

HomeWork

A Guide to Wellbeing



Alchemy

Posture

When planning your home working environment there are a number of factors to consider. Foremost is to ensure your workstation is functional & that key ergonomic principals are practised. Your initial sitting position at the desk should ensure:

- Your forearms are level with the desk work surface.
- Your hips are level or above your knees.
- Your back is supported to reduce the load.



It is a combination of products that will help you achieve this.

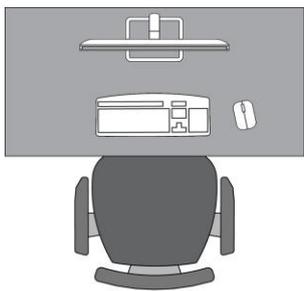
The Desk

If the space you have for your desk is restricted & you can only squeeze in a small desk the organisation of the work surface is key.



Panel Desk

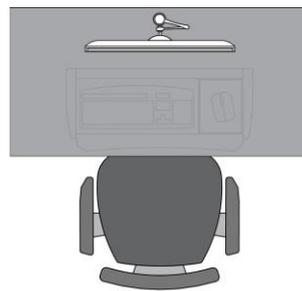
Remove as much as possible from the work surface by using a keyboard tray, a monitor arm or a monitor stand. The keyboard tray will slide out to increase the depth of your desk & create the optimum viewing distance between you & the monitor screen. It then slides away under the work surface when not in use. The monitor arm will allow you to position the monitor at the correct height & adjust the viewing distance & incline to your personal preference.



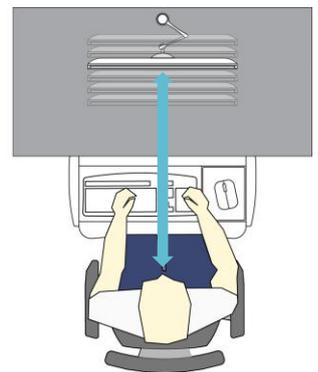
Keyboard, mouse & screen sitting on desk top. Minimal free desk top space.



Working at your desk with fixed focal length to screen & little remaining desk top space.



Keyboard & mouse on keyboard tray retracted under desk. Screen on adjustable arm sits above desk top. Maximum free desk top space.



Keyboard & mouse slide out from under desk. Screen on adjustable arm can be moved forward/backward to adjust focal length. Maximum free desk top space.

The Desk



Stiga Sit Stand Desk

If your budget permits the ultimate ergonomic desk solution is a sit stand desk. Research has proven that sitting for long periods is detrimental to our health & wellbeing. Mixing periods of sitting with standing has tangible benefits.

By getting up and out of your chair throughout the day, you engage postural muscles that "switch on" genes that are essential to good health. **When you sit all day, your health goes into decline.**

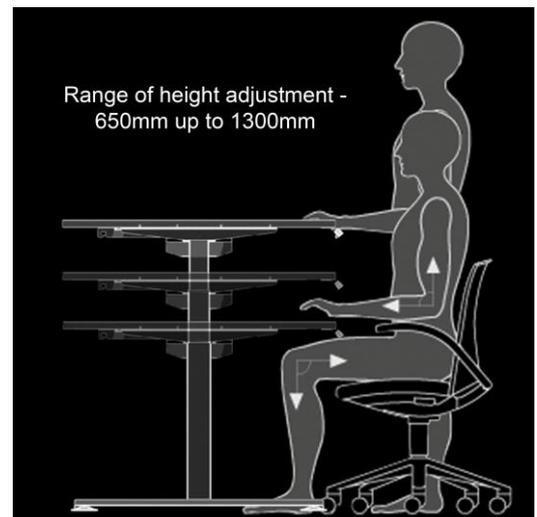
According to scientists, when we sit the **"enzymes that are responsible for burning fat just shut down."** This can lead to retention of fat, lower good cholesterol and spark the overall reduction in the metabolic rate.

