

## WHY THE ZENBENCH

When we meditate, we want a posture that is comfortable and sustainable throughout the period of meditation.

While we all want to experience the calm and expansiveness that accompanies meditation, often we cannot sit without shifting and moving simply because we are sitting without proper support. Moving and shifting, of course, defeats our efforts to sit still and enter the stream of meditation. Discomfort and pain can get in the way of sustaining a regular meditation practice.

As you think of buying a cushion or bench to use for support during meditation, consider how you can meditate with the most comfort and stability. If you are flexible you will like sitting on a cushion (a zafu, or one of the newer versions of it). If you cannot sit low on a single zafu with both knees resting or almost resting on the floor, or are more comfortable straddling two stacked zafus while kneeling, consider the ZenBench.



In walnut, adjusted to be higher and below, in maple, adjusted lower.



People who meditate regularly will agree on the following:

a. The feeling of stability and rootedness that accompanies meditation is helped by knowing that you have returned to a posture that is both precise and familiar. As you meditate more, you want predictability in your cushion or bench. Your body learns what is a stable and comfortable posture and it will want to return to this posture. (People in retreats are fussy about picking a cushion or bench they can depend on.)

b. It is uncomfortable to sit cross-legged if your knees are up in the air and do not rest supported by the floor or a cushion. As gravity pulls your knees down you will feel the tendons in your thighs tense up. With only your buttocks to support you, this posture is wobbly. A stable ("grounded") posture is essential to meditate.

c. Soft cushions, or cushions with a high loft, are not particularly useful. Think of the firmness of a bicycle seat, a saddle, or the driver's seat of your car. Cushions stacked high are not ideal, since they "sink" and you end up in a different posture from what you started with.

d. You want a range of adjustability. Think once again of a bicycle seat, a saddle, or a driver's seat in your car. On long trips, you may want to adjust your seat. Small adjustments realign your body and relieves the points where you feel undue pressure. After you find your zone of comfort, adjustments you make to the ZenBench are not dramatic, but rather subtle and small. The small changes in pressure and alignment relax joints and muscles and makes you feel renewed.

The ZenBench will adjust to the precise height and tilt where you are most comfortable. No other bench can guarantee this. Give your joints and muscles a break. You can listen to your body as you meditate, readjust the bench as you need to, and in a short time find your still point.

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High seat with cushion. Maple legs, laminated bamboo benchtop. This was built higher than a stock bench, for someone whose knees could not close easily. Today that person's knees are more flexible, and he alternates between a zafu (round cushion) and this bench. When adjusted "low" the front edge of this bench will tip down to 5 1/2", slightly higher than our stock bench.

This photograph shows clearly how raising or lowering the front or back of the bench will change height and angle. The benchtop is a full 8" deep, so you get plenty of support.

We guarantee that the ZenBench will fit you.

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"I am an experienced practitioner, but as I am aging I am having more and more difficulties with long sitting periods. This is the first bench I have ever used on retreat. I was having real problems with my knees, hips, and back until I used this bench. With its adjustable features one can change the angle and height easily. This is a wonderful product for anyone who has arthritis (as I do) or is less flexible for any reason. I highly recommend it." (a signed online review of the ZenBench on Amazon.com.)