

WORK ERGONOMICS

Considerations for home office set up

Working from home can present a range of ergonomic challenges. The following guidance is general in nature, intended to assist you to achieve a comfortable set-up. You may need to try different options before finding the best solution for your individual needs.

Basic positions and set up

In sitting - Your feet should rest flat on the floor with your knees at an angle of approximately 90 degrees (thighs are parallel to the floor). The backrest should ideally support your lower back. Forearms should be approximately parallel to the floor. It's good if you can adjust your chair and desk to match your height.

If you have access to a chair with adjustable armrests, adjust the armrest height to be slightly lower than the table so that you can place the chair close to the table. Also make sure you can rest your forearms gently on them, while your shoulders are relaxed.

In standing - If you have a possibility to also work in a standing position, set the height of the table to elbow level or select a table/countertop that is at a suitable height for you.

Working at elbow level means that your elbows are at an approximate 90 degree angle, your upper arms are along your sides and your lower arms are resting on the table top when you are standing straight.



If possible, set the height of the screen so that you don't need to look down or upwards. This applies to working in a seated or standing position. As a general rule, the top of the screen should be approximately in line with your eyes and the screen approximately an arm's length away. This can make it easier to keep your neck in a neutral position. (Note: if you wear multi-focal glasses, you may find it more comfortable to have the top of your screen slightly below eye level.)

If you are working on a laptop with an external keyboard you can lift the laptop using a suitable height box or books or a laptop stand.



Place the computer mouse to the side of your keyboard or use the mouse on the keyboard. Place the keyboard in front of your hands so you can work with your wrists straight and supported on the desk. The keyboard should be approximately forearm length away from the edge of the table.

When using the mouse, your wrist should rest on the surface in a neutral position. Your hand and fingers should be relaxed and rest on the mouse. If possible, try different options and select the mouse that fits your hand and the tasks you do in your work.

Using a phone while working on a computer

If you are using your phone often, it is recommended that you use a hands-free device or a headset. If your work requires only occasional phone use, keep the upper arm of the hand holding the phone close to your upper body.



Other home office setups

When working from home one might want or need to change the setting from time to time. If you find yourself working with a laptop on a couch/sofa, ideally this should only be for short or infrequent periods of time, with frequent changes of position to stand up and move.

So if you find yourself from the sofa consider placing a pillow or folder or something similar under the laptop to raise the screen and give you an approximate 90 degree angle at the elbow.



Also consider how it feels to sit on your couch and if for example you feel better when placing a pillow behind your back.

Change position often

Even if you work in either of the above positions as instructed it is essential to change your position often.

- If you work in a seated position, stand up regularly and move.
- If you work in standing, remember to alternate your position frequently, for example march on the spot, walk or sit down to rest your legs from time to time.
- No static position is good for you if maintained for too long.

