

Ergonomic Tips for Telecommuters



Below are some useful Ergonomic tips to maintain healthy working conditions for using your computer while telecommuting.

<u>Laptop</u>	<p>Avoid using your laptop for prolonged periods. Evidence shows that prolonged exposure to working directly on laptops can lead to musculoskeletal issues in the neck, shoulders, wrists, and/or hands. Some studies suggest that 'no' amount of direct laptop use is safe.</p> <p>Use an external monitor, keyboard, and mouse if using a laptop. You may place the laptop on a stand or on books at eye level. Position the screen so you can easily read it, typically about an arm's length distance.</p>
<u>Designated Space</u>	<p>Avoid sitting on a bed or couch. Create space at a desk or table that can be dedicated for computer use.</p>
Monitor	<p>Position the monitor in a way that the top of the monitor is slightly below eye level, so you can view it with a slight downward gaze. In addition, place the monitor at about an arm's length distance.</p>
<u>Keyboard and Mouse</u>	<p>Connect the laptop to a monitor or place the laptop on a stand and use an external keyboard and mouse. Consider using speech recognition.</p>
Chair	<p>Use a chair with back support. 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.</p> <p>If a good ergonomic chair is not available, utilize pillows or cushions for added support as well as a tool to raise your sitting height to better match the height of your table</p>
Phone	<p>Use a headset, speakerphone, or microphone/voice activation. Use computer audio for conference calls.</p>
<u>Lighting</u>	<p>Position your computer at a 90-degree angle from any windows. Use room and task lighting as needed.</p>
Plan your Day	<p>Establish a schedule / routine. Create a process to check in with your team.</p>
<u>Breaks</u>	<p>Change your position every 20 minutes. This should help to relax the muscles that have been in contraction mode.</p> <p>Take frequent breaks away from your work area to drink water, eat lunch, and change your posture.</p>
<u>Training</u>	<p>Take the online <u>UC-Davis Office Ergonomics Training</u> for help with real-time adjustments you can make at any workstation. Free, <u>online training for students</u> is available.</p>
Supervisor/Safety Coordinator	<p>Work with your supervisor/<u>Department Safety Coordinator</u> to discuss any equipment needs and telecommute agreements.</p>
Equipment	<p>Contact IT for laptops, monitors, and standard keyboards and mice.</p>
Long-term Telecommuting	<p>Consider investing in an adjustable task chair, desk, and external monitor.</p>
Additional Resources	<p>Refer to these resources on <u>sit/stand workstation</u>, <u>good posture</u>, <u>UC-Davis Office Ergonomics</u>, <u>Laptop Ergonomics</u>.</p>



Using a table or counter with your equipment at the right height for you will place the least amount of strain on your body. Risk of injury decreases, and you can work longer and more efficiently.

