

Ergonomics Tips

Neutral posture at your workstation helps prevent injury

In order to understand the best way to set up a computer workstation, you first need to understand neutral posture. This is a comfortable working posture in which your joints are naturally aligned and your risk of developing a musculoskeletal disorder is reduced.

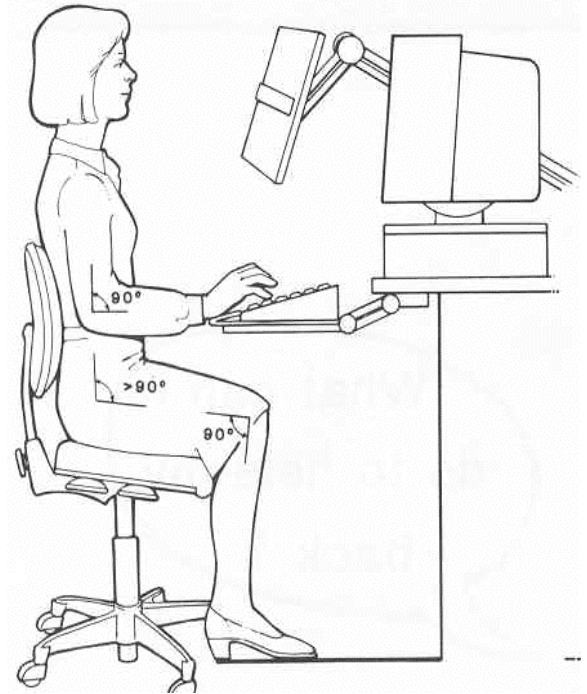
Change postures frequently

Regardless of how good your posture may be, sitting still for long periods of time isn't healthy. You should make small adjustments to your posture every 15 minutes by changing the height of your chair slightly, or leaning back a little further into the backrest. Larger changes in posture are also important; stand up and stretch or walk around for one or two minutes every hour.

Practice neutral posture while seated

The following are the important components of neutral posture while seated:

1. Keep your head level or tilted slightly downward. Place your work in front of you so that you are looking straight ahead.
2. Sit with your shoulders relaxed, not elevated, hunched or rotated forward.
3. Keep your elbows close to your sides and bent at about a 90° angle, not extended out in front of your body.
4. Use the chair's backrest to support your lower back, or lumbar curve.
5. Sit with your entire body upright or leaning slightly back.
6. Keep your wrists straight while you work, not bent up, down or to the side.
7. Sit with your knees at the same level or slightly below the level of your hips. There should be no pressure points along the backs of your thighs or the backs of your knees.
8. Place your feet slightly out in front of your knees and make sure they are comfortably supported either by the floor or by a footrest.



Pay attention to overall posture

Although the components of neutral posture are listed individually above, it is really the posture of your body as a whole that is important. Having just one part of your body out of neutral can affect the rest of your posture. Try sitting with your feet hooked under your chair. You will notice that this tends to pull you forward in your seat, away from your chair's backrests. Now place your feet out in front of you and you will notice that it is much easier to lean forward to view it. Practice adjusting your workstation to achieve a neutral posture for your whole body. It may help to have a co-worker take a look at you while you work and give you feedback on your posture.

4 STEPS TO PROPER LIFTING

1. SIZE UP THE LOAD

- Use a hand truck if possible.
- Get help if you need it.
- Check for slivers, nails, exposed staples.
- Use gloves if necessary.
- Make sure you have a clear path to where you are moving it to.



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2. LIFT

- Bring the load as close to you as possible before lifting.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Keep your head up, your back straight and bend at your hips.



3. MOVE

- Keep the load close to your body.
- Look where you are going.
- Shift your feet to turn, don't twist your body.

4. GET SET AND LOWER

- When setting a load down, let your leg muscles carry it down.
- Make certain your finger and toes are clear before setting the load down.



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