

## Mouse & Keyboard

### What are the different types of mouse and keyboard for?

The most ergonomic position for our hands, wrists, elbows and shoulders is one which places the joints and muscles in, or close to, a 'neutral' position, meaning there is less stress on the musculoskeletal structures. The different types of ergonomic mouse and keyboards available aim to reduce the stress on our upper limbs and hands by moving us toward these neutral positions. Some individuals are able to use the 'standard' mouse and keyboard without any problem, others may require ergonomically designed equipment.

The size of a mouse is important, individuals with particularly large or small hands should have an appropriately sized mouse to prevent unnecessary pressure or strain. Any change in mouse or keyboard use can take a short time to get used to.

An example of the options available from JCU's preferred supplier include:

- Vertical mouse – aligns wrist and elbow in neutral position;
- Split/angled keyboard – aligns wrist and elbow in neutral position;
- Compact keyboard with no number pad / external number pad – allows the mouse to be positioned closer to keyboard to align shoulder in neutral position.



Many other mouse and keyboard options are available, each with their distinct benefits and uses. The WHS unit can provide more advice on suitable options for individuals.

### I am experiencing pain/discomfort and think I need ergonomic equipment, what should I do?

Step #	Responsible person	Task
1	Employee	Complete WHS-PRO-CHK-002b Ergonomic Workstation Self-Assessment and adjust the current chair.
2	Employee	Implement strategies from the WHS-PRO-GUI-002j Activity Based Work Guideline.
3	Employee	Lodge a RiskWare injury notification
4	Work Health & Safety	Undertake an ergonomic assessment
5	Work Health & Safety	Provide advice on suitable ergonomic equipment options
6	Employee	Seek approval from their manager to order the recommended equipment
7	Work unit	Arrange for a quote (if required) and purchase the ergonomic equipment from a JCU preferred supplier following JCU's procurement procedures.

### Additional strategies

The provision of ergonomic equipment should be used in conjunction with other strategies to improve ergonomics at the computer workstation. Examples include

1. Using inbuilt voice recognition software (e.g. Window's Speech Recognition)
2. Alternating mouse use between both hands (this takes time and practice, start with 5 minutes per hour in the non-dominant hand)
3. Use [keyboard shortcuts](#) to minimise mouse work
4. Program the buttons on your mouse to perform shortcuts (if applicable)
5. Adjust mouse pointer and scroll speeds
6. Rotate tasks to manage repetition
7. Take regular micro-pauses while keying and mousing
8. Implement regular breaks away from the computer in line with the Activity Based Work Guideline.

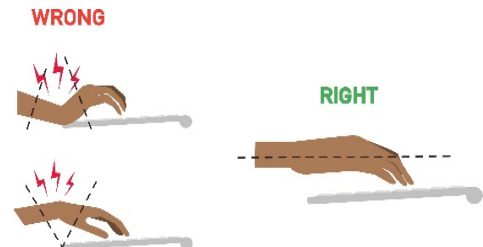
### Should I get a wrist rest for my mouse/keyboard?

Before purchasing a gel / cushioned wrist rest, think about the reasons why you feel it is needed and if it is possible to address the underlying cause of discomfort. Wrists angle should be neutralised while typing (see picture) to avoid compression through the joint.

Wrist rests are not usually a necessity, and when used incorrectly they can contribute to the development of hand/wrist pain or discomfort. Wrist rests for a mouse are generally not recommended due to an increased reliance on wrist movement coupled with compression under the wrist.

### Typing postures

- Floating: A floating typing posture (pictured) is recommended for individuals who can touch type. This typing posture lifts the wrists off the desk while typing to neutralise the wrist joint and to remove compressive forces. Wrists can be rested on the desktop surface when not typing.
- Supported: The alternate typing method is a supported posture where the majority of the forearms rest along the desktop surface. In the supported position with a low profile keyboard, there is no need for a wrist rest.



## Soft Phone & Headsets

### What are the benefits of a headset?

Most staff at JCU will have a softphone, operating through their computer, with an accompanying headset. A headset is useful for employees frequently required to type on the keyboard whilst using the phone. A headset allows the employee to maintain a neutral neck position whilst performing these two actions simultaneously. Consideration should be given to a cordless headset as this enables movement during telephone/video calls, as suggested in the WHS-PRO-GUI-002j Activity Based Work Guideline.

Staff are to liaise with their manager regarding purchase of headsets.

## Footrest

### When should I be using a footrest?

Staff with height adjustable desks are not likely to require a footrest. Chair and desk height are to be lowered so feet are flat on the ground.

Staff with fixed height desks may require a footrest if their feet are unable to reach the ground when the chair height is raised so that the forearms are parallel to the desk surface when typing.

Staff are to liaise with their manager regarding purchase of footrests.

## Floor mat

### Should I be using a plastic floor mat?

Plastic floor mats can present as a trip hazard and have caused injuries in the past. Plastic floor mats are not usually required in JCU buildings and should only be used if plush carpet or underlay creates too much friction and prevents ease of chair movement. Before purchasing a floor mat, inspect chair casters for dirt blockages or cracks, and replace if necessary. Plastic floor mats should be inspected regularly and replaced if cracked or curling up at the edges.

Staff should liaise with Work Health & Safety before purchasing a floor mat. Submit a ServiceNow request.

## Document Holder

### What type of document holder is best?

Document holders are an important consideration for those who frequently work between paper based tasks and computer tasks as it can reduce exposure to repetitive or sustained end-range neck postures. Reference material is best placed directly in front of the user, between the keyboard and the monitor, or in the case of the microdesk, over the keyboard.

Staff should liaise with their manager regarding the provision of a document holder.

## Equipment Suppliers

JCU has preferred suppliers for purchasing ergonomic office equipment which can be found using the ServiceNow Knowledge Base.