

Setting Up Your Workstation

Advice from the experts

OSHA, the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, is the part of the United States Department of Labor that ensures safe and healthful working conditions by setting and enforcing standards in the workplace. So they know their stuff when it comes to workstation setup. Here are a few pointers they mention:

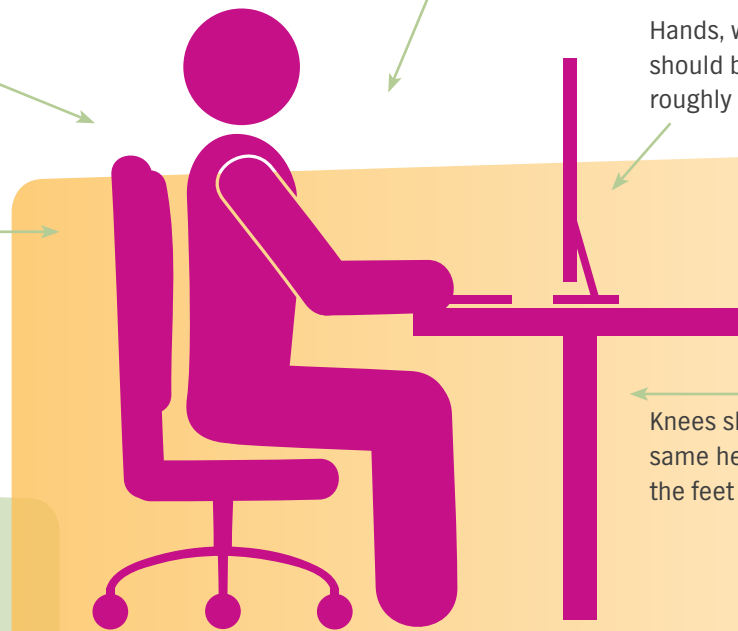
Your head should be level, or bent slightly forward, forward facing, and balanced. Generally it should be in-line with the torso.

Elbows should be in close to the body and are bent between 90 and 120 degrees.

Shoulders should be relaxed and upper arms hang normally at the side of the body.

Hands, wrists, and forearms should be straight, in-line and roughly parallel to the floor.

Your back should be fully supported with appropriate lumbar support when sitting vertical or leaning back slightly.



Knees should be about the same height as the hips with the feet slightly forward.

Regardless of how good your working posture is, working in the same posture or sitting still for prolonged periods is not healthy. You should change your working position frequently throughout the day in the following ways:

- Make small adjustments to your chair or backrest.
- Stretch your fingers, hands, arms, and torso.
- Stand up and walk around for a few minutes periodically.

Thighs and hips should be supported by a well padded seat and generally parallel to the floor.

Feet should be fully supported by the floor or a footrest may be used if the desk height is not adjustable.



* Adapted from the OSHA Computer Workstation Tool, osha.gov