

orangebox

design innovation on every level

allowme®

standing work
counter-height work
project table work

design innovation on every level

allowme®

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smart working®

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MBS (swivel only) 420mm fixed height

No Mechanism

The fact that the back frame geometry provides progressive recline resistance for the chair precludes the requirement for a conventional mechanism (a mechanism conventionally made up of many parts, and of a diverse mix of materials). As a result, the whole chair contains fewer parts than are found within a traditional mechanism alone. Such dematerialisation and reductive design will help pave the way to an equitable carbon-based economy.

No Staples, No Glue

This is the first task chair in our portfolio that doesn't employ either of these traditional fixing methods, both of which can make it difficult to maintain or take apart a chair. The seat fabric simply floats over the seat plastic and foam, without restricting the pliant nature of the flexible seat shell. An elasticated trim on the seat cover makes fitting easy at the point of manufacture, and also allows it to be easily replaced for an onsite refresh some years down the line.

These considerations clearly demonstrate our commitment to total product stewardship, and have resulted in a product with multiple lifecycle considerations, covering every eventuality. The chair's simplicity of design and manufacture also makes it a future-proof investment, which can be refreshed to meet your changing needs.

Our aim is always to design a classic, we've worked hard to achieve this with AllowMe: only time will tell if we've succeeded.



MBS 420mm fixed height

Functional Performance

AllowMe makes light work of the increasing variety of scenarios that improve productivity and efficiency in the contemporary workplace, from conventional executive meeting spaces to traditional 720mm desk-orientated tasking; from sit/stand work and project tables to elevated counter-height work.

Height adjustment:

One dynamic principle applied across the four models in the range provides a solution for any situation, with one simple adjustment – height adjust (the only function all users look for when setting up a chair) – instantly getting you to the position that suits you best. AllowMe's MBP Model (430mm-650mm height range) is a game changer, the increased range of adjustment allows a huge proportion of people to use the chair in a conventional 720mm desk height scenario, while also facilitating perching up to a desk height of 950mm. This is, perhaps, the chair's most impressive USP.

Back support:

The patented back support has enabled us to eliminate the need for a complex mechanism to deliver movement for the chair: the back frame geometry is the mechanism. Two coiled helix profiles act as a spring to give the chair a dynamic feel when loaded, as each helix deflects independently offering responsive support in any direction. The back frame moves as you do, reacting to your body's subtle natural flexing and movement.

Seat structure:

AllowMe's seat structure is very different from the norm. Seats traditionally feature stiffly laminated parts; a structural outer onto which an inner seat-foam carrier for the seat foam is clipped, meaning comfort levels are dictated solely by the thickness of the foam. The fact that AllowMe's extended height range enables perching meant the seat itself couldn't be structurally stiff, as the user only engages the front third of the seat when perching. To avoid excess pressure (and consequent reduced blood flow to the hamstrings), AllowMe's seat front edge is pliant, acting like a springboard and deflecting under load as you change position in the chair or shift to an almost upright, engaged perch position. This gives an open hip to thigh angle, holding the pelvis in a natural, upright position.

Arm support:

A fixed-height 'armlet' provides the user with a rest for their elbow and forearm, with a short front-to-back dimension that allows both user and chair to get closer to the desk. The arm and back frame tri-form connection gives the chair an open aspect, allowing the user to sit unencumbered for 320 degrees of the seat profile. Egress and ingress are also facilitated by the armlet, as the back frame's progressive resistance provides a safe platform into or out of the chair. (The armlet can be specified with a soft arm cap for added comfort).



MBSH (standard height) 410mm-545mm

allowing users to instantly configure work settings that suit them and the task at hand.



545mm MBSH 410mm

Crafted not Drafted.

The initial concept emerged out of the Perch team's making process, and this hand-crafted approach has helped shape and hone the entire AllowMe range. After spending 1000s of fruitless hours manipulating 3D CAD and inadvertently becoming inspired by a piece of reindeer horn at a Christmas market, biomimetic design did the rest. For instance, we crafted the arm juncture using basic hand tools and sand paper, solving the problem almost instantaneously.

Creating the sprung helix profiles in fibre glass resin for the first prototype and finalising the back frame geometry in solid wood helped give AllowMe its compelling purity of form.

Playing with wood also sparked an interesting debate for us internally. We've known for quite some time that the most responsible material we can build our chairs from is wood – rapidly renewable, low carbon impact, locally grown and naturally biophilic.

The only real downside is its high cost. Performance could possibly have been an issue, but we reckoned that trees naturally deflect under pressure from wind and heavy snowfall, so there's no reason why a laminated wooden structure couldn't perform well and be remarkably strong and resilient. Feeling that wood was exactly the right material to use, we invested in two major prototyping tools to make it happen.

Luke Palmer – Principal Designer

The Design Story.

The best stories start with a great idea, and the great idea at the heart of the AllowMe story emerged after Simon Dennehy and Phil Hamilton of Dublin's Perch Design asked themselves,

'How can we make a chair that beautifully mimics dynamic human movement?'

The practice wanted to create a beautifully simple chair that would move fluidly with the user... An ergonomic chair that would improve comfort and wellbeing by promoting continuous low-threshold movement and active-dynamic sitting, for any size or shape of user, built around pelvic rotation and hip abduction.

In their quest for enabling 'applied human movement', Dennehy and Hamilton took to their workshop, applying engineering ingenuity and creative thinking to basic modelling techniques and materials. The result was a chair back involving a single piece of geometry based on a helical sprung section, providing progressive resistance during the natural recline movement of the user, regardless of their shape or size.

