

Home office ergonomics – Self-assessment of workstation

Home office can present challenges regarding the ergonomic working environment. The ergonomic principles will nevertheless be the same for both office and home-office in terms of how to prevent muscle- and skeletal problems. We want to give you some tips and advice so you can avoid and prevent repetitive strain injuries as a result of a prolonged home office situation.

This checklist is intended to help you evaluate your workplace at your home office. We recommend that everyone perform this evaluation, but it is especially important for those who have had or are beginning to feel pain. If there is equipment in the office that is important to your health, check with your employer if you can take it home for a period.

How to tick off the form:

Green: Optimal ergonomic conditions, no action required.

Red: Ergonomic challenges. Adjustments can be considered

If you have ticked off several red boxes and need assistance to make necessary adjustments please contact Aker Care: akercare.com

Chair:

Comfortable work chair that provides good support in the lower back. The best is a type of height-adjustable office chair with wheels. An extra low back pillow on a regular dining room chair can also work well. Sit next to the table so that at least 2/3 of your forearms are supported.			
Recommended sitting height: the hips placed slightly higher than the knees - do not sit too low as this negatively affects posture in the neck and upper back.			
Feet in steady contact with the floor or on the chair legs.			
3-6 cm distance between knee and chair seat (possibility of bending knees)			
If armrests: Can you get close enough to the desk without the armrests preventing this. The forearms should rest on the desk surface.			

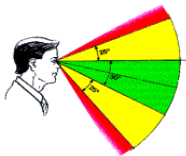
Desk:

The desk height allows the arms to rest with approx. 90 degrees angle in the elbow. About. 2/3 of the forearms should rest on the desk surface - relaxed shoulders.			
Adjust table height, if possible.			
Good enough space underneath the desk. Can you stretch your legs?			

Monitors, Keyboard, Computer Mouse:

Most people use a laptop. These are basically not designed for long-term work. The challenge is that the keyboard and monitor are interconnected so that you cannot get the monitor at the right viewing distance while also providing the keyboard for optimal forearm support. The best solution is therefore a separate keyboard and screen if possible. If possible, get the computer equipment you have in the office. It is also possible to use a laptop stand so that it can be placed at a good height and angle.

The best solution is, as mentioned is a separate screen, keyboard and computer mouse. The monitor is positioned so that the eye hits approx. in the middle of the screen when you rest your eyes down. (Upper part of the screen edge at about eye level, it should also be angled somewhat backwards, about 15-20 °)	Green	Red	
Screen Position: The screen directly in front of you to avoid neck rotation.	Green	Red	
Distance to screen: 60-100 cm. An arm's length fits most people.	Green	Red	
Keyboard: comfortable wrist angle, keys are easy to press down etc.	Green	Red	
Computer mouse: Design and function satisfactory. Precise in use.	Green	Red	
Computer mouse: placed as close as possible to your keyboard or in front of the keyboard to avoid outward rotation in shoulder joint during use - good support for forearm during use.	Green	Red	



Lighting conditions:

The daylight should fall from the side of the screen to avoid glare and reflections.	Green	Red	
General lighting without direct or indirect glare or annoying reflexes.	Green	Red	
Sun protection on window surfaces are satisfactory.	Green	Red	
Work light on desk when needed.	Green	Red	

Organization of the working day:

Variation: Possibility to take breaks from the screen work.	Green	Red	
Minor breaks / micropauses when needed.	Green	Red	
Vary between sitting and standing work position. Work standing eg. if you talk on the phone etc. Create a standing workplace if possible.	Green	Red	

Recommendation: variation and movement:

It is important to focus on variation and movement when you do not have an optimally designed workplace.

You must attempt to vary your working position. Make sure that you get up from the chair regularly, walk around. When working at the computer, you should take regular micro-pauses, a few seconds of interruption in work. During these micro-pauses, it's important to let the eyes look at something other than the computer screen, so that the eye muscles can change focus. For example look out of the window or at something away from your desk.

Simple exercises to activate larger muscle groups are also recommended.

Work-space:

Having a dedicated office space makes it easier to keep work and privacy separate. If possible, try to find a separate room or zone where you are not distracted too much and can concentrate on the tasks.

If you have children at home from school or kindergarten, make some rules and schedule breaks when you can be together. If both parents are working from home, take turns helping the child/children so that the other parent can focus on work.

Good luck with an efficient working day at your home office!

References:

Forskrift om utforming og innretning av arbeidsplasser og arbeidslokaler (Arbeidsplassforskriften),
Forskrift om utførelse av arbeid, samt forskrift om organisering, ledelse og medvirkning.