

Landmark identification

Explanation to participant:

Before we start the next assessments I need to identify some bony regions in your back. I will mark the points I find. These points will help me to measure the shape of your back and to carry out accurate assessments.

Setting: physiotherapy treatment cubicle

Equipment required:

Gown	Treatment plinth	Skin/Make up pencil
Two towels	Pillows	

Method:

1. Prepare the plinth with a pillow on the edge. Raise the plinth to a suitable height. The pillow may be used by the participant to lean their head on should they wish to.
2. Start by asking the person to remove their top and don a gown so that you can observe their back.
3. Palpate the spine to determine the spinous processes of C7 and mark this point.
 - C7 can be identified by palpating the base of the occiput down into the deep hollow where the next bony prominence felt will be C2, then C3-5 are closely packed and the spine of C6 is very prominent. To ensure you have not moved on to C7, ask the participant to raise the head when C6 should disappear under your finger,



- move on to C7 the next spine and mark.



4. To locate L1. Identify the sacrum between the posterior borders of the ilia, slide your hand cephalad towards the dip or base of the sacrum and to the fifth lumbar vertebra. Count up one level and find the spinous process of L4. The L4 spinous process is typically larger than the L5 process. To double check place your hands on the iliac crests with your thumbs pointing towards one another which will put you in the region of L4. Count up from L4 to identify L1.
- Alternatively you could identify T12. The spinous process of T12 is typically smaller than L1. T12 can also be verified by location of the 12th rib and the attachment site at T12 then go down to the next level to find L1.

