Seated Workstation Setup Guideline

WHS-PRO-GUI-002f

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

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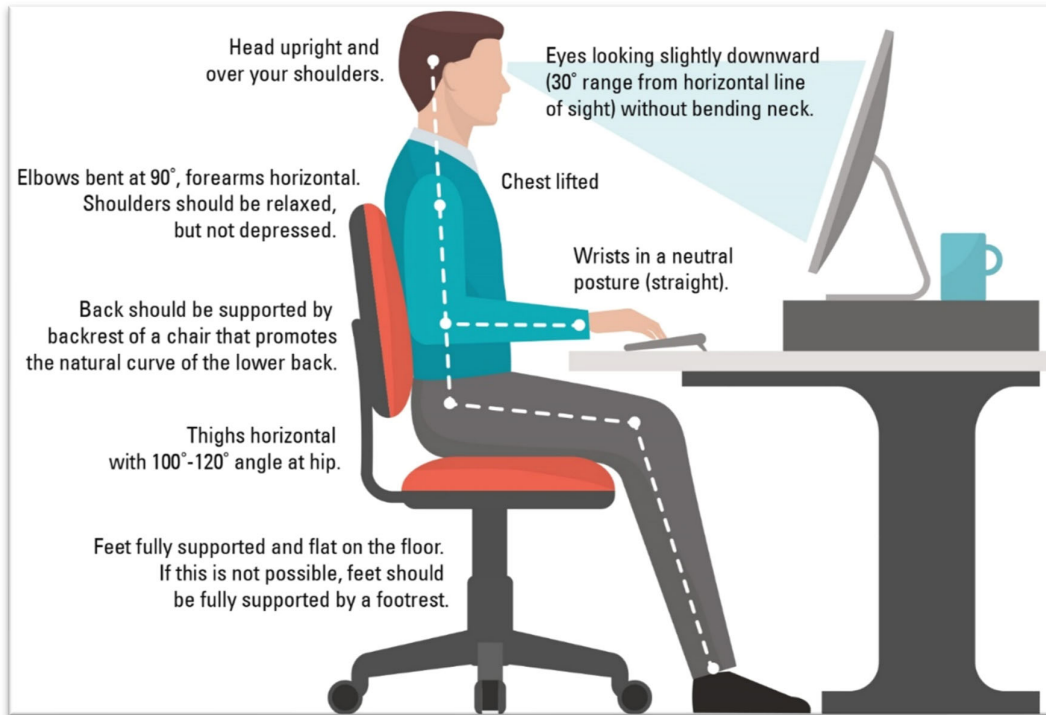
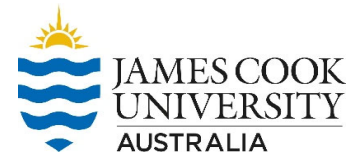## Seated Workstation Setup Guideline

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Work surface
A suitable work surface is required. This comprises of a flat smooth surface, sufficient space for all computer and accessory equipment, sufficient space for legs underneath the surface, and at a height enabling optimal working posture (described in Step 1).

Chair
An ergonomic chair is one which can be adjusted to suit the users needs. As a minimum the chair will need adjustable seat height, adjustable backrest height, and adjustable backrest tilt. Ergonomic chairs are typically those with casters. Ergonomic chairs may have parts that move individually, other chairs have a synchronised mechanism that moves the seat and backrest angle together.

Step 1: Working Height
Adjust seat height so that the elbow angle is approximately 90-100° when operating keyboard, elbows should be in line with or slightly above the height of the desk surface. Use a footrest if your feet do not touch the floor. Feet should be supported with knees and hips mostly level when seated.

Step 2: Seated position
Sit your hips back into the chair, most of the thigh should be supported (there should be approximately 2-3 finger gap between back of knee and front of chair). The backrest of the chair should be set so that lumbar support matches curve of lower back, and creates an angle of 90-110° at the hip. Arm rests are not necessary and should be removed if they prevent close access to the desk or if they encourage poor posture.

Step 3: Monitor
Raise or lower the monitor height so that the eyes/forehead lines up with the top edge of the computer screen, creating a 30° viewing angle when looking at the centre of the screen. Monitor should be positioned about an arm's length away (approximately 50cm) from the user. This may vary depending on a person's vision/use of bifocal glasses. When using a single monitor, place this directly in front of you. When using dual monitors, you may position the primary monitor directly in front of you and the secondary monitor to the side, or, you may centre both monitors in front of you angling them in slightly.

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Step 4: Keyboard	The keyboard should be positioned relatively flat (kickstands down), and placed on the desk in a location that allows elbows to remain by the sides when keying, not out in front of the body. Centre the keyboard in front of you.
Step 5: Mouse	Position the mouse so that it is as close to the keyboard as possible and aligned with the keyboard. A mouse pad is recommended. It is good practice to switch mouse use between left and right hands to reduce the likelihood for overuse of the dominant hand. Use keyboard shortcuts to minimise mouse use.
Step 6: Headset	Use of a wireless headset is recommended to enable positional change and movement. A noise cancelling headset is recommended for use in shared office spaces. Headsets should be located within reach on the non-dominant side.
Step 7: Workstation area	Frequently used items should be within close reach, and unnecessary items positioned further away. Plastic floor mats should not be used unless plush carpet affects ease of chair manoeuvrability. Ensure that there is sufficient legroom under the desk. Avoid glare and reflections from bright lights or windows. Minimise distracting and loud noise.
Note: Laptop Use	Laptops should not be used for a prolonged period of time as they do not allow for optimal body positioning. If required to use a laptop for prolonged periods of time, it is recommended that an external monitor or laptop riser is used, together with an external keyboard and mouse. See WHS-PRO-GUI-002k Laptop Setup Guide.
Note: Breaks	Rotate tasks frequently, take microbreaks every 30 minutes to alter body position, incorporate movement, and rest eyes by looking away from the monitor screen. Once an hour stand up and walk around for a movement break. Consider use of a reminder/timer/app to remind you to move. See WHS-PRO-GUI-0002j Activity Based Work Guideline.
Note: Gym Balls	Gym balls are a useful exercise and rehabilitation tool, but are not suitable for use as an office chair due to their lack of postural support and the creation of a hazard within the work area.