



## Home Workstation Self-Setup

**We have developed this complementary resource to assist businesses with working from home arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

1. Preparing to work from home	
1.1	Take a photo of your workstation at the workplace to support replicating this at home.
1.2	Take measurements of your screen height above the work surface so you can set your monitor/laptop/tablet screen at a similar height when at home.
1.3	With your employer's permission, take as many items home as possible (i.e. mouse, keyboard, document stand, footrest, headset, office chair etc.)

2. Common issues with working from home	
2.1	It can be tempting to just set yourself up anywhere when working from home (couch, bed, kitchen bench/table, etc.), however doing so can lead to unsafe work practices and the potential for injury.
2.2	The main issue with home workstations is that often nothing is adjustable. Kitchen tables are often higher than standard desk heights and, as there are not always adjustable chairs available, you may not be raised sufficiently to work at this.
2.3	Working off laptops/tablets can also lead to the development of neck pain due to the neck bending required to see the screen.

3. Home workstation set-up		
Chair	3.1	When setting yourself up, sit immediately in front of your monitor, avoiding any twisting or reaching.
	3.2	When working ensure your elbows are bent to 90 degrees. You may need to build up the height of the chair you have with cushions or pillows if an adjustable chair is not available.
	3.3	Look for a chair that offers decent spinal support and allows you to recline slightly back with your trunk. A dining room chair might not be suitable.
	3.4	Alternately a rolled-up towel that is taped into a roll/cylinder may assist in providing lower back support if this is the only option available.
	3.5	If an adjustable chair is available, ensure this is raised as outlined above and set up with an angle of between 100-120 degrees between the trunk and thighs. Adjust the back support of the chair to have the lumbar support/prominence fitting into the curve of your lower back. Ensure you are able to fit below the table/desk provided and work with your elbows beneath your shoulders.
	3.6	Ensure that the feet are supported on a firm surface. Be creative! Use books, timber, reams of paper or whatever else you may have that can achieve this. Doing so will enable you to avoid slipping forwards out of the chair.
Screen height	People with no glasses or single prescription lenses	
	3.7	Adjust/raise the screen height if necessary, to avoid bending the neck forwards and looking down when focusing on the screen. Seek to raise the screen to a height where the top of the screen is at or just below eye height, while a neutral neck position is maintained. You may be able to use a



<b>Screen height (cont.)</b>		laptop stand for this purpose or other items within the home (i.e. large cooking pot, books, etc.). Neck movement will then be minimised when working, as you can use eye movements to view the documents on the screen.
	<b>People with multi-focal lenses</b>	
	3.8	The screen height may need to be lower to suit the prescription of your glasses. To determine the location for the screen, hold your head with a neutral neck position (i.e. not bend forwards or backwards) and ask a family/household member to move the screen location up and down until you are able to see all of the screen in focus while your head is held in neutral. Support the screen at that height.
	<b>Using two screens</b>	
	3.9	Consider the ratio of use between these. If using one as a main screen (i.e. > 60%) place this directly in front of you and the secondary screen to one side, as close as possible to the main screen. If using both for similar periods of time (i.e. 50% each) place the join between the 2 screens directly in front of you.
<b>Mouse</b>	4.0	Ensure your elbows are below your shoulders when operating the keyboard and mouse and avoiding reaching forwards or to the side when working.

<b>4. Top tips</b>	
4.1	Consider all options available to you. Use document holders, headsets/ear buds, etc. if available and required.
4.2	Where possible avoid using laptops/tablets and take advantage of adjustable options (i.e. chairs, monitor raisers, etc.).
4.3	Optimise lighting, using desk lamps if needed.
4.4	Maintain hydration, bringing a glass of water to your desk/table rather than a bottle, as this will prompt regular movement breaks to refill the glass.
4.5	It is important that you schedule in and take regular movement breaks (at least every 30-40 minutes) and wherever possible, incorporate gentle stretches into your break routine. Moving regularly will ensure that you are not adopting poor postures for long periods and will also serve to provide you with a visual break away from the screen. Some suggestions for pause exercises and stretches can be found at WorkSafe Tasmania ( <a href="https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/540827/PO015.pdf">https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/540827/PO015.pdf</a> )
4.6	Separate yourself from the domestic part of the house to prevent home duties and chores creeping into your thinking too much. Endeavour to create a workspace area that can remain set up and is away from noisy or distracting environments. It's hard to keep focused when you are staring at dirty dishes or having children running around.
4.7	Set a time limit for technology use so that you can wind down and get a good night's sleep.
4.8	Maintain social contact via phone or video calling, especially if you have limited contact with people in your environment and remember to check in regularly with others.
4.9	Your employer has a duty of care to ensure your working environment promotes health, safety and wellbeing. If you have been asked to work from home by your employer and have any concerns or are experiencing pain, then let them know.

**Keep positive and stay well**