In the standing position the natural curvature of the spine permits the body to achieve a loading balance. **Prolonged sitting** causes a steady compression on the spinal discs that can **contribute to their premature degeneration.**

Prolonged sitting reduces body movement making muscles more likely to pull, cramp or strain. It has been associated with a **high incidence of back complaints**, discomfort in the lower extremities and increased muscle loading of the neck and shoulder muscles.

Additionally, lower demands on the circulatory system while sitting results in a slow down of heart activity and blood flow which **accelerates fatigue.**

A study of more than 73,000 women reported that **the risk of dying from heart disease** was nearly 3x higher among people who sit the most compared to those who sit the least.



But don't take our word for it, follow the link & download the article published in the British Medical Journal along with other research reports. There is also a handy guide on 'How to Use Your Sit Stand Desk' published by the Smart Work & Life organisation.

Our sit stand desk has an adjustment range of 650mm up to 1300mm making it a great solution for the whole family.

The Chair

It is important to have an adjustable task chair when creating a healthy & comfortable home work space. A properly adjusted chair will improve your blood circulation aiding alertness & mitigating the stress on your body that leads to back, arm & neck pain when seated for long periods. The chair should help you achieve the ideal posture.

- Your forearms are level with the desk work surface.
- Your hips are level or above your knees.
- Your back is supported to reduce the load.



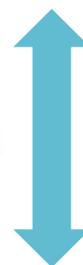
You should look for a chair with the following adjustments as a minimum.



Independently height adjustable back or lumbar support to ensure your back is supported to reduce load.



Height adjustable arms to make sure you can get your arms level with the desk work surface.



Height adjustable seat to make sure you can get your hips level or above your knees.



Swivel base on wheels to easily move the chair into the desk.

Storage

Storit Storage



To minimise clutter & maintain a comfortable, well-organised home working environment storage is an important consideration. It allows you to retrieve information efficiently whilst providing additional work surface space your printer/scanner.

Task Lighting

Natural light in your home working environment is a positive influence & should be sought when deciding on the placement of your work area. It has a positive influence on your productivity whilst increasing creativity & wellbeing. Task lighting can supplement & overhead light sources creating an optimal work setting.

To reduce the risk of eye strain that will reduce your efficiency as well as impacting health & wellbeing it is important to have an efficient task light. The light should have good light dispersion & be glare free with a single shadow. It should be easy to adjust as your tasks change throughout the day by manual positioning & adjustment of brightness.



