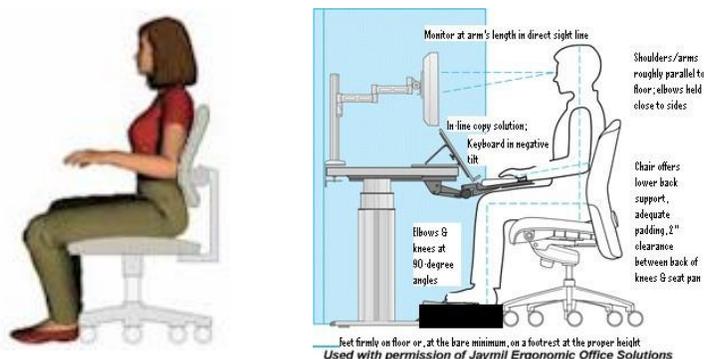


HOME OFFICE WORKSTATION ERGONOMIC TIPS

With so many of us working part and full time from home, it is important to remember good ergonomics in our “new” workspace. These tips will help you optimize your work environment at home to keep you feeling healthy.

Check out the Dartmouth College EHS on-line Office Workstation Ergonomics Training module at <https://dartmouth.bioraft.com/node/19658>. It has a lot of information about optimal workstation postures, how to use equipment safely, and may answer a lot of your questions.

Remember, your posture is important, and you should consider ergonomic basics in the new work environment. These two diagrams represent the “ideal” sitting workstation posture.

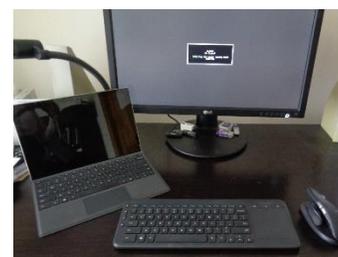


TIP 1. LOCATION:

- ✓ As much as possible, plan to work at one location so you can have it set up as optimally as possible.

TIP 2. EQUIPMENT:

- ✓ When working from a laptop, it is best to have separate components: keyboard, mouse, and monitor.



TIP 3. CHAIR:

- ✓ Find a comfortable chair that allows you to sit in a **Neutral posture** (see diagrams above). This means:
 - Neck straight to view the monitor – not looking to the side, or up
 - Shoulders relaxed with upper arm at your side
 - Elbows at a right angle / 90° or slightly less
 - Wrists straight
 - Hips and knees at 90° with feet on the floor.
- ✓ If you can't have your feet on the floor, use a 3-4" high box, or one or two reams of paper as a foot rest.
- ✓ Try to make sure you can sit with your back against the back of the chair for optimal support.



TIP 4. WORK SURFACE:

- ✓ Check the height of your work surface. Sit in the **Neutral posture**. The height of your hands should be about where your keyboard is.
- ✓ If your work surface puts the keyboard too high, either elevate your chair and use a foot rest

- ✓ **OR:** consider using a Laptop Lap desk, an example would be: <https://www.amazon.com/LapGear-Chestnut-Bamboo-Lap-Desk/dp/B081P4NCTX>
 - This allows you to use the laptop at a better arm height and position
 - **OR:** place the mouse and keyboard on the laptop lap desk and put your laptop / monitor on the work surface and view it in **Neutral arm and neck posture**.
 - ideally no right hand number pad, unless using the number pad a lot

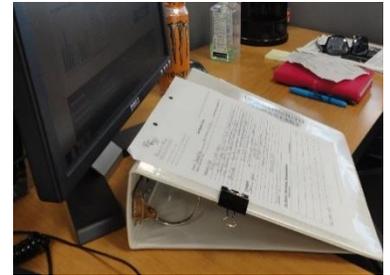


TIP 5. MONITOR POSITION

- ✓ The monitor should be about an arm's length away from you
- ✓ The top of the monitor should be about the same height as your eyes or just a little higher. You should not have to bend your neck up or down to see the portion of the screen you use most
- ✓ If you use the lower portion of progressive glasses or bifocals, the monitor should be lower so you keep your neck in **Neutral posture**.

TIP 6. DOCUMENTS

- ✓ Position documents so they are close to the monitor and keyboard. Ideally, they should be in line with the monitor. You can use an empty three ring binder (between your keyboard and the monitor) to position and angle them so you don't have to look to the side to view them.



ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- ✓ Take frequent mini-breaks: Stand up, do a back and arm stretches, walk around, step outside for a breath of fresh air, and at some point during the day take a walk.
- ✓ Stand up / walk around during phone calls
- ✓ Avoid sitting on the bed or couch to work on your laptop
- ✓ Drink plenty of water
- ✓ Stay healthy and safe!

Not all possible problems or solutions may be noted here.

For more information about the optimal workstation set up, or to set up a Remote Workstation Ergonomic Evaluation, Contact:

molly.rhoad@dartmouth.edu

603-646-1762 (phone)

Prepared by Susan Emerson, MEd, OTR/L, CHT, CEES