

Getting ergonomically correct

Since the introduction of the video display terminal in the workplace, writer's cramp has been replaced by painful wrists, eyes, necks and backs. Some of these aches can be relieved or eliminated with a properly adjusted work station that provides the operator with a comfortable sitting position, flexible enough to reach, use and observe the screen, keyboard and documents.

Fitting humans into a computer world

Arms: When operator's hands are on keyboard, upper arm and forearm should form right angle; hands should be lined up with forearm; if hands are angled up from the wrist, try using attached to front of keyboard; optional arm rests should be adjustable

Backrest: Adjustable for occasional variations; shape should match contour of lower back, providing even pressure and support

Posture: Sit all the way back into chair for proper back support; back, neck should be as comfortably straight ahead; knees should be slightly lower than hips; do not cross legs or shift weight to one side; give joints, muscles a chance to relax; periodically, get up and walk around

Telephone: Cradling telephone receiver between head and shoulder can cause muscle strain; headset allows head, neck to remain straight while keeping hands free

Document holder: Same height and distance from user as the screen, so eyes can remain focused as they look from one to the other

Screen: Eyes should be about level with top of screen; screen should swivel horizontally, tilt vertically

Keyboard: Positioned to allow hands, forearms to remain straight, level

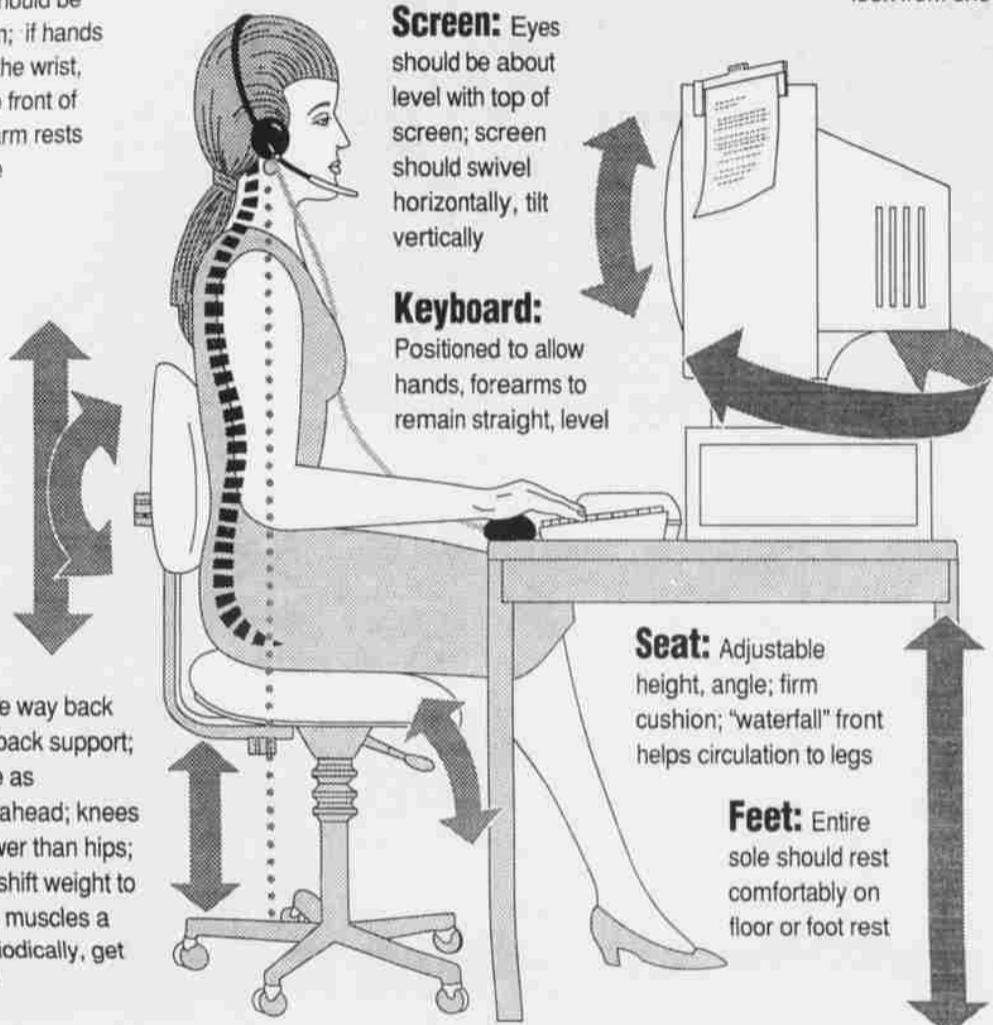
Seat: Adjustable height, angle; firm cushion; "waterfall" front helps circulation to legs

