Workstation Set-up

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Figure 1. Task chair set-up

Introduction

The goal of this document is to educate users on the functional set-up of their dedicated workstation. See chair guide to start to ensure the task chair is set up appropriately. Once completed, use this guide to help set-up the workstation to promote neutral joint alignments and reduce strain.

Overall Workstation Set-up

Refer to Figure 1: Demonstrated seated posture includes having feet fully supported (floor or use of foot rest); thighs parallel with floor (knees approximately 90 degrees); and weight of upper back fully positioned on back rest.
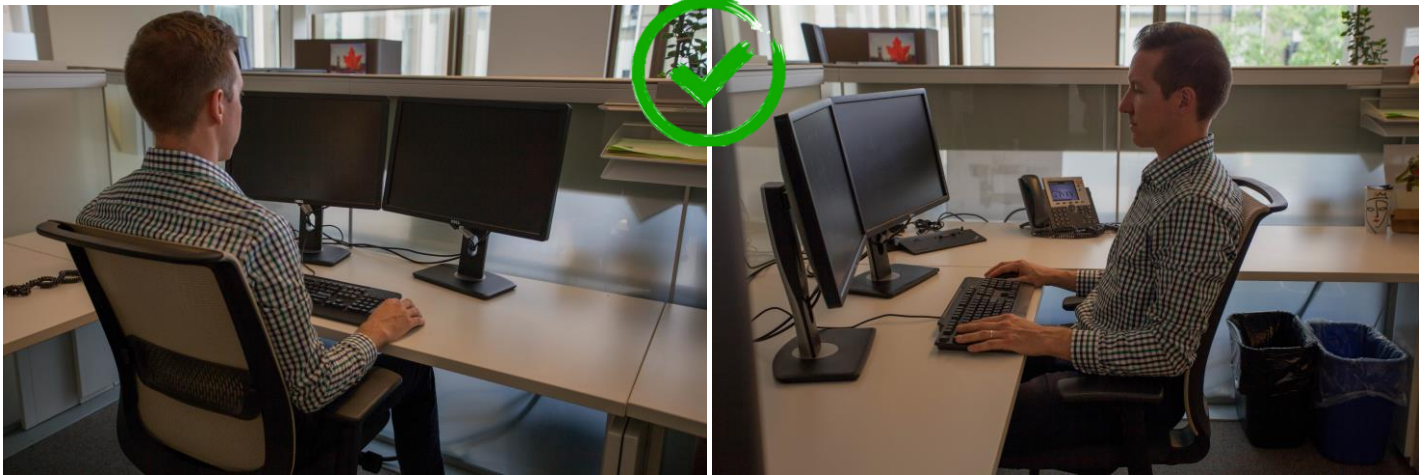
Desk Orientation

Facing Straight-on

The standard L-shaped desk should be set-up to allow the user to face straight on to either desk partition. In doing so this will allow the keyboard and mouse to remain close to the user to promote neutral joint alignments of the shoulders and elbows.
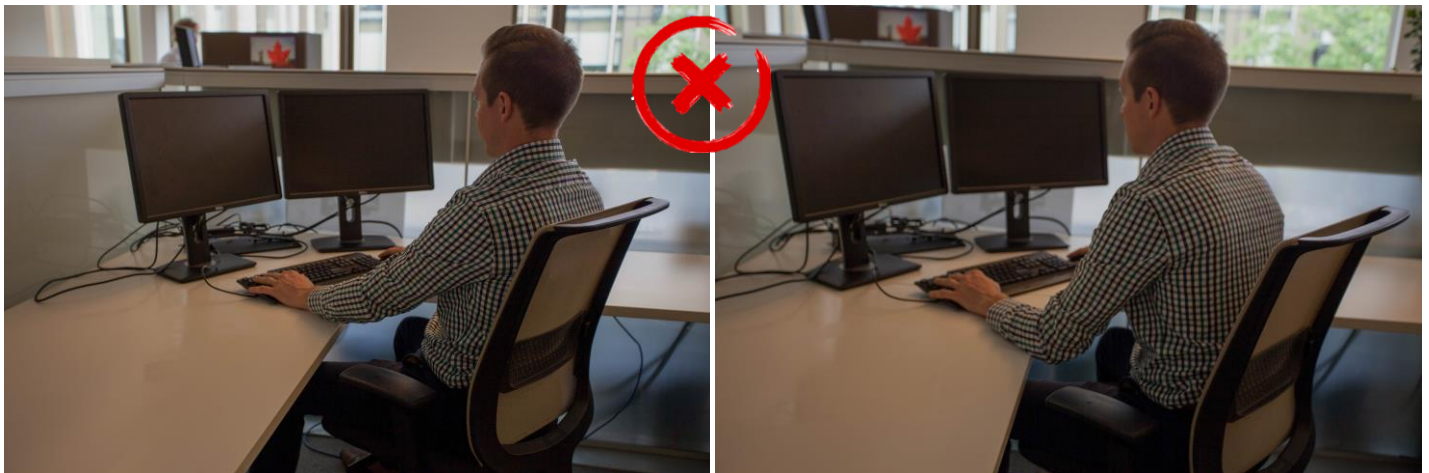
Corner Set-up

