

Working From Home Ergonomics

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Introduction

- *As we move into the world of working remotely, ergonomics becomes an important risk management tool to ensure we are safe when working from home or other remote locations.*
- Many times, that requires the use of a laptop which can place users in awkward postures – **How can we set up our workstation to accommodate a laptop?**
- **Solving Ergonomic Problems** - the position of components in a workstation with respect to the placement of your body can help create a workstation that is ergonomically beneficial

Ergonomics Defined

Ergonomics is the science of **fitting the task** to the worker to maximize productivity while **reducing discomfort** fatigue and injury.



Essential Chair Adjustments

- Use a chair with back support and adjust the chair so you can comfortably lean back.
 - In lieu of an office chair try using pillows or cushions to provide lumbar support when sitting on regular dining chairs
- Keep your thighs parallel to the ground and feet flat on the floor.

Bad

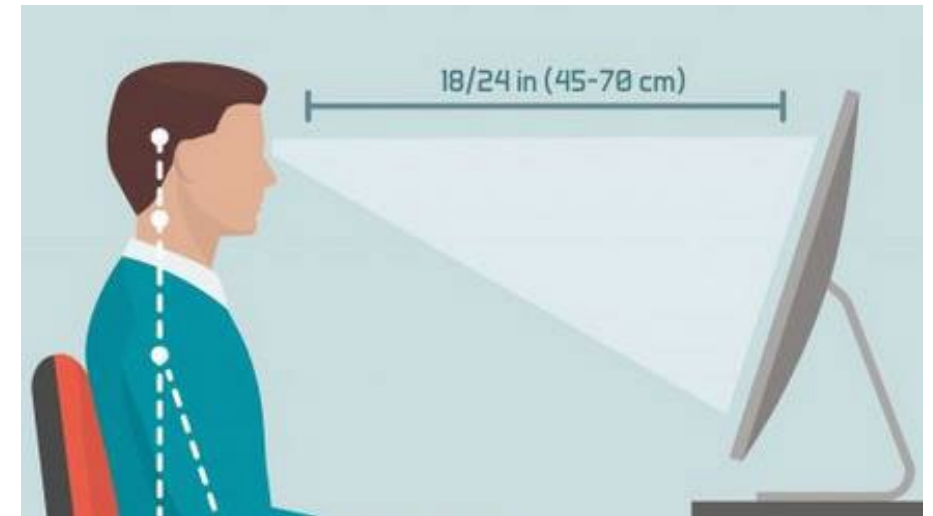


Good



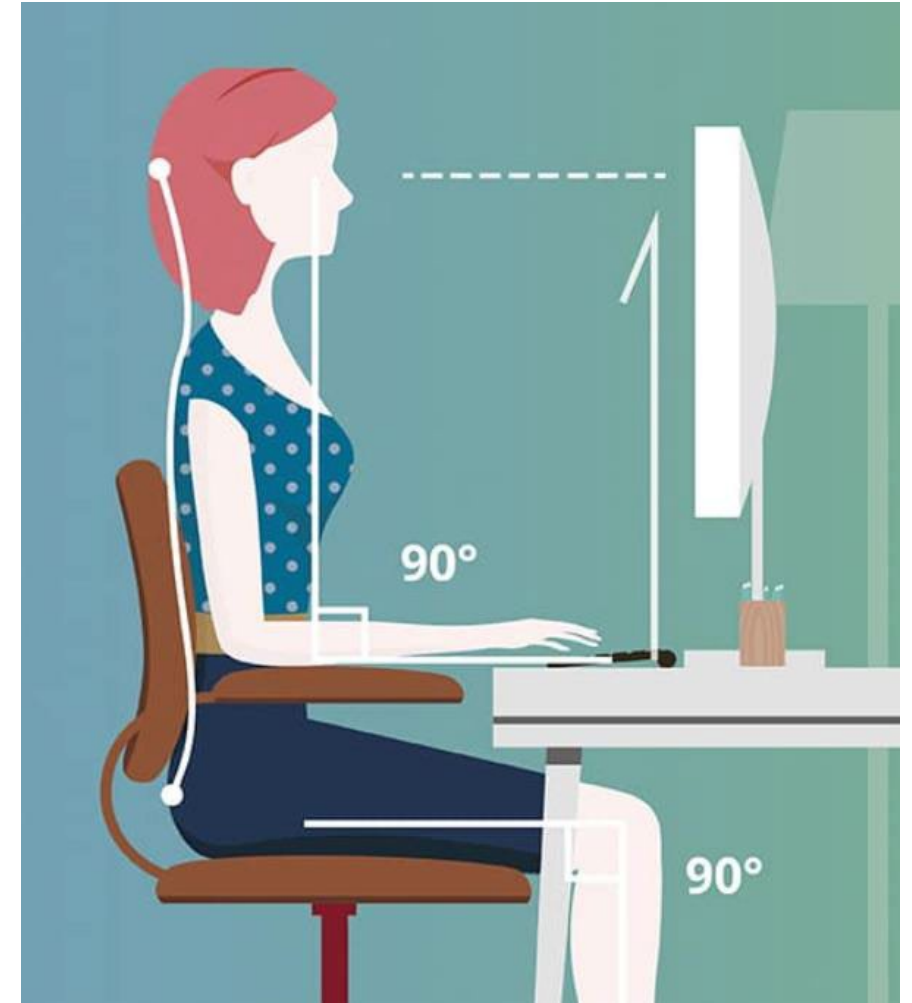
Monitor

- If you are using a laptop, set the laptop so the monitor is at, or slightly below eye level
- Place your laptop so the monitor is about an arm's reach away.
- If you have a separate monitor, keyboard and mouse, consider using those in combination with your laptop.
- Look 20 feet away every 20 minutes for at least 20 seconds to reduce eye strain.



