

Workstation Assessment

Are you sitting comfortably?

A properly adjusted chair will reduce the strain that you put on your back:

- ⇒ Try and ensure that your knees are level with your hips
- ⇒ you should be sitting up straight while at your desk
- ⇒ If your chair isn't providing enough back support, try using a rolled up towel or cushion until you find a position that's comfortable for you - then adjust the chair accordingly
- ⇒ Your feet should be flat on the floor, if they're not, consider getting a footrest
- ⇒ It's important that you avoid crossing your legs or sitting with one (or both) legs twisted beneath you

Check the position of your monitor

- ⇒ Guidelines suggest that the monitor should be positioned approximately 12-30 inches away from your eyes
- ⇒ A good guide to positioning is to place the monitor about an arm's length away
- ⇒ The top of the screen should be roughly at eye level, use something to elevate the screen if needed

Are key objects are within reach?

- ⇒ Position frequently used objects - such as your telephone or stapler - within reachable distance from your body
- ⇒ Positioning items within easy reach will help to avoid overusing your arm, shoulder and back muscles.
- ⇒ If you spend a lot of time on the telephone, you may want to consider exchanging your handset for a headset

Screen reflection and glare

- ⇒ Ideally your pc screen should be as glare-free as possible
- ⇒ Try positioning the monitor so that it is at right-angles to the window. You may need to move your desk or close the blinds.
- ⇒ If glare continues to be a problem, try using an anti-glare screen
- ⇒ You should also experiment with the screen settings on your monitor. Adjusting the brightness or contrast could make a big difference.

Take a break

- ⇒ Try to alter your working day so that you don't spend all your time at your computer
- ⇒ If your job is mainly computer based ensure that you take regular breaks
- ⇒ For every hour at your keyboard, take at least five to ten minutes rest
- ⇒ Rest your eyes - look away from the screen and focus on something in the distance for a few seconds

Sitting at the keyboard

- ⇒ Keep your wrists in a straight position when using a keyboard - they shouldn't be bent up, down or to either side.
- ⇒ Your elbows should be positioned vertically under your shoulders
- ⇒ Using a wrist rest may help you to avoid awkward bending in your wrists
- ⇒ Position and use the mouse as close to you as you can
- ⇒ A mouse mat with a wrist pad will help to keep your wrist straight and avoid awkward bending
- ⇒ Try learning some keyboard short cuts to cut down on the amount of time you spend using a mouse