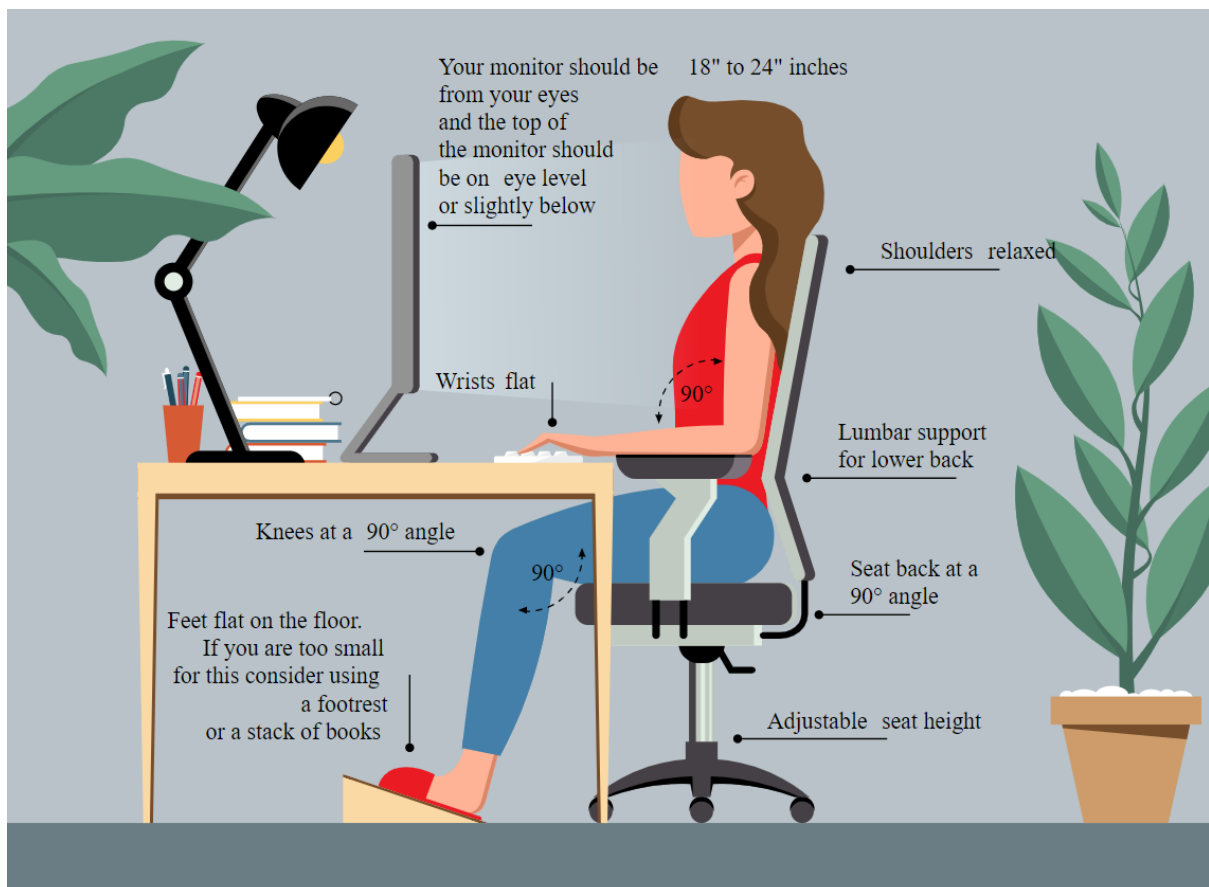


# HSE Desk Set Up

## Seating

- Your chair should have an adjustable back that allows for lumbar support while you are sitting in an upright position.
- An ideal chair will allow for a natural curve in the spine.
- Armrests, preferably those that are adjustable, can help you maintain proper posture.
- Your feet should not be dangling, as this causes blood to pool and can cause poor circulation and sensations such as pain, numbness, and tingling in the lower body.
- The optimal seating position for an ergonomic workstation is:
  - Elbows resting at 90 degrees
  - Spine flat against the seat back
  - Hips squared at 90 degrees
  - Thighs parallel to the ground
  - Knees at 90 degrees with the back of your knees resting on the edge of the seat
  - Ankles at 90 degrees with feet resting flat on the floor or on top of a book, box, or small foot rest



## Desk

- Keep all items you frequently need/use (water bottle, chapstick, etc.) within arm's length so it is always in reach.
- Whether you are working at a highly customizable office desk, small desk that is mounted to the wall and folds up for storage, or a simple surface like a card table, you can still modify your workspace to be more user-friendly. If you are not able to adjust the height of your tabletop, ensure that equipment such as your monitor(s), chair, keyboard, and mouse follow the principles of good ergonomics.

