Ergonomics

Designing a Comfortable Workstation

Set the top of the monitor screen at seated eye height directly in front of you. If you perform frequent typing, use a document holder to minimize neck strain.

To prevent eyestrain, eliminate glare by positioning the monitor at a 90-degree angle to the windows. Minimize glare from the overhead lighting by tilting the screen.

Keep your hands and wrists in line with your forearms, not bent up or down or to one side. Avoid resting your forearms or wrists on sharp edges, which puts pressure on your underlying nerves, blood vessels, and muscles.

The front of your chair's seat pan should have a waterfall design that rounds over to eliminate pressure on the back of the knees. Pressure here will impair blood flow causing swelling, discomfort, and possibly varicose veins.

Your feet should be firmly planted on the floor or footrest. Otherwise, the weight of your lower leg puts pressure on the back of your knees and increases stress on your lower back. Unsupported feet may cause you to sit forward in your chair to reach the floor, making the backrest ineffective.

You should be able to sit comfortably in your chair and have good lumbar support while working. If your chair does not allow you to slide close enough to your work surface, you have to sit forward in your chair and the back support does not provide any benefits.

Armrests should be height and width adjustable to allow your upper arms to rest comfortably at your side and padded to decrease the risk of compression to your arms. A well-designed armrest will provide support and will not restrict your ability to place your chair close to your keyboard. However, armrests used inappropriately may expose you to risk factors such as non-neutral postures and compression of your elbows.

Frequently change positions and adjust your chair to reduce static fatigue of your back, neck, shoulders and legs.

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