

# Ergonomics: Setting Up Your Work Area

Your workspace is important.

Whether it's in an office or in your home, how you set up this area can make a big difference in how you feel.

For example, with a healthy workspace, you may be less likely to have problems such as headaches, eyestrain, and neck and back pain.

So what do you do? Set up your workspace so it fits you.

Be sure that the top of your computer monitor is at eye level and directly in front of you.

And you want it about an arm's length away.

And its place? You don't want the monitor in front of or right next to a window.

That creates glare, which can make it harder to read the screen.

Move the monitor away from the window, or, at a right angle to the window.

If you can't do this, consider putting up a window blind that you can adjust to keep sunlight off the screen.

How about your chair?

The edge of the chair should be soft, with a breathable, padded seat.

Lumbar support for your back is helpful.

Wheels will help you move around.

But you'll want 5 wheels to keep your chair stable.

In a chair that fits you, your thighs will be parallel to the floor.

When you sit in your chair, the front edge of the seat should not touch the back of your knees.

Try to keep your feet flat on the floor.

If you can't do this, get a small footrest to put under your feet, or adjust your chair.

If you have armrests, adjust them so that you can use them without slouching or having hunched or drooping shoulders.

Now let's turn to your desk.

Your knees should fit underneath.

And is it big enough for all of your work?

You'll want to keep your work in front of you.

Don't lean toward it. Bring it up to you.

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Keep items you use a lot close by so you don't have to reach so much. [phone rings] And try not to twist to reach your work.

Instead, turn with your whole body.

When you use a phone, don't cradle it against your shoulder.

That can strain your neck.

Use a telephone headset if you can.

It helps you avoid awkward positions while talking, typing, or doing other tasks.

[Worker]: "Better!"

And most importantly, take breaks to stretch or get out of your chair every 20 to 40 minutes.

When you stand, don't slouch.

It puts more stress on your back.

Keep these pointers in mind when you return to your workstation.

Take a look around. Is there anything you'd change?