How to set up your **office chair**
for healthy working...

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How To Set Up Your Office Chair For Healthy Working

If your office chair isn't properly set up and adjusted to our personal requirements it will be uncomfortable and likely give you posture problems regardless of how good the chair is!

These notes are intended to be a guide to help you set up your chair for your optimal comfort and support. We assume that you will be using your chair mainly for work at a computer, although we have added some additional notes for other uses.

Key Posture Points

To better understand how to adjust your chair you need first to consider the ideal seating position in relation to your workstation and computer.

We'll begin by starting from floor level and working up your body.

Your feet should be flat on the floor, or if you aren't tall you may find the use of an adjustable footrest helps you.

Your knees should be angled so that your lower legs and hips are a little over 90° with your thighs pointing slightly downwards.

To check if you are correctly sitting in your office chair, a useful test is to place a sheet of paper on the chair seat pad once you sit down you should be able to pull the paper out relatively easily without a struggle to lift up

When you are sitting on the seat pan your lower back and bottom should be at the back of the seat.

When correctly adjusted there should be a gap of approximately 2 - 3 inches between the back of your legs and the front edge of the chair.

The lower part of your back should be well supported and in contact with the chair back.

Your neck and shoulders should be relaxed, avoid craning your neck forwards as well as raising or lowering your shoulders unduly.

Finally, your lower arms should be approximately at right angles or slightly more open, preferably resting on the chair's armrests such that your wrists are straight when addressing your keyboard from your office chair.

Correct Adjustment Of Your Office Chair

First, adjust your office chair seat height, this is usually controlled by a lever or button on the underside which you need to lift upwards or press. Begin by raising the chair's gas lift to its full height to do this raise your body slightly to take your weight off the chair, allowing it to rise.

Using the height control lower yourself gradually until you have the correct seating angle outlined above.

As mentioned above the use an ergonomic footrest may help if you have a problem attaining the correct leg position.

Next, adjust the seat back height so that it gives good support to your lower back.

Backrests adjust in a number of different ways including a simple locking knob or push button on the back stem or the preferred ratchet back which is easily adjusted from a seated position.

If you chair has one, a seat depth slide should be adjusted to suit your leg length and this is usually operated by either a push button or paddle lever on the underside. There may also be a lever which allows the seat angle to be adjusted.

Then, adjust your chair's armrests (if fitted) to give the right angle arm position.

Adjustable arms rests mostly operate by pressing a button to allow adjustment, while others have knobs to turn to raise and lower the arms.

Next, you need to set up your monitor, mouse and keyboard to suit your newly set up seating position.

Both monitor and keyboard should be directly in front of you when sat at your desk in your office seat.

Monitor height should be set such that the top is in line with your eye level and you don't have to strain your neck up or down to view the screen. You will find that your eyes will naturally settle around the centre of your monitor's screen.

The monitor should be set approximately 18" - 24" from your eyes such that you aren't straining to read it when sitting in your computer chair.

Your keyboard and mouse should also be in front of you and you shouldn't need to strain to reach either of them from your office seat.

Finally, position your office seat, desk and monitor to minimize glare from you screen. If you can see things reflected on your screen before you even switch it on then you need to consider re-positioning your chair, desk and monitor to eliminate or minimize this.

Try and avoid placing your office seat and desk with outside windows directly behind you as this can cause real glare problems and can even render your screen unreadable in very bright sunlight.

If you read a lot as part of your work it is not a good idea to place your reading material on your desk as you will tend to crane your neck downwards placing it under pressure. Using a copy holder adjusted so the top of what you are reading is at eye level your neck is going to be much more relaxed.

When you use the phone a lot you absolutely must avoid trapping it between shoulder and neck as it is very bad for your posture and may result in long term neck issues. Instead try using a speaker phone or headset if you need to make notes or if not just hold it in your other hand as you write.

Many people like to think things through sitting at their desk and often reclining in your chair seems to help with this. If you tend to work like this try picking a chair which allows a good reclining angle and yet doesn't tip you and the chair arms up in the air at the same time.

Summary Of Key Points

So to summarize how to seat yourself correctly, adjust and set up an ergonomic office chair. Run through this top to bottom body check to ensure you are correctly positioned in your ergonomic office seat.

- Make sure your chair's seat height is properly adjusted for your legs.

- Make sure your chair's backrest is set correctly giving support to your lower back.

- Shoulders, neck and arms should feel natural and unstrained if your seating position is correct.

- Position your monitor, keyboard and mouse properly in relation to your seating position.

- Try using a copy holder when you read a lot at work relieving pressure on your neck

- Never wedge your phone between shoulder and neck it's terrible for your posture

One final point, make regular changes in your work flow, vary your work so that you don't find you are typing non stop for hours on end. Even a quick five minute break and exercise every thirty minutes or so is very beneficial.

Don't find you are feeling welded in your computer chair through poor working practice.

We feel it is very important to have the maximum range of adjustments on your chair – and to actually use the adjustments regularly to ensure comfort and support through your day

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