

# WORKING FROM HOME

In the modern office, work can happen anywhere — on the road, in a coffee shop or at your kitchen counter. If you work from home, having a dedicated home office designed properly can help avoid painful injuries and time lost from work in the future.



## THE 3 KEYS TO ERGONOMICS

You can lessen the strain of working on a computer by focusing on three things:

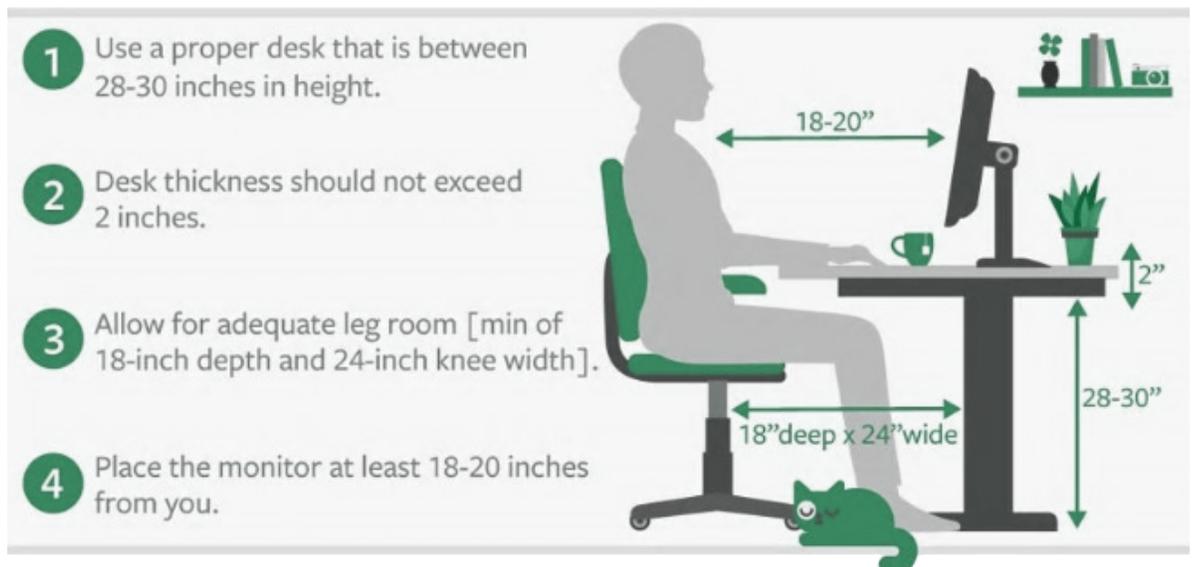
1. PROPER POSTURE
2. GOOD WORK HABITS
3. APPROPRIATELY ADJUSTED EQUIPMENT

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that a slouched posture is more relaxing. Remember to take frequent breaks, both to stretch and to help focus. Whether you are working from home or traveling, get comfortable with adjusting your setup until it suits you.



## TABLE/DESK

You'll want a proper desk between 28-30 inches in height, instead of working off a kitchen countertop. If a desk is not available, use a dining table with a height adjustable chair. Avoid sitting on the floor while working and don't use lap desks for long stretches. Consider these other important dimensions for desk thickness, leg room, and monitor placement.



# CHAIR



Your favorite seat on the couch won't cut it — most couches don't support the body evenly during extended sitting. Invest in an adjustable chair with pneumatic height adjustment, lumbar back support, a height-adjustable seat back with locking function and an adjustable depth seat pan. Bonus points if it has padded armrests that are height- and depth-adjustable with rounded edges. Some other suggestions as you look for the right fit:

- Consider sitting on a small pillow so your seated elbow height is level with the keyboard and mouse.
- Use a thin pillow to provide additional support to the lower back.
- Stand, stretch, or walk after sitting every two hours.



# KEYBOARD & MOUSE

Instead of the built-in track pad and keyboard on your laptop, use an external keyboard and mouse. They offer greater adjustability, which is a major factor in user comfort. Make sure the mouse is next to the keyboard, and place both near the edge of the table. If the desk is too high, consider a height-adjustable keyboard tray. You can also use a small rolled up towel to support your palms when typing.

# MONITOR



Take time to get the position of the monitor right. Having a monitor connected to your laptop as a second screen can offer more flexibility to have multiple documents open at once, while giving you more adjustability than a laptop screen.

- Position the monitor directly in front of your body, roughly arm's length away.
- Dual monitors should be positioned at more than an arm's length and positioned in an arc.
- Large monitors should also be positioned at more than an arm's reach.
- The top two-thirds of the monitor should fall within eye level.
- Use a small box, reams of paper, books, etc., to raise the height of the monitor or laptop.
- Position the monitor away from direct sunlight.



## OFFICE ACCESSORIES

When your chair is raised to work at the desk height, you may need a footrest to support your feet. You may want to use a headset or speakerphone if you are on the phone for more than two hours per day. Take care with where you place documents, as looking down at the desk can place a strain on your neck. A document holder or clipboard near the monitor, at about the same height, can hold reference documents.

## LIGHTING



Change the orientation of your desk if the sun is in your eyes, and avoid facing windows without shades or curtains. Use task lighting to highlight documents and desktop areas, and lamps with diffusers or shields to help to reduce glare. Remember that light from lamps should not directly face the eyes.



Taking the time to go to your home office, rather than working with a laptop propped on a coffee table or kitchen counter, might take practice, but following good ergonomic practices will make it more comfortable. You may also find limiting work to the home office helps to create some healthy boundaries in a 24/7 “always-on” work week.



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