

Ergonomics isn't just about sitting up straight, it's about creating a working environment that fits your need for comfort. The ergo design must be complementary, rather than force your body to adapt. This guide will give you simple ideas for changes that you can implement easily to take steps in reducing your risk of long term problems like back pain and muscular skeletal disorder.

Ergonomics

Reducing injury and increasing efficiency

1. The chair needs to be close to the desk allowing for ease of accessibility. Your lower back needs to be supported so adjust your chair accordingly, Your upper body should now be relaxed. Your elbows should be parallel to the desk.


2. The addition of a foot rest helps reduce stress in the joints of the lower body. If your feet already touch the ground you may not require a footrest. Height adjustable chair arms provide additional support for the upper body.


3. The monitor needs to be at eye level, this promotes a healthy posture and reduces neck strain. Your eyes should line up just below the top of screen, if possible the screen should be tipped back slightly.


4. If you need to keep looking at the keyboard when typing it may be beneficial to lower the monitor level to minimise the nodding between the two. Wrist supports could be used if required for both mouse and keyboard.


5. If chair is too far back from the desk, it will promote bad posture and no body support. This will result in lower back pain and neck strain as the head and back is tilted forward. The feet are not in a neutral position and will restrict blood circulation.


6. If the chair is too low it can create strain on the arms and shoulders. It is important to adjust your chair until your wrists are in a neutral position therefore relieving pressure on the shoulder.

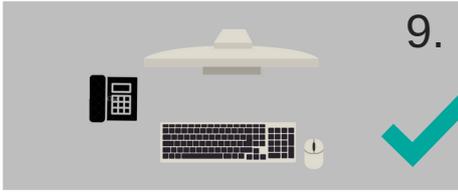

7. If the monitor is set to low this results in the whole body leaning forward, putting constant strain on the neck and upper back. The chair support is none existent as the whole back is not in contact with the chair.


8. For a fully healthy ergonomic set up you need to mix sitting, standing and movement. Ideally In every 30 minutes, aim for 2-3 minutes of movement, 7-8 minutes of standing and about 20 minutes of sitting.



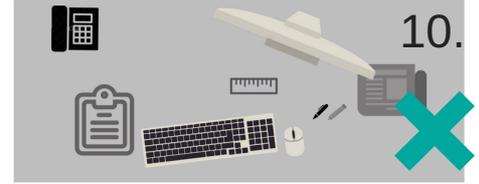
Accessibility

Ergonomic desk

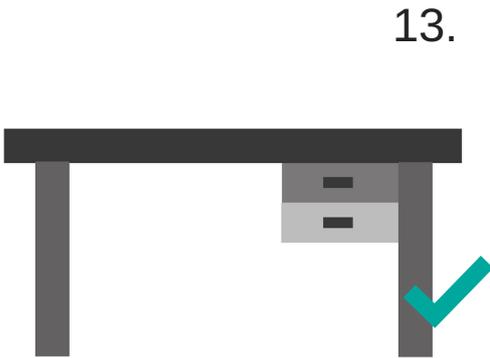


9, 10. When arranging your desk you should think about the usability. You need to make use of the available space without overcrowding. You should prioritise your desk space and only have what you use on a day to day basis to hand.

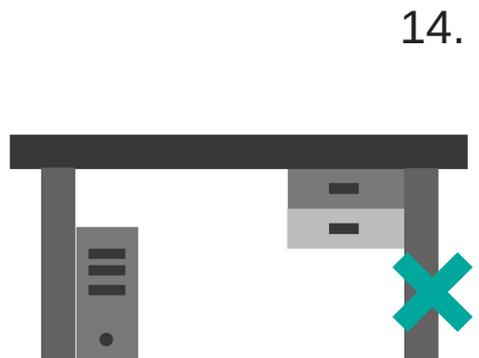
These items should all be accessible without stretching and twisting. If you use a telephone frequently you should use a headset as this will dramatically improve comfort and convenience.



11, 12. The distance between your eyes and the screen is ever important. You want to ensure that you face the screen straight on, this reduces the twisting of your neck and body. Having the screen too close can increase your risk of short-sightedness and restrict free flowing movement.



13, 14. The space under your desk should be clear to accommodate room for your legs. Your legs should not feel restricted. The height of the desk should also be considered. The recommended height of a desk is 740mm which can accommodate 95 percent of the population. At Braleys we supply alternative products which can raise your desk without the full cost of a height adjustable desk. The wrong height of desk can result in bad posture so it's important you have the correct height.



Laptop Users



15, 16. Laptops are built for casual work whilst moving around. Using one all day in the same position can create problems. In an ideal situation you would use a separate keyboard and mouse. This would make a significant improvement to layout flexibility. Preferably laptops need a stand which can raise the screen for optimal viewings. This stand allows for adjustable height and view distance.

Laptop use is a major source musculoskeletal problems. Using a laptop on its own for any length of time will inevitably cause poor posture which in turn is likely to lead to head, neck and back pain.

