

Ergonomics Tips for Working at Home

The ergonomics design of the computer workstation is applicable in the office environment and wherever you find yourself working. How you set up the space and work has a big impact on reducing the use of awkward postures and for the risk of injury. For those who are finding themselves working at home more often, here are some ergonomics tips to follow*.

Create a Dedicated Workspace

- Identify a space with a desk or table that can be dedicated for computer use; do not work while sitting on a bed or couch for long periods of time
 - **Monitor:** Use a separate monitor, keyboard and mouse; if using a laptop place on a stand or books
 - **Keyboard and mouse:** Use a traditional set-up, hook laptop directly to monitor or



- place laptop on stand and use an external keyboard and mouse
- **Chair:** Use a chair with low back support and seated cushion; for a kitchen or dining chair insert a seat cushion and roll up a soft towel or blanket to place in your low back area
- **Phone:** Use the speakerphone or microphone/voice activation for cell phone texting; don't brace the handset or cell phone between the neck and shoulder

- [A User-Friendly Workstation and Ergonomics Tips for Laptop Users](#)



Laptop to monitor set-up



Laptop on stand with external devices



Use a seat cushion and rolled up soft towel for low back support

Leave Food in the Kitchen

To help allow enough space to use computer equipment properly, especially the keyboard and mouse, try keeping food in the kitchen. Having two distinct spaces will allow for focused time to work and enjoyable time to eat.



Use Ample Natural Lighting

Create the dedicated work area with as much natural lighting as possible. Don't tuck it away in a dark corner, but instead use good lighting to improve performance. Use lamps where needed. Place the work area perpendicular to windows to reduce glare. Keep in mind the monitor should be the brightest thing in the space.

Drink Lots of Water and Take Breaks Throughout the Day

Drink water consistently throughout the day. Take movement breaks every half hour and change postures when starting to fatigue. Try to find ways to stand and alternate job tasks for short periods of time. See resources below for stretches, break timers and ways to move more.



Resources

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/bewellatwork/ergonomics>

Computer Health Matters Online Training: [Enroll now](#)

Short and Fun Video: [Ergo Tips for Using Your Mouse](#)

Stretches: <https://ehs.ucsc.edu/programs/ergo/stretch.html>

Break timers:

- Stand Up! The Work Break Timer App by Apple - Download through the App icon
- **RSI Guard Stretch Edition Software:** *Try the 45 day free trial to test it out.* This robust software program offers a BreakTimer, ForgetMeNots, AutoClick (hands free mouse clicking) and a great selection of stretches. For more information click on this link: <http://www.rsiguard.com/> (Compatible for both PC and Mac).

Move More at Work: https://uhs.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/move_more_handout1.pdf

*Humantech; Office Ergonomics E-News: "Four Ways to Improve Your Home Office"; April 2019

*Humantech; Office Ergonomics E-News: "Tips and Techniques for a Healthy Office"; March 2020