Orienting the workstation in the corner of a 90degree angle should be avoided. This position promotes awkward seated posture due to lack of space to house keyboard/mouse. Refer to Figure 4 and 5 as this demonstrates to commonly found postures of a user with this set-up (excessive reach and/or slouching).
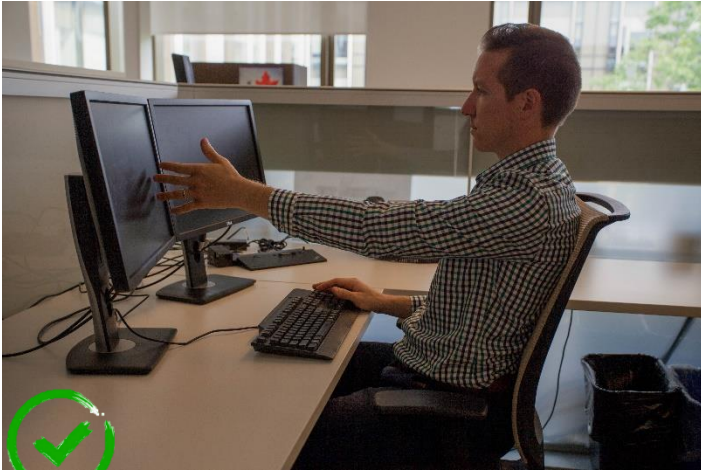
Monitor Placement

Figure 6 and 7. Monitor distance set-up

Monitor Distance

Monitor set –up is important to consider as this can help keep a person sitting comfortably in the chair. Distance and height should be adjusted to each user. Monitor distance can be adjusted with reference to Figure 6. Monitors should be within approximately one arm's length when sitting optimally in the task chair. Any further will promote eye strain and possible poor seated posture i.e. perching
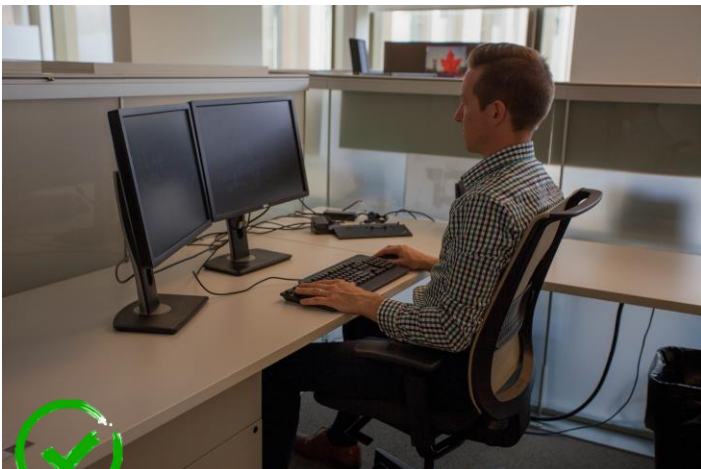

Figure 8 and 9. Monitor height

Monitor Height

Monitor height should promote a neutral neck posture. Generally the top border of the screen should be in view when looking straight ahead. Looking over top of the monitors OR in the middle of screen should be avoided as these can cause excessive neck flexion or extension and are both considered awkward postures.