Feet: Entire sole should rest comfortably on floor or foot rest

Desk: Thin work surface to allow leg room and posture adjustments; adjustable surface height preferable; table should be large enough for books, files, telephone while permitting different positions of screen, keyboard, mouse pad

Avoiding eye strain

1. Getting glasses that improve focus on screen; measure distance before visiting eye doctor
2. Try to position screen or lamps so that lighting is indirect; do not have light shining directly at screen or into eyes
3. Use a glare-reducing screen
4. Periodically rest eyes by looking into the distance



Staying in shape

Do these exercises several times a day to give your hands a break from repetitive work and to help to keep them flexible. Take a few minutes every hour or when your hands start to get tired to do these exercises. If you are being treated for hand problems, check with your doctor before starting these exercises.

1. A) Hands in front, stretch fingers



B) Rotate hands ...



C) ... while closing them ...



D) ... into a tight fist



2. Hands at sides; shake them for 5-10 seconds



3. Stretch each hand gently twice; support elbows



4. Repeat step 2

5. Stand; stretch body with both arms raised overhead



6. Stand, interlace fingers behind back with elbows straight; keeping chin tucked and body erect, lift hands away from body; hold final position for 15 seconds



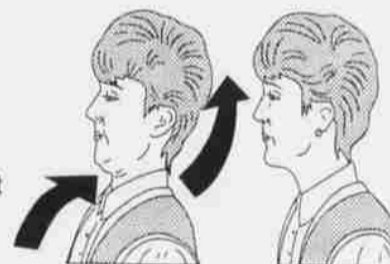
7. Neck stretch: Hold right arm behind back; tilt head forward and to opposite shoulder; hold five seconds; repeat three times; repeat entire exercise for left arm



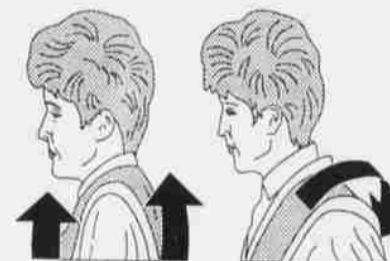
8. Arm pulls: Gently pull elbow across chest toward opposite shoulder; hold five seconds; repeat five times; repeat entire exercise, pulling other arm



9. Chin tucks: Keeping chin level, pull your head, neck backward as if you are making a double chin; hold two seconds; relax, returning to normal position; repeat 10 times an hour



10. Shoulder shrugs: From relaxed position with arms at side, shrug shoulders up toward ears, then back, then down and relax; repeat 10 times an hour



SOURCE: San Jose Mercury News; San Jose Physical Therapy and Sports Injury Center; "Computer Comfort," by Melissa Mayfield

ATTENTION GAYS AND LESBIANS

Come join the fun in UNLV's Lesbian and Gay Academic Union. LGAU is a social group offering anonymity, support, and friendship to both students and persons in the community. Meetings and workshops are scheduled on the first and third Mondays of each month at 6 pm in the Moyer Student Union.

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Correction—

Yellin' Rebel photographer Rob Weidenfeld's name was incorrectly spelled in the 4-8 issue of The Yellin' Rebel.