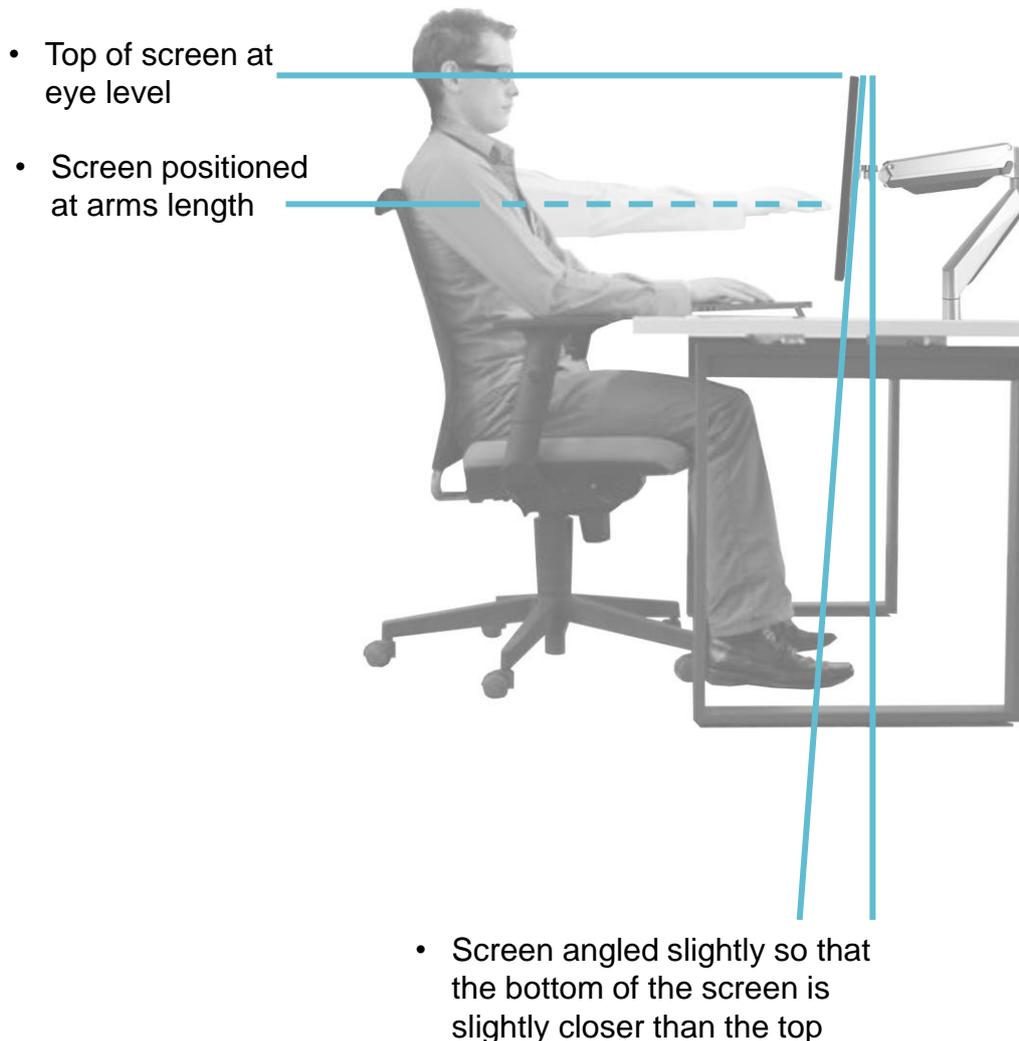
Kordi Task Light

Monitor Arm

The monitor arm raises the screen above the desk top creating greater usable work surface whilst encouraging a healthier, more ergonomic work posture. PC users often lean in towards their screen in order to see it clearer, the monitor arm enables the user to pull the screen closer creating a healthier posture with their back supported against the back of the task chair.

The arm also adjusts vertically to position the screen at the correct height thus preventing eye & neck strain. Key factors to consider when setting up you home working desk with a monitor arm are:

- Centrally position your main screen at about arms' length
- If you are using 2 screens, on a double arm monitor arm, position the main screen directly in front of you & the secondary screen close to the side & at a similar height.
- The top of the screen should be at eye height (for most users), & angles slightly so that the bottom of the screen is slightly closer to you than the top.



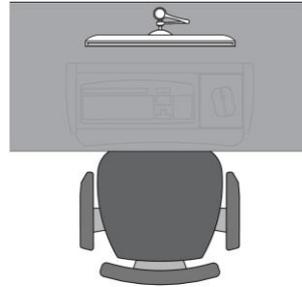
Keyboard Tray

The keyboard tray is another key element in pursuit of an adaptive ergonomic work setting. The tray brings the keyboard & mouse closer to the user encouraging a healthy neutral posture avoiding the need to lean forward & placing undue stress on the body that causes neck & back pain.

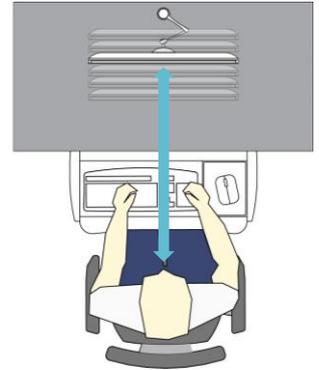
The keyboard tray should allow the mouse mat to be positioned to the left & right.



Keyboard Tray



Keyboard tray retracted sitting under desk.



