

The BackChecker™

User Guide



Active Posture Devices™

www.activeposturedevices.com

Cautions and warnings

- The BackChecker™ is not a toy. It contains small parts that may be harmful if swallowed.
- This device is intended for adults or those under adult supervision.
- Do not wear this device if you cannot be exposed to strong magnets or electric motors; for example, you use a pacemaker or other medical device.
- Do not wear this device in any situation where the vibration would cause a dangerous distraction.
- Do not drop the switch unit, heat it, or immerse it in any liquid.
- Do not clean this device with any volatile fluid.
- Do not attempt to operate this device when it is disassembled or damaged in any way.
- Posture should be corrected gradually over short exposures: attempting to correct habitually poor posture too quickly may cause frustration and discomfort.
- Some postural problems may be due to medical conditions. Before using this device, or any other piece of health equipment, you may wish to consult a health care professional.
- No medical claims of diagnosis or treatment are made or implied for the BackChecker™.

How your BackChecker™ works

Slumping while sitting or standing often causes back, neck, head, and shoulder problems. It also creates a negative body image.

When you slump or let your shoulders roll forward, your BackChecker™ gives you a quiet and gentle vibrating reminder to stand or sit up straight. Repeated reminders help you gradually relearn proper posture.

Carefully read all of the following instructions before using your BackChecker™. For full details, take course “Getting the Most Out of Your BackChecker™” included in your kit.

Preparing your BackChecker™

Unpacking

Your BackChecker™ comes assembled with a fresh battery installed. To unpack, simply remove the tape securing the harness to the switch unit.



Testing the switch unit

1. Gently pull out the spring tab. The switch unit should vibrate strongly.*
2. Release the spring tab. It should retract easily and the vibration should stop.



*If the switch unit does not vibrate or vibrates very weakly, check the battery (see “Caring your BackChecker™”).

Checking the harness

1. Examine the webbing, sewing, and strap fixtures.
2. Pull on the closed sensitivity adjustment tabs. They should hold when you apply moderate force.

Wearing your BackChecker™

When you are wearing your BackChecker™ properly, you should only notice it when it vibrates to let you know you are slumping. Pay close attention to the following instructions for fitting your BackChecker™.

If possible, have someone assist you when you put on your BackChecker™ for the first time.

Do not wear it next to your skin; however, you can wear clothing over it.

Putting on the harness

1. Prefit the harness:
 - Size the straps to your shoulders.
 - Move the sensitivity adjustment tabs so that the D-rings sit midway across each side of your chest.
2. Lay the harness over your right forearm so that
 - The cover screw and sensitivity adjustment tabs face away from your body.
 - The harness tab is uppermost.
3. Put the strap on your right shoulder and then the other strap on your left.
4. Adjust the strap sliders so that the straps are snug but not tight. The straps should not slide off your shoulders.



Note: If the straps will not stay on your shoulders, try using pieces of the supplied mounting tape between the straps and your clothing. Be careful not to damage your clothing when removing the straps.

Setting the switch sensitivity

1. Adopt a comfortable upright posture with your ears, neck, shoulders, and trunk in line.
2. Shorten or lengthen (equally) the sensitivity adjustment tabs so that the switch unit vibrates when you let your shoulders slump forward slightly or let your shoulders roll forward.
3. Perform a final adjustment of the strap sliders, positioning them so that the straps are only slightly noticeable.



Tips for using your BackChecker™

- The real key to getting the best out of your BackChecker™ is to train with it for short exposures over time.
- During your initial training period, wear it for 45-60 minute exposures over 2 weeks.
- On the first day, wear your BackChecker™ no more than three times for 45 minutes each time and spread over the entire day.

- After the first day, wear it for about 1 hour several times a day during a variety of your regular activities.
- Keep the switch sensitivity low at first and then increase the challenge over time as your posture improves.
- It is normal for your body to feel some minor discomfort while you remodel your posture; however, if the pain is severe or if it continues, stop using your BackChecker™ and consult a health care professional.
- You may need to adjust the straps and adjustment tabs slightly when moving between sitting and standing.
- Pay attention to which activities trigger the switch and then modify these activities wherever possible.
- Do not use your BackChecker™ during vigorous or athletic activities or in situations where you are continuously moving the upper back and arms.
- After your initial training period, train periodically to help reinforce and maintain your new posture.
- In addition to using your BackChecker™, you should perform basic exercises to help correct your slumping (see “Exercises for slumping posture”). Consult a health care professional if you need additional exercises.

