty lifestyle

Paediatric Range



Model	Explorer Mini	K300 Ps Jr.	M300 Ps Jr.	Koala	Z500 Mini	Stretto
Manufacturer	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil	Permobil	Sunrise	Quantum
Intended Age Range	12-36 months					
Drive	FWD	FWD	MWD	FWD	MWD	MWD
Turning Circle (mm)		630	510	530	610	530
Base Width (mm)	480	610	610	580	520	520
Base Length (mm)	630	1010	930	810	1120	810
Seat to Floor Height	12"-21"	16.5"-18"	17"-18.5"	15"	17"-21"	16"-18"
Seat Depth		10"-18"	10"-18"	10"-14"	10"-19"	12"-20"
Seat Width		11"-16"	11"-16"	10"14"	10"-16"	12"-20"
Weight Capacity (kg)	15.9kg	75	75	35	75	136
Warranty	12 months	12 months	12 months	24 months	12 months	12 months
Note	Early intervention mobility device that initiates self-facilitated movement and exploration	Highly adjustable with compact base and capable suspension	Adult sized power base with adjustable seat pan means the chair can grow with a child	Low seat to floor allows users to interact at the same height as their peers	Great to navigate tight spaces and capable of tackling tough terrain	Perfect for easy maneuvering and great shock absorption for overall comfort

Recommended Brands

Over the last 10 years, we have seen a lot of improvements in technology with Powered Wheelchairs. During this time, we have worked with numerous clients who have trusted our PWC recommendations because they suited their specific needs.

We partner with manufacturers that continue to innovate, improve, and stand behind their warranties, so we know we will be supported. There is no such thing as the 'perfect chair for all users' so we don't just recommend one brand or one model. We have a wide range of models from leading manufacturers including Magic Mobility (made in Australia), Sunrise Medical (Quickie and Zippe ranges), Glide, Permobil and Quantum.



There are other great chairs out there; the ones listed in this guide are the ones we have found work best for our clients.



Questions?
Get in touch today!



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