

## ✓ **Exercise Tips**

After every 30 minutes of continuous computer use, pause to perform a few office exercises.\*

### **Eyes**

- To relieve dry eyes, close your eyes tightly for a second, then open them widely. Repeat several times.
- Refocus your eyes momentarily on an object that is at least 20 feet away.

### **Hands/Forearms**

- Spread your fingers wide and hold, form fists and hold. Repeat several times.
- Place your hands together with fingers pointing upwards and at chin level. Slowly lower your hands, part them, and reverse the process. Repeat several times.

### **Neck**

- Keeping your chin tucked in, slowly turn your head to one side and hold. Alternate sides and repeat several times.

### **Shoulders**

- Slowly shrug shoulders in a forward circular motion. Alternate to reverse circular motion.

### **Back**

- While standing with your feet about shoulder width apart and with your hands on hips, slowly lean hips forward and shoulders slightly back.

\* Any exercise program should be approved by your physician. If you have an injury or any type of recurring discomfort, you should immediately report this information to your supervisor and obtain a medical evaluation. These stretching exercises are not provided to cure any existing problems, but they may help in preventing any future ones.

## **To Learn More**

- Check out the EH&S ergonomics website at:  
<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/EHS/prod/general/ergo/index.html>
- Take a computer workstation ergonomics class. These are offered several times a quarter. See the *Training and Educational Opportunities* guide, issued quarterly in the *Stanford Report*, for the current class schedule; OR
- Use the EH&S Workstation Ergonomics CD-ROM for employees and students (contact your local Human Resources Officer)

## **Also**

- Visit EH&S's ErgoLab to try out recommended models of ergonomic office equipment. Call 5-3209 for an appointment.
- Consult the Pre-approved Ergo Product List before purchasing a new chair. This list is available on the EH&S ergonomics website at:  
<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/EHS/prod/general/ergo/index.html>

For further assistance please contact the EH&S Occupational Health & Safety Program at 725-3209.

# **Computer Workstation Ergonomics**



Tips for correcting common computer workstation problems and preventing repetitive strain injuries.

Stanford University  
Environmental Health & Safety  
Occupational Health & Safety  
Program

## ✔ **Seating**

### **Feet dangling?**

- Lower the chair seat until your feet rest on the floor, or use a footrest.

### **Insufficient back support?**

- Adjust the backrest for better lumbar support, or use a rolled-up towel or back support cushion.

### **Armrest preventing a natural arm & shoulder position?**

- Adjust chair armrests, in/out or up/down, or remove armrests if they are not used.

### **Improper seat fit (height, depth, tilt)?**

- Use the chair adjustment functions to create a better fit, or
- If your chair will not adjust enough for you, a more adjustable chair may be needed.\*

\* If you are purchasing a new desk chair, consider only those with full adjustability. Refer to the "Pre-approved Ergo Product List" on the EH&S website.

## ✔ **Keyboard/Mouse**

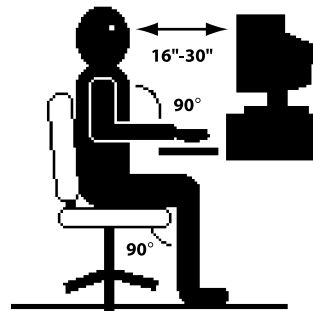
### **Keyboard/mouse too high/low/tilted?**

- Use an adjustable keyboard or mouse tray, or adjust your chair height. You may need to add a footrest.
- Retract the keyboard support legs to keep the keyboard flat.

### **Keyboard/mouse too far from user?**

- Move closer to the equipment or move the equipment closer to you.
- Consider using a keyboard/mouse tray.

**Ergonomic Injuries** are rapidly increasing as people spend more time at computers-most, however, are preventable. By reviewing these tips and studying the diagram, you can find ways to adjust your workstation to avoid injuries.



## ✔ **Your Monitor**

### **Improper viewing distance?**

- Move the monitor forward or back as needed. If a wall hinders monitor placement, move your desk away from the wall or find a deeper work surface.
- Use a keyboard/mouse tray to increase viewing distance.

### **Monitor too low?**

- Use monitor risers to increase height. (Phone books, reams of paper, etc., will work if they can be secured.)

### **Screen glare?**

- Keep the screen perpendicular to any strong light source. Do not tilt the screen, keep it upright.
- Use an anti-glare screen or hood.

## ✔ **Work Environment**

### **Cramped leg space?**

- Clear out items beneath the work surface or rearrange your work area.

### **Reaching too far for tools, etc.?**

- Reorganize your work area to allow the most frequently used items to be within a forearm's reach.
- Avoid frequent reaches above shoulder height.

### **Eyestrain from direct/indirect glare?**

- Arrange task lighting to provide diffuse, indirect illumination.
- Reduce fluorescent lighting glare with light diffusers, and/or light filter products (tube sleeves or filter panels).

## ✔ **Work Practices**

### **Improper work postures?**

- Avoid sustained, awkward postures.
- Pay attention to any body discomfort.

### **Extended periods of computer use?**

- As a routine work practice, take a 1-2 minute break after every 30 minutes at the computer.
- Use a timer to remind yourself to take a "microbreak".
- Perform office exercises to relax, and to rest eyes.
- Vary your work tasks to avoid long stints in front of the computer.