COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Computer Workstation Ergonomics Tips

Monitor

Centered in front of you, slightly more than arm's length away, and top of monitor at eye height (so most of the monitor is below eye level).

Keyboard

Same height as elbows, close to edge of desk, and the spacebar (not the whole keyboard) should be centered with your body

Wrists

As straight as possible, with a soft palm support under the base of the palms (not under the wrists)

Mouse

Directly adjacent to keyboard and on a soft mouse pad to prevent wrist compression while mousing

Knees

Bent at 90-120 degrees. Avoid using chair base as footrest

Feet

Resting firmly on floor or footrest

Neck

Comfortably centered above shoulders, not bent or twisted

Shoulders

Relaxed and down, not elevated

Back

Supported, in full contact with chair's backrest

Elbows

Close to your sides, bent at 90-120 degree angle, and at the same height as keyboard

Hips

At same height or slightly higher than knees

Additional Tips:

- It is recommended to stand up and take a short work break every 30 minutes. Going to the bathroom, the kitchen, or the printer count. If you are on a long call in your office, and cannot walk around, try to stand up and do heel raises to get the blood flowing in your legs. Stand with your feet a few inches apart, with your hands lightly resting on a counter or chair in front of you, and slowly lift onto the balls of your feet, getting your heels off the floor. Do 8 to 12 repetitions in place of walking when you cannot walk away.

- If you do not know what all the knobs and levers on your chair do, find out the make and model of your chair (sometimes on a sticker underneath seat) and then down – load an instruction manual. Spending 10 minutes learning how to adjust your chair properly can make a huge difference in your overall comfort.

- Keep frequently used objects (keyboard, mouse, phone, stapler, etc) close to your body to avoid excessive leaning to reach them.

- Use proper typing technique (utilize all 10 fingers, and avoid looking down at keys) to prevent overuse injury from repetitive use of only two fingers and repetitive neck flexion. If you do not know how to type properly, invest the time to complete a computer based training program.