

What You Need to Know ... Before Buying a Stair Lift

Regaining the freedom to move around your home may be as easy as installing a stair lift. If you, a friend or family member has trouble with stairs but would like to stay in their current home, a stair lift may be the right solution.

Stair lifts are gaining in popularity in the United States as the population ages. Many older adults continue to enjoy good health and want to remain in their homes, but find stairs to be a challenge.

Today's stair lifts, such as those manufactured and installed by Harmar, Handicare and Brooks, do not require any structural changes to the home, and they do not damage the stairs or home décor. The stair lifts are designed for quiet, efficient operation, with a battery-powered motor with regular house current used to recharge the batteries.

Some top things to know when considering adding a stair lift to your home include:

Stair Style. Choosing the right stair lift for your stairs helps you get the most from the product. Lifts are available in designs specific to straight stairways, curved stairways and outdoor stairways such as front steps or patio steps. The modular style of most manufacturer stair lifts allows for easy installation without structural changes to the home.

Safety Features. Most models of stair lifts include multiple safety features. The chair and built-in footrest typically fold up when not in use, allowing for easy passage on the stairs. The lifts also feature sensors on the foot platform, motor rail panels (top & bottom) that will stop the lift when triggered. In addition, most lifts include remote control components to make it easy for family or others to operate. The stair lifts also include safety belts, locks, lockable swivel seats and light touch for easy operation by individuals whose dexterity is limited.

Support. When you purchase a stair lift from an authorized dealer and installation provider, service and support is performed by a trained service technician who can address any problems with your stair lift. In addition, look for a manufacturer of stair lifts that offers a warranty that covers the motor and gearbox on the stair lift for as long as you own it, plus a one-year warranty from the installation date on all other parts. Only authorized manufacturer dealer and installers can provide service. If a stair lift is removed or serviced by an unauthorized dealer/installer, the manufacturer reserves the right to "void" all warranties.

Purchasing Used. We see "used" lifts listed in local newspapers and the internet. The price is much lower than a new unit, so you buy it. Great deal...maybe not. Unless you're an authorized manufacturer dealer/installer, buying used from a private owner can be a serious mistake. Work with an authorized manufacturer dealer/installer when considering a used unit. Protect your investment and avoid unexpected costs for installation, repairs and "voided" warranties.

Ask for References. Stair lift manufacturers list authorized dealers/installers on their website. Check out multiple dealers in your area. Make sure the company you select is an authorized dealer with a proven track record of successful installations. Ask for customer references you can call. Be wary of "shady" companies who do not list their credentials or manufacturer affiliation, and are not insured.

(Source) Portions of this article are reprinted from an Acorn Stair Lifts article published in NewsUSA

BLACKBURN'S is an authorized manufacturer dealer/installer for Brooks, Handicare and Harmar stair lifts. Our manufacturer-trained professionals will provide a home evaluation to determine the right stair lift for your needs. Call to schedule your *free* in-home evaluation.

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