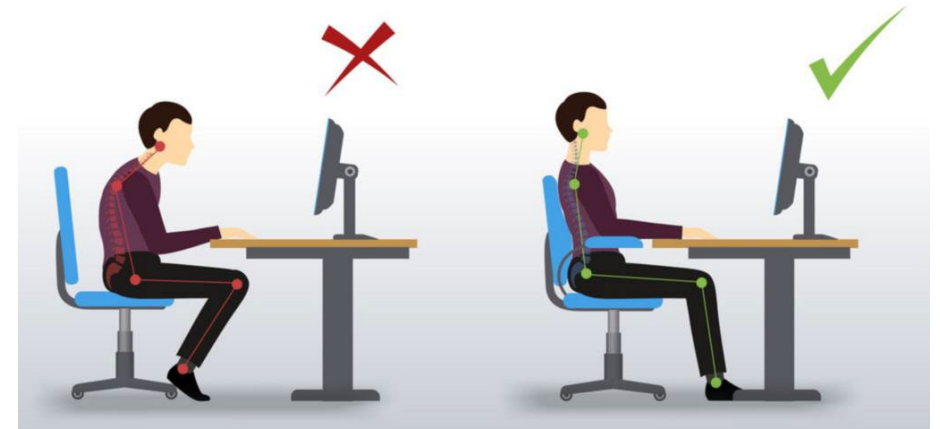
Keyboard and Mouse

- Use an external keyboard and mouse, if available, and place them close to your body to reduce reaching.
- Make sure your arms close to your body with elbows near your sides at a 90-degree angle
- Keep your wrists straight (in a neutral position) and do not rest your wrists on the keyboard or the edge of a hard service
 - Use a soft gel wrist rest for the keyboard only (not the mouse)



Work Surface

- If you are working only on a laptop, place it on a hard flat surface such as a table or desk.
- Do not use the laptop on your lap or while laying down.
- Ensure you have good lighting and minimize glare on your monitor screen
- Adjust your workstation if you feel discomfort by raising your chair or lowering your work surface



Adjusting your Workstation

- If you are looking down at your laptop screen, and you have an external keyboard/mouse available, you can raise your laptop monitor with a stand or a stack of books/paper.
- If you are feeling you are straining to view the monitor, increase the zoom settings on your display.
- If you need to raise your chair and it is not adjustable, consider adding a cushion on the seat for height.



Considerations when Working Remotely

- Limit the length of time you sit to no more than 2 hours at a time unless otherwise directed by a medical provider
- Stand when you can and get up for breaks, phone calls or other non-computer tasks
- Changing positions, varying tasks, doing mild stretches, and walking will rejuvenate and provide more comfort!
- Correcting positioning of your body while working at a computer workstation is essential to your comfort.

Additional Considerations when Working Remotely

1. Keeping your routine is very important and this includes getting up at the same time and getting dressed for work
2. Ensure that you take your breaks and schedule time for a lunch
3. Use Zoom or other virtual tools to keep in contact and engage with co-workers

Upper Body Tension Relief Guide



Neck Side Bend



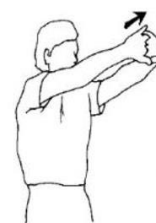
Neck Rotation



Shoulder Retraction



Shoulder Shrugs



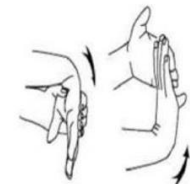
Shoulder &
Rhomboid
Stretch



Overhead Reach



Side Bend & Triceps Stretch

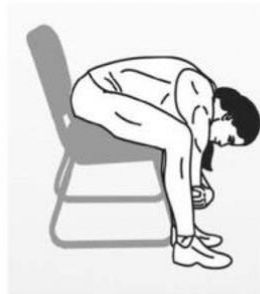


Wrist Flexor
& Extensor
Stretch

Photos courtesy of Shelter Pub Fitness Guides

Rest / Stretch Breaks

Lower Body Tension Relief Guide



Seated Forward Bend



Seated Buttock Stretch



Seated Twist



Knee to Chest



Quadriceps Stretch



Hamstrings Stretch



Standing Forward Bend

Photos courtesy of Darebee.com

Important Factors to Remember!

1. ALWAYS remember to take rest breaks. Humans were not meant to remain in static positions for long periods of time! It is important in terms of our cognitions as breaks allow us to recharge and refocus to maintain productivity. No ergonomic tool or workstation adjustment is better than taking a short break.
2. If at all possible, lean back in your chair. Lower back, upper back and neck pain can be alleviated by making a conscious effort to lean back in your chair

In Conclusion

We will work together as a team to protect the health and safety of the San Mateo County Community College District during this COVID-19 global pandemic.

Stay safe and healthy!



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