

# Proper Workstation Ergonomics

*How to Prevent Injury and Boost Productivity in Your Office*

## Ergonomic Seated Position



When sitting at your desk chair, make certain that your hips are positioned as far back in the chair as they can go. Adjust the height of your chair so that your feet are flat on the floor and your knees are equal to, or slightly lower than your hips. The back of your chair should be positioned in a 100-110 degree reclined angle and both your upper and lower back should be supported by the chair. Small ergonomic pillows should be used if your desk chair lacks support for your back. Adjust the armrests of your chair so that your

shoulders are in a natural, relaxed position and if they are in the way, remove the armrests from your desk chair. If your ergonomic office chair allows for it, make slight changes in positioning throughout the day.

If the height of your desk or keyboard requires you to raise your chair height so that your feet dangle, use a footrest to support your feet and legs.

## Ergonomic Mouse & Keyboard Positioning



If possible, an articulating keyboard tray should be attached to your desk and used, as it can offer you the ability to fine-tune positioning for ideal ergonomic placement. It should have room for your mouse (to keep it close), and should not interfere with your leg positioning. The primary thing to remember about ergonomic keyboard and mouse positioning is to keep everything close and avoid having to reach to use your peripherals. Position the keyboard directly in front of your body, and make sure it is close to you with the section you use most frequently centered in front of

you. Keyboard height should allow your shoulders to be relaxed, your elbows in a slightly open position (100-110 degrees vs. 90 degrees), and your wrists and hands should be straight and in line with the angle of your arms. A negative-angle keyboard tray can be ideal for this. Palm support in front of your keyboard may also help. Your mouse should be as close as possible to your keyboard to avoid over-reaching, and you can use a cushioned mouse pad to keep your hand and wrist properly positioned if necessary.

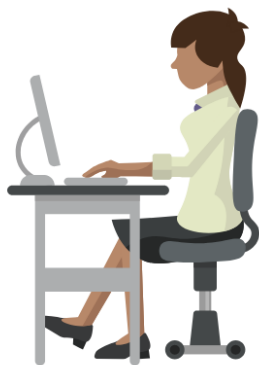
## Ergonomic Monitor, Documents & Telephone Positioning



It is important to position the top of your computer monitor 2-3" above eye level, and to keep that height consistent if you alternate between sitting and standing at a height-adjustable desk. Center the monitor directly in front of you and above your keyboard tray. You should be seated or standing at least one arm's length away from your computer screen and adjust objects on your screen appropriately to make them easy to see.

Reduce glare on your computer screen by positioning the screens at right-angles to windows if possible, and if not possible adjust curtains or blinds in your office to diffuse light and prevent glare. Vertical screen angle should be adjusted to reduce glare from overhead lights, and optical glass glare filters or secondary task lights may be used to adjust lighting in your office. If you use multiple monitors, swivel your chair and keyboard tray to face the screen you're working on to avoid neck strain. If you need to reference documents, position them close to you and alongside your monitor, using a document stand if possible. If you use a telephone keep it close to you, and if possible use a headset to avoid cradling the handset for extended periods of time.

## Office Desk Ergonomics



If you sit at your desk be sure there is adequate clearance for your knees, thighs, and feet. If your desk is too high to maintain proper ergonomic keyboard positioning, raise your chair so your arms and eyes are at the proper position and use a footrest or small stool to support your feet and legs.

If the front edge of your desk has a hard or sharp edge, pad it or use a wrist support to avoid injury. You can use the ergonomic desk height calculator at the URL below to gain a general sense for the best ergonomic desk position for your height:

<https://www.10desks.com/ergonomic-desk-height-calculator.html>

## The Importance of Taking Pauses & Breaks



No matter how perfect your ergonomic workstation is, extended periods in any static posture can inhibit blood circulation and take a toll on your body. It is recommended that you take short breaks every 20-30 minutes that last a minute or two. A walk to the bathroom or water cooler is perfect for this.

Additionally, change tasks or position for a few minutes every hour and make sure you don't eat lunch at your desk ... giving yourself an opportunity to totally separate from your work environment and move is important to health and well-being.

If you work at a computer, avoid eye-strain by resting your eyes regularly. A good practice is to focus on something 20 feet away for 20 seconds every 20 minutes (the 20-20-20 rule).

Finally, use correct posture when working and keep moving as much as possible throughout the day.

## Additional Resources

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/>

<https://ergonomics.ucla.edu/office-ergonomics/4-steps.html>

<https://ehs.unc.edu/workplace-safety/ergonomics/>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/office-ergonomics/art-20046169>

<https://www.10desks.com/ergonomic-desk-height-calculator.html>



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