



Occupational
Health Clinics
for Ontario
Workers Inc.

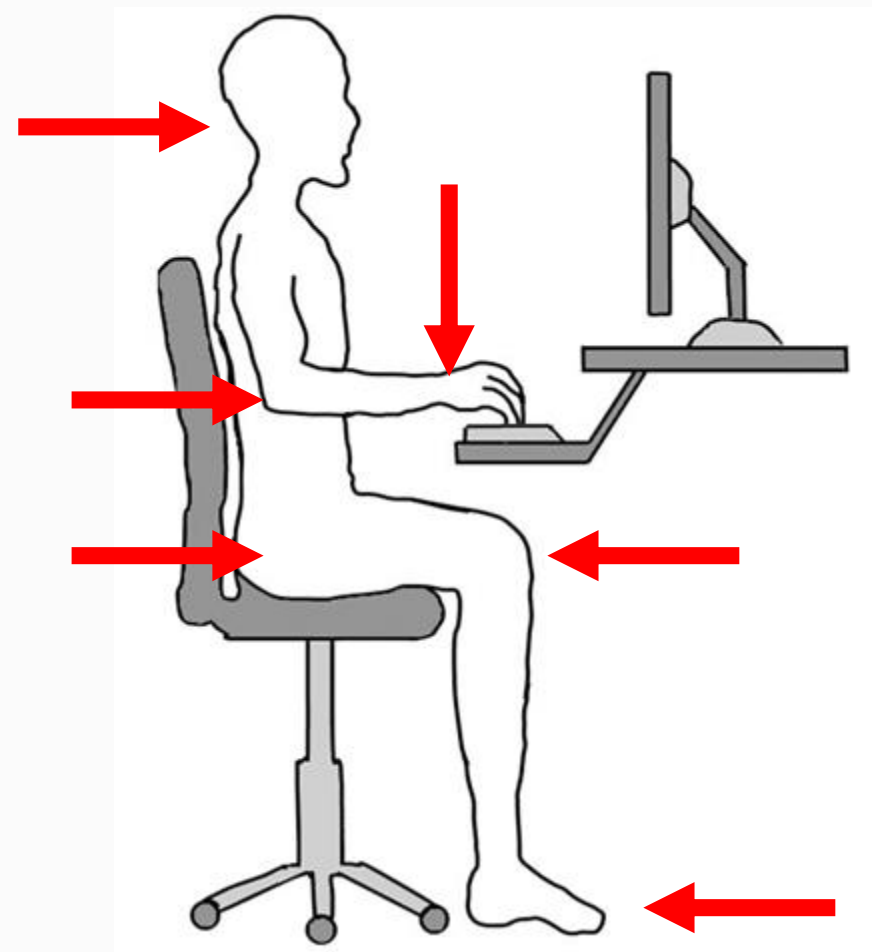
Centres de
santé des
travailleurs (ses)
de l'Ontario Inc.

Ergonomic Tips for Temporary Home Workstations



Ideal Sitting Posture

- Want to ensure that body is in a “neutral” positions





External Equipment

- If you have a “proper” desk at home then set it up according to ergonomic principles
 - “Proper” meaning all the required equipment including height adjustable keyboard tray
- If you are using a laptop on a desk or table be aware that you will likely begin to experience muscle aches and pain.
- Ideally, an external keyboard, mouse and monitor should be utilized with the laptop serving as the hard drive only



Work Area

- Find a suitable location to set up your work space
- Make sure it is a dedicated work space if possible, if not possible set it up and take it down each day at the start and end of work time.
- Take into account the amount of light present (make sure there is plenty of light – natural light if possible), pick a spot that has limited external noise or distractions.



Work Surface

- Hard, stable, flat... large enough to fit required work equipment. Make sure there is space beneath for leg placement.
 - Examples – desk, table, counter, folding table
- Ironing board – height adjustable, stable, large etc.