Figure 10 and 11. Single vs. dual screen use

Dual Screen Placement

Placement of dual monitors on the desktop surface should be taken into consideration to avoid awkward neck and seated postures. If the user references both screens fairly equally throughout the day, then screens should be centered between body midline (Figure 11). Otherwise a primary screen should be centered to avoid excessive neck movement. Note that screen placement is not fixed, and can be rearranged by user depending on work demands and usage.
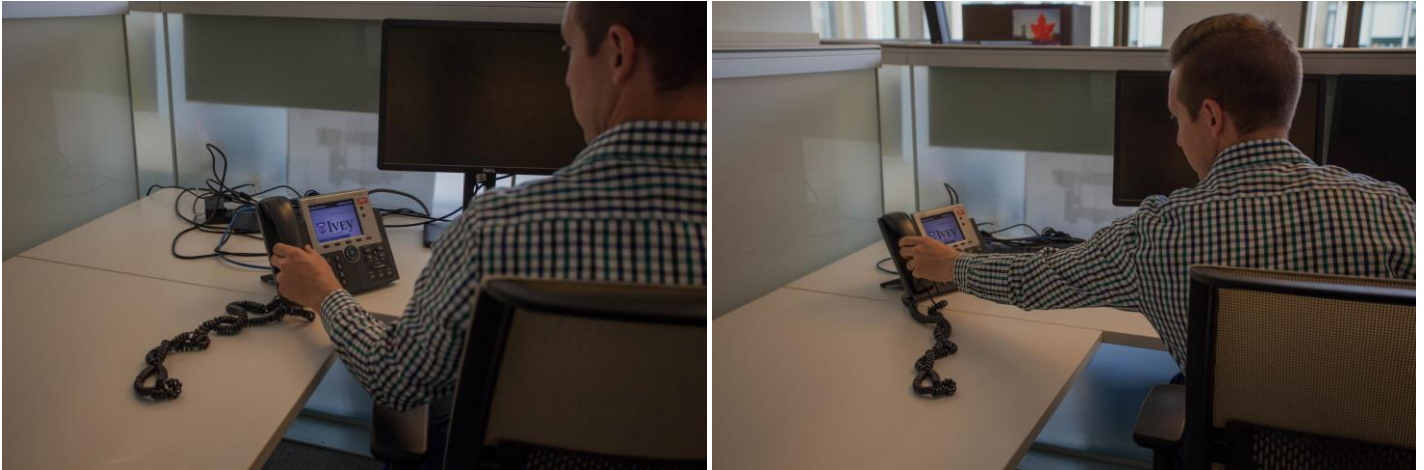
Additional Workstation Devices

Phone placement

Optimal placement of the phone will depend on frequency of use. If phone is used very infrequently, it can be located farther from the body (Figure 13). This position does increase the required reach and possible strain so if phone is used more often it should be located close to user to reduce this reach (Figure 12.). Alternatively, considering the use of a headset or speaker phone if appropriate can also help to reduce awkward neck posture (cradling of phone head set).
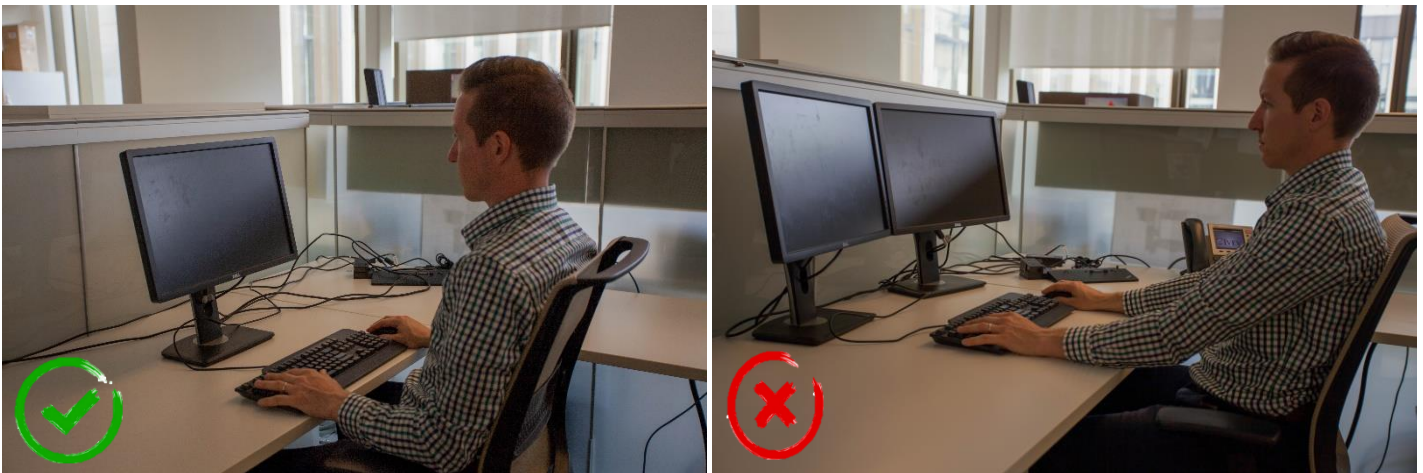

