

Working from home, your comfort

Welcome to working from home. You may be a seasoned home-worker or this may be your first time. Either way there are some simple but effective things you can do to keep yourself comfortable, healthy and productive.

Unless you have a dedicated desk and chair setup it can be difficult to achieve a healthy posture. That said, it is possible to work effectively from a couch, dining room table or kitchen counter by following this advice:

- First, figure out where you are going to work to avoid too many distractions.
- If possible, try to avoid soft seating. Couches and beds do not support your body well. If you do decide to work from your couch use a small pillow to support your lower back and maintain the natural curve of your spine.
- Avoid placing your laptop on your lap. This can cause laptop burn on your legs. Use a tray or even a magazine to prevent contact.
- In an office your chair is positioned so your thighs are horizontal and your feet flat on the floor or footrest. It is unlikely your dining chair or kitchen stool will provide the same support so your pelvis may be tilted while you work. Make sure you stand up regularly and move your body.
- A couple of ways of doing this is to place your beverage out of reach so you have to move to get it. Stand up while taking a call.

Listen to your body! If you become stiff, fidgety or uncomfortable... MOVE! If you experience more frequent discomfort speak with your manager or health and safety colleagues.

Remember, your health and wellbeing is the most important thing to us. This homeworking period is temporary and difficult for all of us, we are here to support you through this challenging period.



Working from home, your computer set-up

If you have the ability to sit at a desk and have a height adjustable chair you can follow these tips, to ensure you reduce the stress on your body.

Understand that your eyes will dictate your posture. If you can't see your screen clearly you will move towards it. If you have a lap top you will be looking downwards at the screen, which can strain your neck, shoulders and lower back. A key concept is to position your screen correctly.

- Place your monitor directly in front of you. Raise your monitor to eye-height if you have an external keyboard and mouse.
- If you are using a laptop and an external monitor make sure they are kept at the same height, and PLEASE try match the contrast ratios to each other to avoid eye-strain.
- Next position your elbows above the desk height. You don't want to have to continually lift your shoulder girdle up in order to type.
- If your feet come off the floor, then place them on a box, small dustbin etc.

Understand too, that your body does not like to be held in fixed, static postures. Your body will send warning signs such as, numbness, stiffening, fidgeting, loosing concentration. If this happens pay attention and move around.

If you can, try stand and work, but understand that standing too is static and will cause similar warning signs similar to sitting too long. Pay attention to your body.

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