The geometry of the double helix makes the back a thing of beauty, which immediately captured our attention and fired our imagination. With nothing other than one manual control in the form of height adjustment, the quest in partnership with Orangebox was also to promote better posture and comfort in a variety of typical settings from casual reclined collaborative sitting and right-angled task sitting, right up to an elevated perch touch down position.

The challenge for the Orangebox team tasked with evolving the design for production was, however, how to remain true to its defining geometric principle and spirit, while manufacturing at scale using modern processes. It ended up being a five-year development process; one which inspired and stretched the minds of all those involved.

MBSH

stand perch sit

410mm

design
innovation
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allowme®

Any Height.
Any Desk.
Any User... AllowMe

While sitting conventionally at a desk may still be the default working option for many of us, more and more companies are adopting sit-stand desks across the board for their employees. And for those prepared to change their default approach to how and where they work, this could bring huge health, social, cultural and productivity benefits.

As we move toward more informal work settings, adaptive furniture will become the norm, facilitating multifunctional work styles by allowing users to instantly configure work settings that suit them and the task at hand.

Focus and Fidgeting in the VC World of Work

Back-to-back video conference meetings became the norm during lockdown and the habit has stuck, with rapid-fire meetings now frequently replacing the to'ing and fro'ing of long drawn-out email trails. The fact so many participants switch off their camera during calls may be an indication of discomfort (cf. the long-established 'fidget index'), with ergonomists giving four-legged 'resi' chairs a mere 20-minute 'sit distance' before concentration and blood circulation suffer. AllowMe, however, has natural articulation that you can't lock off, encouraging and supporting micro movements that help users to stay physically and mentally nourished and 'in the room'.

The Power of Perching

Observational workplace studies have shown that many of us aren't receiving the health benefits associated with sit-to-stand workstations. It's all very well providing the workforce with height adjustable desk functionality, but if you don't inform and convince them of the benefits of postural change over the course of a working day it's a waste of capital investment. It's also a missed opportunity to encourage them towards a more active work life; something that will bring enormous health benefits over the course of their career. Training and educating employees on the wellbeing and effectiveness benefits of sit-to-stand is key to adoption, which means you don't have to settle for either a conventional desk-height chair or standing for too long and getting fatigued when you have a chair which allows postural choice at different heights.

Enjoying the Highs and the Lows

All of AllowMe's movement comes from the helix backrest and the flexibility in the front of the seat, removing the need for the conventional-looking mechanism between the gas lift and the underside of the seat. This results in fewer moving parts that need servicing - and fewer materials generally - while also freeing up space for a longer gas lift, for the first time allowing the user to travel in one go from sitting at conventional desk height to perching.

What the Research Tells Us

Even the most active amongst us will suffer ill effects if we remain static for too long. We therefore need to gently encourage chair users to shift position frequently by making it easy and intuitive for them to do so. This will help us transition toward new sitting habits, and eventually make perching the new sitting.

Spinal tracing evidence demonstrates a clear improvement in lower back comfort when the hip angle is opened while perching. The forward inclination and rotation of the hips encourages a flattening of the spine, helping to prevent lordosis or kyphosis (spinal curvature), which can be worsened during protracted periods of immobility.

A New Attitude at a New Altitude

Ad hoc discussion with a passing colleague or line manager will subliminally put the person sitting at a desk at a disadvantage, with the physical fact of being looked down on taking away their power, making passive engagements the norm. Working at bar-height, however, levels the playing field, changing things both socially and physically. Perching at height allows for a face-to-face conversation, meaning the standing party no longer has the advantage. It also provides the sitter with a better view of the office and an increased opportunity for social interaction.

A Shifting Focus

Teams of all sizes are now coming together and dispersing with an agility and frequency unimaginable only a short time ago. Kitchen table wash-ups, project table reviews, impromptu updates and multi-level gatherings are enhancing collaboration and productivity, often involving video participation from those working remotely.

Light, responsive, dynamic and easily reconfigurable furniture can help foster these energetic working styles, making it easier to keep the conversation flowing, allowing spontaneous participation from colleagues passing by, and giving those working remotely a better view of and feel for workplace culture.

stand perch
sit

- 01. MBS (swivel only) 420mm fixed height
- 02. MBC (counter height) 611mm-873mm
- 03. MBP (standard height & perch height) 434mm-650mm
- 04. MBSH (standard height) 410mm-545mm



873mm
MBC
611mm



650mm
MBP
434mm



545mm
MBSH
410mm



Redefining Simplicity

Building on more than two decades of environmental design, the design and engineering team working on AllowMe put dematerialisation at the heart of the development process. The result is our simplest-ever chair, featuring just 22 individual parts in the entire assembly (dependent on model code), compared to approximately 60-80 components in an equivalent chair with a traditional mechanism.

65mm castors	5
Base	1
Gaslift	1
Cone Plate	1
Seat Plastic	1
Seat Foam	1
Seat Fly	1
Seat Cover	1
Back Frame	1
Knitted Cover	1
Screws	4
Clips	4

Total Part Count 22

Trust us, these numbers keep us awake at night! This reduction in part count and number of materials used results in a chair that can be efficiently maintained, and potentially remanufactured, maximising its lifecycle potential and reducing its carbon footprint.

making light work
of the ever-changing
demands of
the hybrid world of work