


## ERGONOMIC TIPS FOR A HEALTHY HOME OFFICE SET-UP

**Are you spending more time in your home office, or working at home for the first time?**

**Here are a few things to be aware of:**

- Work surfaces can be too high for some people (such as a kitchen table or standard height desk)
  - Chairs may not be height adjustable, or may not provide good support
  - You may be sitting on soft furniture, such as sofas, etc. for extended periods of time
  - With laptop use, the keyboard is often too high, and the monitor is typically too low. This can lead to awkward postures, especially if you use it for long periods.
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- **What can you do to optimize your set up?**
    - ✓ If you can use the laptop as the CPU, and connect a separate monitor, keyboard and mouse, that is ideal. Then treat this as you would your standard office – set the monitor at the correct height, and the keyboard/mouse at the correct height.
    - ✓ If you use the laptop for the screen, use a laptop stand such as the one to the right, then hook up a separate keyboard and mouse, as shown. (Many stands also have a document holder.) If you cannot get a stand, place the laptop on a stable surface such as a large book or risers, at the correct screen height.
    - ✓ The keyboard and mouse should be at about elbow height, with forearms parallel to the floor. Elbows should be at your side, with little to no reaching.
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- **Look at the chair you are using:**
    - ✓ The chair height should be adjusted so that the keyboard/mouse are at elbow height. If your chair does not adjust for height (like with a kitchen chair), and you need to sit higher (because the keyboard/mouse are too high), consider adding a stable seat cushion to raise up an inch or two. Sitting back in the chair, feet should be on the floor (or on a footrest, if feet do not reach the floor).
    - ✓ If your chair has other adjustable features (in addition to height), adjust the lumbar support so that it supports the curve in the low back, and adjust the seatback angle to optimize back support. Adjust the arm rests so they are slightly below the elbows, and so that forearms are parallel to the floor.
  - **Make sure your monitor(s) are in the right position and at the correct height:**
    - ✓ Position the monitor (either the separate monitor or the laptop monitor) so the top of the screen is at or slightly below eye level. If you wear progressive lenses, the monitor may need to be positioned lower. You should not be tipping your head back in order to view the monitor.
    - ✓ The monitor should be positioned 18- 30 inches in front of you (about an arm's length).
  - **Other tips:**
    - ✓ If you are on the phone frequently, use a headset or speakerphone.
    - ✓ Stretch every hour for 1-2 minutes, and take a brief break from ALL device use. Stand up, rest your eyes, and rest your hands.
    - ✓ Vary your tasks throughout the day and break up your computer time.
    - ✓ As referenced in your temporary telecommuting agreement, HSU supplied equipment must be maintained by an HSU authorized person. If you are using personal equipment, that is your responsibility. For more resources <https://training.humboldt.edu/content/keep-working>