## Keyboard & Mouse

- The keyboard should be positioned directly in front of you, so you can reach it comfortably with your elbows close to your side at 90 degrees.
- Your wrists should be in neutral and kept level with your forearms, which should be parallel to the floor. You should not be straining the forearm muscles or excessively moving your wrists while using the keyboard.
- It is a good idea to use a gel or padded wrist rest to cushion and support your wrists as you use your keyboard.
- Be sure to use a functioning keyboard that only requires minimal force on the keys.
- Your mousepad should be supportive enough to allow your mouse to function properly. You should also have a small cushion, rolled up washcloth, or gel buffer just below your mousepad to support your wrist during prolonged mouse use.

## Monitor

- Whether you have single or dual monitors, it is important to adjust the height so that you are able to see either screen while keeping your head straight. An appropriately positioned monitor will allow you to sit with your neck relaxed, shoulders rolled back, and spine tall in your seat.
- If you cannot obtain the right monitor height, you can get a monitor stand or place it on top of a box or stack of books to make the screen sit higher. If you need the monitor to be lower than the adjustments allow for, you may be able to change the height of your desk or use a different tabletop surface for your workspace.
- You should be able to comfortably see the top third of your screen with your shoulders relaxed and head in a neutral position.
- Adjust the brightness on your monitor(s) to ensure you can comfortably see the screen without squinting or frequently rubbing your eyes.
- If you have more than one monitor, choose a primary monitor (the monitor you use more often) and arrange your mouse, keyboard, and desk items thoughtfully around that.

## Sound

- It is most ideal to set up your workspace in a room that has a door to block outside sound while keeping you focused. Plants, rugs, and other furniture in your office also assist in preventing an echo or drowning out sound coming from outdoors and the rest of your home.
- If these modifications are not possible, other options are ambient music or white noise machines. These can also help boost productivity and keep you focused.

## Lighting

- Be sure the room you are working in has enough light so you can see the screen and do not need to strain your eyes. The best room has a lot of natural light coming through windows, since this is easiest on the eyes. However, this is not always possible. A good way to create appropriate lighting is to use lamps in addition to ceiling lights to gain a happy medium.
- If you are working late, be mindful of limiting blue light exposure from your computer screen. This can be harmful to the body's natural rhythms, but there are ways to minimize its effect on the body and mind if you must work after the sun has set.
- Download an app or tool such as f.lux, which adjusts the blue light coming from your screen based on your time zone and geographic location. As the sun goes down, the light on your computer gradually dims to prevent blue light from impacting your productivity and sleep schedule.
- You can also use eyeglasses with features that block blue lights from electronic devices.
- Blackout shades or other curtains can be used to block bright light at certain times of day. This can prevent a glare on the monitor. Another way to avoid glare is to observe the lighting in your room at various times of day. Then you can arrange the furniture in a way that does not impact your ability to see the screen.

## Stretching

- Sitting in one position for an extended period of time is not good for the body. You should make it a habit to take hourly stretch breaks to improve flexibility, decrease joint stiffness, and prevent or relieve pain.
- Drinking plenty of water is not only good for the body, but encourages you to get up and use the bathroom more often, which can be used as a stretch break.
- Get into the habit of stretching for at least 5 minutes before and after your work shift to help minimize stiffness from your night of sleep and/or poor posture throughout the day. There is a stretching section on Working Den which will help you with this.
- Try intermittently working while standing. Rotate between 30 minutes working in standing for every 1 hour working while seated. This may mean taking a laptop to a countertop or even standing at your current

desk and stacking books under your monitor. Again, be sure your monitor is high enough that you can see the top third while you are standing.

- Use the Pomodoro Productivity Sprint option on Working Den to remind you to take a break every 45 minutes that you are working. This not only helps improve your focus, but serves an equal purpose at keeping your body flexible and preventing injury.
- Set a reminder on your phone every so often as a cue to adjust your posture.
  - Take a walk around your house or outside to help circulate the blood in your lower body
  - Stretch your arms all the way out in front of you. Bend your wrists up and down, then wiggle your fingers.
  - Lift your arms above your head and roll your wrists.
  - Move your head from side to side while trying to touch your ear to your shoulder.
  - Stand up and roll your shoulders back several times.

## Electrical

- Research conducted by consumer safety charity Electrical Safety First has found more than two thirds of those currently working from home are using extension leads or adaptors with the electronic device they're working on and 38 per cent of them have more appliances plugged into one than they usually would.
- By using extension leads and adaptors to plug additional devices into a socket, there is a danger that they could be overloaded, creating a fire risk.
- 44 per cent of those currently working from home are using extension leads or adapters as part of their setup and admit to 'daisy-chaining' them together. Daisy-chaining involves plugging one extension into another in order to reach further or plug more appliances in, and is advised against in all circumstances.
- Electrical items should only ever be left on hard, non-flammable surfaces unless switched off and not charging.
- If you are worried about overloading your sockets and would like to check then please use the calculator that Electrical Safety First have put together below:

# Socket Overload Calculator

Are you overloading your sockets and putting your home at risk of fire? Plug in some appliances to find out!



Important: The appliance power ratings used are indicative only

For more safety information visit **[www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)**



[Terms & Privacy](#)

The Socket Calculator has been brought to you by Electrical Safety First.

For more safety information visit <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk>