

Article: Physical Health—musculoskeletal

Content notes:

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AUDIENCE	Office-based and hybrid workers looking for practical ways to set up a safe and ergonomic home workspace to prevent back and neck pain.
COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES	White-label content tied to World Health & Safety at Work Day (April) or National Safe Work Month (October), positioning home office ergonomics as a simple but important part of musculoskeletal health.
MESSAGE	A poor home desk setup can cause or worsen back and neck pain, but a few simple adjustments to your workspace and posture habits can make a real difference.
INSIGHTS	Flexible and hybrid working is now commonplace, yet many home offices lack the ergonomic setup of a traditional office, increasing the risk of musculoskeletal issues from prolonged sitting and poor posture.
ASSOCIATED ASSET/S	Healthdirect posture guidance, TAL Health Connector.
CTA	Review your home workspace setup and posture habits or find support through the TAL Health Connector.
REVIEW DATE	May 2026

Tips for working safely from home

Now that flexible working arrangements are commonplace for many previously office-based roles, it’s important to consider ways to ensure your home office is friendly for your back. If you’d like to know more, our life insurance partner **TAL**, has provided some useful guidance.

Prolonged sitting in a poor desk setup can be a risk factor for developing back and neck pain and can make existing muscular issues worse.

Six tips to improve your workspace:

1. PLACE YOUR SCREEN AT EYE LEVEL

You should be able to just touch your screen with your fingertips if you reach out. This places it at the optimum distance. The top of the screen should be at, or slightly below eye level.

2. AVOID PHONE STRAIN

If you spend a lot of time on the phone, use a headset instead of a handset. Repeatedly cradling the phone between your ear and shoulder can strain our neck muscles.

3. MAKE OBJECTS ACCESSIBLE

Position frequently used objects, such as your phone, mouse or calculator within easy reach. Avoid repeatedly stretching or twisting to reach things.

4. ENSURE YOUR CHAIR IS SUPPORTIVE

Your chair height should enable you to use the keyboard with your wrists and forearms straight and level with the floor. Crossing your legs while sitting may contribute to posture-related problems.

5. PLACE YOUR KEYBOARD IN FRONT OF YOU WHEN TYPING

Leave a gap of a few centimetres at the front of the desk which should allow you to rest your wrists between bouts of typing. Keep your arms bent in an L-shape and your elbows by your side.

6. CONSIDER DUAL SCREENS

Multiple screens can help ensure you have your work well positioned. Ensure your main working screen is placed directly in front to minimise the need to turn your neck repeatedly.

Tips for improving posture

Don't slouch. Over time, slouching can place strain on muscles and soft tissues which may in turn cause pain. Use a chair with adjustable support for the lower and upper back. Ensure that you regularly check your position throughout the day.

Take regular breaks. To break up sitting, stand at least once an hour and try changing positions if you're taking calls. Consider using a sit-to-stand desk and if standing, share your weight equally over both legs.

Avoid 'tech neck'. Looking down at electronic devices over a prolonged period of time can contribute to back, neck and shoulder strain. This can be avoided through improved posture and regular breaks with exercise and stretches.

For more information on improving your posture and safely working from home, visit the [Healthdirect](#) website. If you're feeling overwhelmed, or unsure where to begin, speak to your GP or find support through the [TAL Health Connector](#).

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