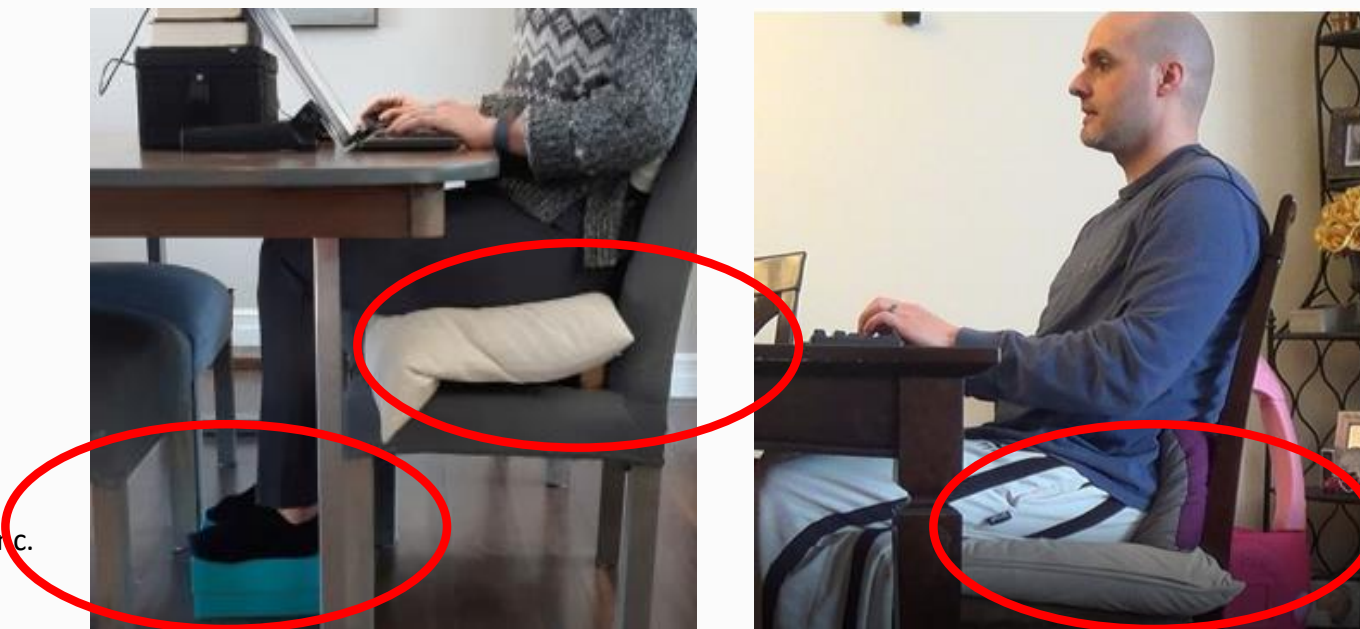
Chair

- Locate as many different chairs within your house as possible to compare which would be best for you.
- Adjustable office chair is best.
- Stable base with back rest is essential – **NO** ball or stools preferably.
- Height of chair should attempt to adhere to joint angles as much as possible – less modification required. Try to get elbows at or slightly above work surface.



Chair

- If chair is too low for work surface place pillow/cushion, stacked towels, etc on seat to raise body.
- If chair is too high – cause feet to dangle- use books, boxes, crate, pop case, stacked towels (in pillow case) to elevate feet.
- If seat pan is too large place towel, pillow etc., between back and back rest. May need one at both lumbar and thoracic regions.





Monitor

- If using a laptop best to get an external monitor.
- No external monitor - raise laptop (if external keyboard and mouse available) by placing books, boxes, etc., beneath laptop.
- No external keyboard/mouse - raise monitor portion as much as possible



Monitor

- Tilt screen by angling the laptop keypad. Use binder or other raised angled item – could modify a box by cutting down one side. Could use a book and place it half way under laptop so back is elevated.





Document Holder

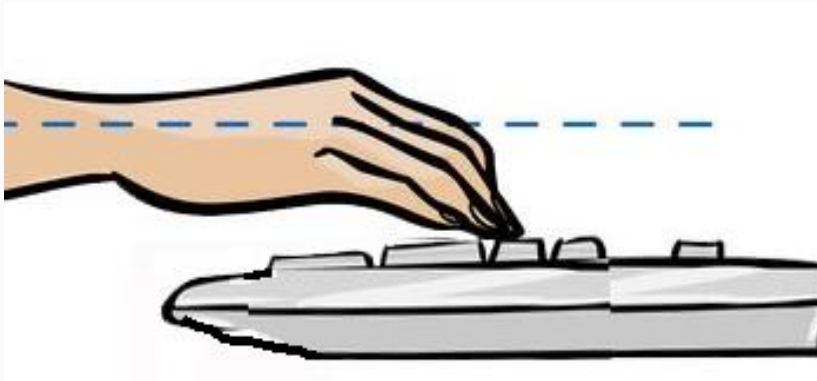
- Document holders – use if have one.
- No document holder - make one - with a vertical binder, vertical book, magazine holder, cereal box, cardboard etc.