Keyboard tray in position bringing the keyboard & mouse closer to the user.

Monitor Stand



The simple monitor stand or platform raise the height of the monitor whilst providing a recess to store away the keyboard & mouse when not in use. This provides some of the ergonomic benefits associated with a higher monitor position but does not have the versatility for adjustment that a monitor arm possesses.

Anti Fatigue Mat

The anti fatigue mat is designed to reduce the stress on feet & legs during periods of standing. Recommendations for the use of sit stand desks state that the user should work up to a total standing period during the working day of 2 hours & ultimately work towards a total of 4 hours. The prevalence of hard surfaces such as laminate & tiled flooring both in offices & the home have promoted the use of anti fatigue mats.



Soft cushioned moulded mat



Contoured & textured to massage the feet



Raised profile to move the mat to the desired position

For Your Safety

Don't overload sockets & turn items off when not in use. Keep cables tidy, do not trail cables across walk ways where they are a trip hazard, protected trailing cables from small children.



Cable management kit tidies cables horizontally in a steel tray & routes them from the desk top to the floor vertically through a zip up cable sleeve.



Look for opportunities to work in different postures



Using the telephone?
Consider a wireless headset or use of loud speakers to reduce holding the phone.



Reading or thinking? Use the sofa.



Creative thinking? Go old school & write up your notes.



Surfing the internet? Use the breakfast bar & have a coffee.



Work & exercise with the Cadence work bike range. Increase blood circulation, change posture, be active & alert.

Fatigue checklist

Problem	Check	Make sure you:
Back discomfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are not leaning forward• You are sitting at a suitable height, elbows above keyboard height• Your feet are grounded/supported• Your back is supported	Take suitable breaks & move frequently, move from your work at least every 30 minutes if you are having discomfort.
Neck discomfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You are not leaning forward• Your screen position	Move every 20 minutes re positioning your head & moving your shoulders.
Upper limb pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your forearm & wrist position; should be level with your upper arms & relaxed by your body, use a separate keyboard & mouse when ever possible.• Reduce the amount of time you are holding portable equipment	Take breaks frequently & move your wrists & fingers.
Eye discomfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your screen position. Try not to face or back onto windows.• Reduce the brightness of your screen & consider increasing the font size of text.• Change your screen settings to reduce blue light especially if working in the evening.	Look into the distance every 20 minutes to relax your eyes. When taking a break rest your eyes – try not going straight to your phone!

Summary

We hope you have found the Alchemy Guide to Home Working & Wellbeing informative. Remember it is a combination of products that will help achieve the best possible home working environment.

Please do not be wedded to your laptop & one work position:

- Use a separate keyboard & mouse where possible, if not you are going to have to move more.
- The mouse & keyboard should be positioned so that your arms are relaxed by your body.
- The wrists & hands should be in neutral relaxed postures.

How long should we work before movement is really dependent on how good your home working set up is:

- Good setup – movement & eye breaks every 20 minutes; bottom off seat at least each hour.
- Compromised laptop/table set up – break away every 15 minutes.
- Mobile device – swap & move hands, shoulders & neck at least every 5 minutes. Break from work at least every 15 minutes.

For your mental health:

- Set your workplace away from where you take breaks & sleep. If this is not possible you should clear work away at the end of the day.
- Take breaks with others if possible – remotely as well as with those in the home.
- Get dressed on work days & try to stick to a work routine including breaks.
- Keep connected, speak to colleagues using remote systems & ensure social catch ups.



Breaks, activity & hydration

No matter how good your set up, you need to move. Breaks & changes of activity are vital:

- To reduce static posture & fatigue
- To rest the eyes
- To assist in stress control
- To remain hydrated – we should aim to drink 2 litres or more a day.



Finally the work setting is not just about products, posture & breaks but an holistic view of your workspace.



- Consider light, both natural & artificial
- Air circulation, heating, cooling & fresh air
- Planting, natural materials & sounds

Happy home working