

Desk

Overview

Your desk is a critical component of your workstation. It supports tasks (writing), above-surface equipment (computer monitor, phone, etc.), and below-surface equipment (keyboard tray system or CPU holder). The height and layout of your work surface play an important role in your work posture and efficiency. A good ergonomic arrangement is one that will allow you to work most efficiently in a good posture.

Set-up & Positioning

The best ergonomic fit of your work surface depends upon the kind of work surface that you have:

1. Using a fixed height desk?

If you have a desk with limited clearance or a center drawer that stops you from installing a keyboard/mouse tray system, then you may need to raise the height of your chair to use the keyboard and mouse on the desk top. This arrangement is not ideal, and you should think about replacing the desk with a work surface/keyboard tray arrangement as soon as possible. If you have to do this, remember to use a good footrest to support your legs while you are working.

2. Using a fixed height work surface?

If you have a fixed height work surface, it's probably between 28"-30" above the floor. While this is a comfortable height for writing on paper, it's too high for computer keyboard and mouse work. The best arrangement is for you to install a height adjustable keyboard/mouse tray system beneath the work surface. Another option is to place the keyboard and mouse on top of the desk and adjust your chair upward, using a foot rest to maintain proper seating posture.

3. Using an adjustable height work surface?

If you have an adjustable height work surface, set it to a comfortable height for writing and then attach a separate height adjustable keyboard/mouse tray system to correctly adjust these components.

4. Positioning your Desk

Try to arrange the desk so that you have space on either side of it and easy access to the rear for cables to connect your computer.



Tips for Healthy Desk Usage

1. First, when you are sitting comfortably, pull up to the edge of your work surface and look straight ahead. What you see is your optimal viewing zone, and things that you look at during work (computer screen, documents etc.) should be in or close to this zone.
2. Next, reach each arm out to the side of your body and move them from this position until the hands meet at the center of your body in front of you. The semi-circular area covered by the sweep of your arms is called your normal reach zone, and everything that you frequently use should be placed inside of or close to this area. You should not have to bend or stretch to reach things that you frequently use.
3. Then, relax your upper arms down to the side of your body. Using your elbows as pivot points, swing your forearms out to each side and then move them together until your hands touch in the center of your body in front of you. The area covered by the sweep of your forearms looks like that area covered by your windshield wipers, and it is called your normal working area. Things that you operate with your hands, such as your keyboard and mouse, should be placed in this area and positioned for optimum comfort.