Keyboard and mouse



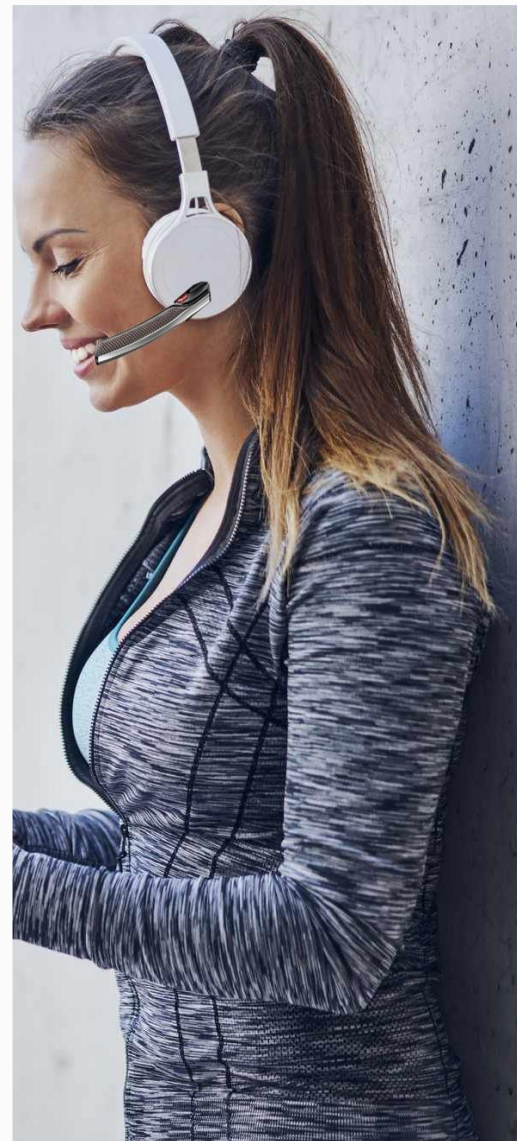
- If external devices are available put at wrist height. If not angle keyboard of laptop to get best angles possible.
- Wrist and mouse rests – can make with small rolled up towels, socks, pool noodle, etc.





Telephone Calls

- Place as close as possible.
- Utilize speaker option.
- Use a pair of headphones
- Do calls from standing or walking.





Homemade Standing Workstation

- Bar style counters or tables may allow for this type of posture
- Can also use an ironing board or even a large box or tote placed on the table





Most Important

- Take multiple breaks – every 20-30 minutes get up and move around. The less ergonomically sound your workstation is the more movement is essential. Use a timer!
- Take phone calls while walking or standing, take set coffee and lunch breaks as you would in your normal office.
- If you are just utilizing a laptop with no external devices then it can be moved easily. Elevate it and work standing then sit again etc.



Temporary Ergonomic Home Assessments

- OHCOW is now offering a Virtual Home Office Ergonomic Assessment
- Available to anyone in Ontario who is currently working from home, and is concerned about their workstation set-up, or suffering from a Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) (or chronic pain) at NO charge.
- Service provides individual assessments performed 1:1 by an OHCOW Ergonomist via email, photos (or video), and telephone (or video conferencing).
- Will focus on the use of available resources (eg. office equipment, furniture, household items, etc.) to improve workstation set-up (and use). Recommendations will be in keeping with the current CSA Z412 Standard: “Office Ergonomics - An application standard for workplace ergonomics.”
- To contact one of OHCOW’s Ergonomists for a virtual home office ergonomic assessment, please contact ergo@ohcow.on.ca to get started.

For More Information Contact your Local OHCOW Clinic



1-877-817-0336

www.ohcow.on.ca

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