



You Can Arrange Your Desk So That It's Right For You

FACT SHEET 88-009-0311

Your connection to your work is through your hands. Place equipment on and around your desk so that when you perform routine tasks:

- Your shoulders are relaxed.
- Your upper arms are close to your body.
- Your forearms and wrists are parallel to the floor.
- Your keyboard, mouse, and monitor are placed in front of you so you don't have to twist your body or neck.

General Desk Design Tips

- Desktops should have a matte finish to minimize glare and reflection.
- Avoid sharp edges—rounded or sloping edges are preferable.
- Avoid glass tops. Glass presents a glare problem and tends to have sharp edges that will compress the arm during writing tasks.
- From your desk's edge, the minimum under-desk clearance depth should be 17.3" (44 cm) for your knees and 23.6" (60 cm) for your feet. The minimum under-desk clearance width should be 20.5" (52 cm).
- The desktop should be large enough for work objects (at least 27.6" (70 cm) wide), and should prevent the sliding of these objects.
- The desk surface should be deep enough to provide at least 15.7" (40 cm) between your eyes and the monitor screen.
- Obstructions under your desk should be removed to provide sufficient leg room.
- Taller workers or workers with a history of back pain may be more comfortable with a height-adjustable desk, a sit/stand desk, or a standing workstation. The minimum adjustment range for a keyboard tray on a standing workstation should be 37.4" to 46.5" (95 to 118 cm) from the floor.
- If your desk is too low, raise your desk by placing stable wood or concrete blocks under the desk legs or use a desk leg stand. If your desk is too thick for you to place your legs under the desk, remove a middle drawer or add a keyboard tray.



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Fixed-Height Desk

- A fixed-height desk can make using the computer uncomfortable. If possible, add a keyboard tray that adjusts vertically to provide adjustability. The minimum adjustment range should allow the elbow angles to be between 70-135°.
- If you can't add a keyboard tray, follow these steps:
 1. Use the desk height as a starting point and adjust your chair height so that your forearms and wrists are parallel to the floor.
 2. Adjust your armrests to support your upper arms.
 3. Add a footrest if the chair height doesn't allow your feet to rest comfortably on the floor. Make sure your ankles and knees joints are at 90° angles.
 4. Use books or folders to raise the monitor so the top of the monitor screen is parallel to the height of your eyes.

Adjustable-Height Desk

- Use the adjustability of your desk height to your advantage.
- Follow these steps for a proper set-up of your desk:
 1. Use the floor as a starting point and adjust your chair height so that your ankle and knee joints are at 90° angles.
 2. Adjust the height of your desk so that your forearms and wrists are parallel to the floor.
 3. Adjust your armrests to support your upper arms.
 4. Use books or folders to raise the monitor so the top of the monitor screen is parallel to the height of your eyes.