UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER℠
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY GUIDELINE
Office Chair & Stool Caster Safety

What are Office Chair & Stool Casters?

Essentially, a caster is a wheeled device mounted to the bottom of each chair leg, allowing the chair to move and roll easily. The basic components of any caster include the mount, stem, and wheel. There may be additional parts depending on the type of caster and its intended use.

What to Consider When Choosing the Appropriate Caster

The design and construction of casters will vary according to these main factors:

- How the chair will be used
- The chair's weight capacity
- What type of flooring the chair will be rolling across

These considerations will dictate which caster size, material, and tread best suit your needs.

Smaller wheels experience more stress during use and are more difficult to roll. Larger wheels are better for frequent use and traveling over high pile carpets. Cheaply made casters don't work to evenly distribute weight as effectively, which means that they experience wear and tend to fail. Finally, the wrong tread can cause damage to your floors. Facilities Project Managers will consider these factors when ordering new chairs.

Caster Sizes

Most office chairs come standard with 2" to 2.5" wheels. While this is undoubtedly an adequate size, there are some advantages to going with larger wheels and opting for at least a 3" wheel. As you might imagine, larger wheels create less resistance when rolling and can more easily overcome obstacles, including high-pile carpets. Larger casters offer more durability and versatility, so you won't have to worry about replacing your casters.

Twin Wheel Vs. Single Wheel

Twin or dual-wheel casters are perhaps the most common in office chairs. The dual caster design creates a wider surface that more effectively distributes weight, prolonging the casters' life and preventing any damage to your floors. Twin casters are also unique because they can roll and swivel, making it easy to change directions while enjoying better overall stability quickly.

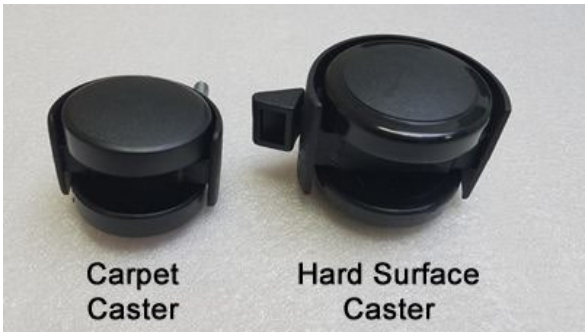
Single-wheel casters tend to be stronger than twin-wheel casters because they have a more solid construction with fewer moving parts that can fail. For these reasons, they are typically used in more industrial applications, while twin wheel options are optimal for use in office furniture.

Types Of Office Chair & Stool Casters

- **Carpet (Soft floor) Casters (standard on most chairs and stools)**
  Most office furniture is outfitted with carpet casters, which can easily operate directly on the carpet. These casters are typically made of plastic.

- **Hard Surface (Hard floor) Casters (safe on hardwood, tile, linoleum)**
  There are caster options specifically designed to be used on hard surface floors. These models are constructed using softer materials that can be safely rolled across hardwood floors without causing damage. They also help prevent the chair or stool from being pushed away too easily.

- **Safety Casters**
  Safety casters automatically lock when the chair is unoccupied, and the casters only roll after a person is fully seated on the chair.



Safely Sitting on Your Chair or Stool.

Employees are advised not to quickly sit on the edge of the chair with some speed and force, as this will likely cause the chair to slip away from them, resulting in a fall.

For your safety, especially if you use a high task stool or a chair on a hard surface, be mindful to slow down and seat yourself back in the seat.

If your chair rolls too easily on a hard floor or plastic mat, speak to your manager about having the casters checked or removing the plastic mat.

To check or change casters, enter a service request to Facilities. In the service request, please list the chair/stool's model or serial number (labeled on the underside of the stool) and the room numbers where they are located. Facilities will look at the chairs and space and send a quote to replace the casters. If you accept the quote and decide to proceed, Facilities will order new casters and manage it as a project.

Updated 05/2024