Caring for your BackChecker™

With proper care and use your BackChecker™ will last many years:

- Test the switch unit and check the harness daily as described in “Preparing your BackChecker™.”
- Clean your BackChecker™ daily as described below.
- Change the battery and elastic spring as required as described below.
- Maintain the harness as required as described below.

Cleaning

Warning: Do not use volatile cleaners on any part of your BackChecker™. Do not heat the switch unit or immerse it in liquids.

Clean your BackChecker™ daily. Wipe down the switch unit and harness using a damp, soapy cloth. Allow them to air-dry.

You can machine wash the harness. Unhook the sensitivity adjustment tabs and remove the switch unit before washing. Close the hook and loop fasteners to avoid collecting lint. Allow the harness to air-dry.

Changing the battery

Change the battery when the vibration strength is noticeably weak when you test the switch. Replace the battery with a good quality 1.5 volt, 10 to 12 mm battery.

Remove the battery when storing your BackChecker™ for an extended period.

To change the battery

1. Remove the new battery from its packaging.
2. Lay the switch unit on its back (cover screw *up*).
3. Remove the screw using the supplied screwdriver.
4. *While holding the switch unit together*, flip it over.
5. Remove the bottom cover and set it on its back. Take care not to detach the elastic spring (to reattach, see “Changing the elastic spring”).
6. Carefully slide the battery under the clip of the battery holder.
7. Replace the bottom cover so that the magnet on the spring tab faces the magnetic switch.
8. Insert and tighten the screw: *do not overtighten*.
9. Test the switch unit.
10. Safely dispose of the old battery.



Changing the elastic spring

Change the elastic spring when the spring tab no longer moves in and out of the switch unit under tension or the switch unit triggers too easily.

Remove the elastic spring when storing your BackChecker™ for an extended period.

To change the elastic spring

1. Obtain a new spring from your maintenance kit.
2. Open the switch unit as described in “Changing the battery.”
3. Remove the spring tab and elastic spring.
4. Loop the new elastic spring around the magnet on spring tab and onto the center post.
5. Reseat the spring tab in the cover.
6. Close and test the switch unit.
7. Safely dispose of the old elastic spring.



Maintaining the harness

- Use scissors to carefully trim any loose threads.
- If the sewing is damaged, you may repair it yourself or contact Support.
- If a fixture is damaged, contact Support.

Exercises for slumping posture

The easiest exercises for slumping posture are Brügger's exercises. If you are sitting, take 10-second *micro-breaks* every 20 minutes and adopt Brügger's "postural relief position":

1. Sit at the edge of your chair with your feet farther apart than your hips.
2. Turn your feet outward slightly.
3. Tuck your chin straight back slightly.
4. Breathe into your abdomen
5. Actively exhale while
 - a. extending your fingers and turning your palms outward
 - b. raising your breastbone slightly
6. Repeat twice.



Try doing the same movements while standing.

Reference: Liebenson C. *Self-treatment of the slump posture, Part 1: Beginner exercises*. Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies. April 2001.

Customer support

If you have any questions about your BackChecker™, contact Support at Active Posture Devices™:

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Limited Warranty Statement

Active Posture Devices™ warrants to the original consumer purchaser that new Active Posture Devices™ products will be free from defects in material and workmanship for 1 year from the date of original purchase.

If you discover a defect, Active Posture Devices™ will, at its discretion, replace the product with the same model or if that model is no longer in production with a comparable model at no charge to you, provided you return it during the warranty period, with transportation charges prepaid to the customer support center. Contact Active Posture Devices™ for a ticket number prior to shipping. This is your exclusive remedy with respect to the product. The item must be packaged in Active Posture Devices™ packaging or approved equivalent to obtain warranty service. A copy of the receipt or a bill of sale is required for warranty service.

This warranty is not applicable to (1) normal wear and tear; (2) abuse, unreasonable use, mistreatment, or neglect; (3) damage caused by modification or repair not authorized by Active Posture Devices™; or (4) damage caused by improper packaging or transportation when returning the product.

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