Figure 14 and 15. Keyboard/mouse placement

Keyboard/Mouse placement

These devices should be kept close to the desktop surface edge to reduce the risk of promoting excessive reach. Additionally, the mouse should be kept as close to the keyboard as possible (left or right side dependent on arm use) to minimize awkward shoulder posture.
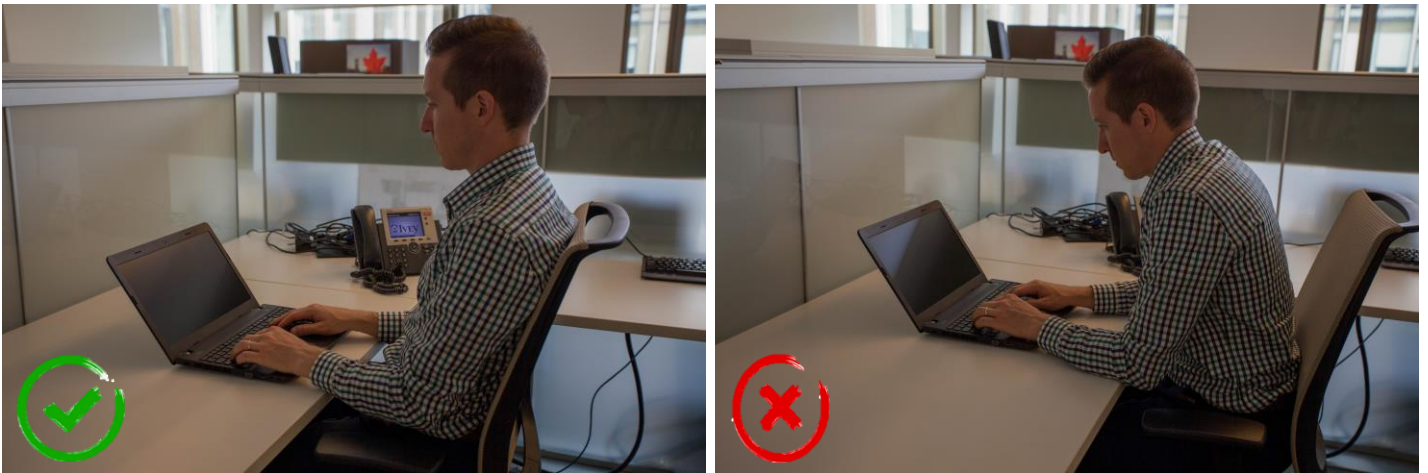
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Laptop Use

Figure 16 and 17. Laptop use

Laptop Orientation

For short duration use only
Generally speaking, laptops promote awkward posture of the neck, back and upper extremities. Neutral posture awareness should be emphasized when using a laptop. Laptop should be kept close to body to avoid excessive reaching. Neck and back should remain in a neutral posture as much as possible.

Figure 18. Optimal laptop placement

Optimal Laptop Placement

Long term laptop use at a desktop configuration should be avoided to minimize risk of awkward posture. If a laptop is to be used as an intermediary solution the screen and keyboard/mouse should be separated (Figure 18). In doing so it allows the keyboard/mouse to be kept close to user to eliminate excessive reaching, and the screen can be elevated off the desktop surface to minimize neck strain. Alternatively, the laptop keyboard/mouse could be put into use with an independent desktop monitor (not shown).