

# How to Set Up and Work Healthy in a Home Office



As we navigate this new landscape, many of us are transitioning from an office environment to working from home. Wherever you are, it's important to consider the ergonomics of your workspace. Here are some tips to reduce unwanted strain or injury, and exercises to keep you mobile throughout the day.

## The Proper Setup

Always try to work at a desk or table. If you can, work in a different area of your home than where you typically relax or sleep.

- Place your monitor at eye level, raising it with books or a shelf if needed. Your screen should be at arm's length to reduce eye strain.
- Place your keyboard close to the body to maintain a 90-degree bend in your elbows. Avoid resting your wrists on the desk. Use a pad to keep them elevated if needed.
- If using a laptop, a wireless keyboard and mouse will help you maintain proper posture. When using a mouse, move from the elbow and not the shoulder.
- Place papers on a document holder or use a household item to prop them up to reduce neck strain.
- Sit upright and fully into your chair with your lower back supported. Always keep your ears over your shoulders.
- When on the phone, use headphones or a headset to keep your head in a neutral position. Avoid holding the phone between your ear and shoulder.
- Keep your feet firmly planted on a stable surface, using books or a foot stool if needed to maintain a 90-degree bend in your knees.
- Alternate between sitting and standing throughout the day if possible. When standing, distribute the weight evenly between your feet and maintain a slight bend in the knees.



## Rest Your Eyes

Remember 20/20/20. Every 20 minutes, look away from your screen for 20 seconds and focus on an object 20 feet away. This can help relax the eye muscles and reduce strain.



## Take a Stretch Break

Include regular breaks in your day to allow for movement. Walk or stand every 30-45 minutes and stretch every 60 minutes. The neck, back and wrists are common places to feel pain or irritation after a long day of desk work.



### Set Reminders

Use your phone, an app or your calendar to set a reminder to take breaks throughout the day.

#### Neck Stretches

- **Side Bend:** Sit up straight and slowly lower your right ear toward your right shoulder. Hold for five seconds. Return to center and replicate on the left. Repeat three times on each side.
- **Neck Rotation:** Turn your head as if looking over your right shoulder. Hold for five seconds. Return to center and replicate on the left. Repeat three times on each side.

#### Back Stretches

- **Back Bend:** While standing, place both hands on your lower back. Slowly bend backward as far as it is comfortable. Hold for five seconds, then return to an upright position. Repeat five times. Do not extend or strain your neck.
- **Trunk Rotation:** While seated, turn your upper body around and to the right as far as it is comfortable. Hold for five seconds. Return to center and replicate on the left. Repeat three times on each side.

#### Wrist Stretches

- **Wrist Bend:** Extend your arm out in front of you with palm facing down. Using your other hand, bend your wrist downward until you feel a comfortable stretch. Hold for five seconds. Switch to palm up, bending downward. Repeat both motions two times on each arm.
- **Wrist Circles:** Extend your arms forward, elbows at your sides, and slowly make circles with both wrists. Keep your fingers relaxed in a fist position. Make ten circles in one direction, then ten circles in the opposite direction.