



Steps to Setting Up Your Workstation

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1. Setting up Your Workstation

Repetitive and prolonged use of a computer keyboard and/or mouse can lead to muscle aches and discomfort. Having incorrect posture from a badly designed workstation can often be the cause of such injuries.

There are 6 easy steps to setting up a workstation:

1. Rest your feet flat on the floor or on a foot rest.
2. Keep your thighs parallel to the floor and avoid pressure on the back of the thighs.
3. Back rest should be upright and provide firm support on the lower back.
4. Shoulders relaxed and arms hanging loosely by your side.
5. Keep forearms loose and wrists straight.
6. Your document holder and screen should be placed at comfortable viewing distances. The top of the screen should be at your eye level.

Some other general hints:

- Alternate between sitting and standing activities.
- Avoid prolonged typing and take frequent short rests.
- Maintain a comfortable and steady key stroke rate.
- Avoid repetitive tasks during lunch and work breaks.
- Build up gradually after being away from work.
- There is an easy online self-assessment that can help you identify any problems with your current workstation set-up. Follow the link to see how you rate! NB: If you end up with a score of 3 or more further investigation and changes may be required.

[RULA - Rapid Upper Limb Assessment](#)

For further assessment of your workstation consult the Worksafe Australia Workstation Checklist.

[WorkSafe Australia Workstation Checklist](#) [PDF-297Kb]

2. Ergonomic Equipment Guidelines

For details on the provision of ergonomic equipment please refer to the [Ergonomic Equipment Guidelines](#) [PDF - 97Kb]

3. Chairs

What should you look for?

The chair is a very important part of your workplace set up. A good chair has the following:

- Adjustable height, arms, seat back, and lumbar support, at the very least.
- If you are tall, an adjustable seat pan or a deeper seat pan, will help to get more of your legs supported by the chair.
- Armrests that adjust in towards the body. This is useful if you are narrow and the chair seat is wide.

How do you use it properly?

- Sit back and use the back of the chair for support. Your feet should touch the ground. If they don't, use a footrest.
- The seat should come within 2 to 6cm from the back of your knee and have about 2.5cm of space on each sides (between your leg and the side of the chair).

- The lumbar support should fill in the curve of your lower back and should feel comfortable. The tilt of the seat is to preference.
- As long as you are seated all the way back in the chair, and have your back supported, it is OK to recline the chair back slightly. A 100-110 degree angle recline is recommended and can reduce strain on the back.
- Too much of a recline can strain the neck, when you try to view a monitor in front of you.
- Armrest height should be adjusted to a position where the shoulders and neck feel the most relaxed with the arms resting on the armrests.

4. Monitors

What should you look for?

- Monitors vary in size - often they depend on the applications that you are doing. Make sure that the monitor size you use fits your work space.
- It needs to be centered in front of you, not placed to the side or corner.
- Glare guards can be used on the screen to reduce glare. Before using a glare guard, try to position the monitor where there is no light source to shine into it creating the glare (i.e. at right angles to windows or away from bright lights).
- Make sure the monitor has a refresh rate of 70 hertz or higher, a high resolution (at least 800 x 600) and a dot pitch below .28mm.

Do you use it properly?

- The monitor should be placed directly in front of you so that your neck is straight.
- It should not be positioned too high. A slightly downward gaze should be maintained to view the screen.
- The distance should be at least 45 to 75cm; this will depend on your vision. The further away you place the monitor to see comfortably, the better it is for your eyes.
- Avoid having glare on the screen by positioning it out of the way of a glare source.
- Consider getting a prescription for working at the computer if you use glasses. Glasses such as bifocals used for normal reading can force you to tilt your head up to see a computer screen.

5. Wrist Rests

What should you look for?

There are many of these on the market, so be sure to look for a wrist rest with the following features:

- It should be relatively firm and smooth to the touch.
- It should not be so soft that your hand/palm sinks into it.
- Make sure the wrist rest is the right height (approximately level with the space bar).
- Select wrist rests that do not force you to reach too far forward to key.
- Make sure it is not too wide.
- It should stay put. A wrist rest that slides around makes you work harder to use it.

Do you use it properly?

- It should support your palms, not your wrists.
- Use it as a landing pad for your palms when pausing.
- Float over the wrist rest while keying.
- Do not park the wrists on the rest and move them side to side and up and down. This can lead to injury, as it overworks the tiny tendons and muscles in the wrist and hand.

6. Foot Rests

What should you look for?

You need a footrest if your feet are not resting on the floor. If you always have your feet on the casters of the chair, or sit forward in the chair to get your feet on the floor, you may benefit from a footrest.

- A footrest that is adjustable in height is helpful so that you can reposition the chair height if needed.
- A tilting footrest is optional - use one if it feels good and for sitting in reclined positions.
- The top of the rest should have a tread that will keep your feet from sliding off.
- Make sure that you get one for the height that you need - one that is too high will position the hips and the spine at an undesirable angle.

How do you use it properly?

- Keep it centered under the desk, and rest the feet on it while the back is supported by the back of the chair.
- Sometimes if the footrest is too high, it will work better if it is pushed further under the desk. Play with the distance to find the most comfortable position for you.

7. Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1.0	0001	OHS Manager	New document created
2.0		OHS Manager	Documented updated to reflect current requirements
3.0		OHS Manager	Documented updated to reflect current requirements
4.0	0705	OHS Manager	Documented updated to reflect current requirements