



Chair: Sit back in the chair with your feet firmly on the floor or footrest. Keep the lower spine in contact with the chair back. Thighs should be parallel to the floor and there should be a small gap between the back of your knees and the seat pan. Armrests, if applicable, should only be used to rest the forearms, not the elbows. Be mindful not to lean on the armrests or position them too high, which will elevate your shoulders and cause neck and back pain. If the armrests prevent you from sitting close to your keyboard and mouse, lower the armrests or have them removed.

Monitor: Position the monitor at about arm's length and centered with the body, with the top of the monitor at eye level. If needed, use reams of paper, books, or a stand to reach the appropriate monitor height. If using two monitors, position the primary monitor directly in front of you and be mindful to rotate your full body when looking at the non-primary monitor. If both monitors are used equally, push them together and where the two monitors meet should be centered with the body.

Keyboard: Wrists should be in a neutral position, parallel to the keyboard, and move freely while typing. When typing, center the 'G-H' keys on the keyboard with the midline of your body and your primary monitor. If you cannot access the keys without an uncomfortable bend or twist in your wrists, an alternative keyboard may be needed. Position the keyboard and mouse at or just below elbow level and close to the body. Additional items that are used frequently should be kept close for easy accessibility and to avoid reaching.

Mouse/Input Device: Place the mouse/input device directly next to the keyboard to avoid reaching forward or outward. Consider using your non-dominant hand when mousing. When not using the keyboard or input device, rest your hands in your lap or on the chair armrests, being mindful to not rest your elbows on the armrests – only the forearms.

Standing: Stand close enough to the work area to prevent reaching. Periodically rest one foot to keep movement in the lower body. Follow the same parameters for the monitor, keyboard, and mouse placement.

Laptops: When using a laptop for prolonged periods of time, use a full-sized external mouse and keyboard and position the laptop at an elevated height. Reams of paper, a box, books, or a laptop riser may be used to provide adequate monitor height.

Document holder: A document holder is recommended if you frequently alternate between the screen and paper. Position the document holder in front of the monitor and centered with the body.

Headset: A headset is recommended to maintain neutral body and neck posture.

Microbreaks: It is important to integrate movement into your routine and avoid prolonged and/or awkward postures. Aim to alternate your posture every 20-30 minutes for 2-3 minutes. Taking frequent stretch breaks will aid in reducing ergonomic injury risk by promoting blood flow and allowing you to regain focus on proper postures. Microbreaks are simple: walk to the printer, stand up for phone calls, stretch, or fill up your water bottle.

Eye Health: Use the 20-20-20 rule to reduce eye strain. Look 20 feet away every 20 minutes for 20 seconds. Have your vision checked annually by a qualified professional and be sure to let them know if you have any vision concerns, such as squinting or leaning toward the computer monitor.

Request an Ergonomic Evaluation: The above best practices are general guidelines. Contact Tiffany Perry at tiffany.perry@sonoma.edu to schedule an individualized ergonomic evaluation. Tiffany will take measurements, discuss any concerns, make ergonomic adjustments to the workstation, and provide recommendations.