

I. Purpose

This guide provides basic workstation recommendations to improve comfort and reduce ergonomic risk. Adjustments may vary based on individual needs and work tasks. For additional information, review the Northwestern [Ergonomics Program](#) or contact ehs@northwestern.edu.

Note: Purchases of ergonomic equipment and furniture are subject to school or unit discretion.

II. Chair Setup

- Adjust your chair so that your shoulders are relaxed and your elbows are close to your body, forming a 90- to 110-degree angle. If your feet are not firmly planted in this position, use a footrest.
- Modify your chair's lumbar support so that your chair follows the natural curvature of your lower back.
- Adjust the armrests so they support your forearms while allowing your shoulders to remain relaxed.

III. Keyboard/Mouse Setup

- Position your keyboard so that it is centered in front of you, and close to your body.
- Keep your wrists in a neutral position while typing. Wrist rests may be helpful during pauses in typing but should not be used to support your wrists while actively typing.
- Position your mouse close to your body to avoid overreaching.
- Your wrist should be in a neutral position when using your mouse. Avoid resting your wrist on sharp edges. If a neutral wrist position cannot be maintained, consider a wrist support or ergonomic mouse (e.g., semi-vertical).

IV. Monitor Setup

- Position your monitor an arm's length away, adjusting as needed for visibility and comfort.
- Raise or lower your monitor so that the top of the screen is at or slightly below eye level.
- Maintain a neutral neck position when viewing your monitor screen.
- Ensure there is no significant glare coming from your screen. Consider adjusting brightness/contrast settings or using a monitor glare protector.
- **Single monitor users:** Position your monitor so that it is centered directly in front of you.
- **Multiple monitor users:** If both monitors are used equally, center them directly in front of you. If one monitor is used more frequently, position the primary monitor directly in front of you and the secondary monitor to the side.
- **Laptop users:** Use a laptop holder or stand to raise the screen to the appropriate height. Use an external keyboard and mouse to maintain a neutral neck, wrist, and arm position while typing and using the mouse.

V. Telephone Setup

- Ensure your telephone is within easy reach.
- To minimize repetitive reaching, position your telephone on the opposite side of your mouse.
- Avoid cradling the telephone between your shoulder and ear, which can result in prolonged awkward neck and shoulder postures.
- Maintain a neutral neck posture when using the telephone. Consider using a headset for frequent or extended telephone use to help maintain a neutral neck and shoulder posture.