

Today's Topic/Issue

Stats and background to the topic

Your workstation position is extremely important. Bad posture can put unnecessary strain on your back or cause discomfort in your neck, arms, wrists and/or legs. Sitting at a desk or in front of a computer for much of your working day is an activity, which if not properly managed, can compromise your posture and lead to long term health problems.

Risks Associated with Poor DSE Setup

Poor posture can affect your health and wellbeing both in the short term and the long term.

Short Term Problems:

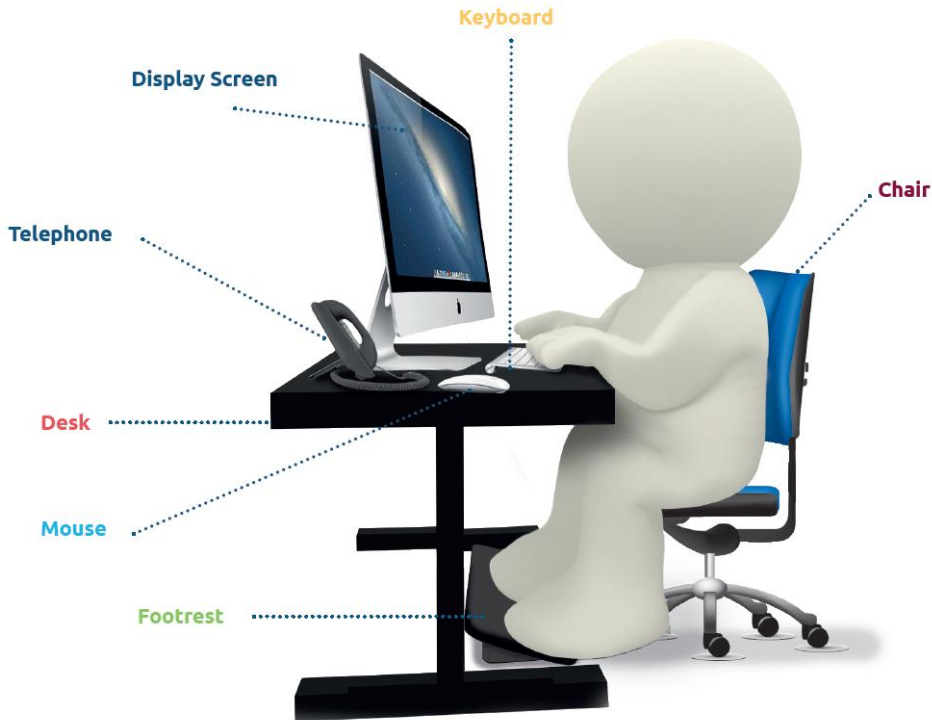
- Pain in the fingers, wrists, or other joints
- Swelling, inflammation, or joint stiffness
- Discomfort or pain in the shoulders, neck, or upper or lower back
- General feeling of muscle tightness, cramping, or discomfort
- Clumsiness or loss of coordination
- Eye strain leading to headaches or nausea
- Poor sleep
- Poor digestion

Long Term Problems:

- Weight gain or obesity
- Type 2 diabetes as poor posture can slow down your metabolism
- Some types of cancer e.g. bowel
- Cardiovascular disease



Fit the task and the workstation to the individual – this is the basis of “ergonomics”. The most effective way of doing this is to make everything that can be adjusted, adjustable.



QUICK QUIZ

How should each of these elements be adjusted to ensure you are working in the most comfortable way?

- No matter how correct your posture is, sitting for long periods in the same position will eventually lead to muscle fatigue. Our bodies are built to be mobile and flexible. Variety is as important to your health as comfort and support.
- Be aware of the need for relaxation. Writing for prolonged, concentrated periods can lead to mental fatigue and tiredness.
- If you feel pain or discomfort, this may be an indication that your body is getting tired. Relax your muscles, stand up, move around and breathe deeply



Desktops vs Laptops vs Home Setups

Factor	Desktop Computer	Laptop	Working from Home
Setup flexibility	High – separate screen, keyboard, and mouse can all be adjusted independently	Low – screen and keyboard are fixed together	Varies – often limited by available space and furniture
Posture support	Good – easy to achieve neutral posture if set up correctly	Poor – difficult to achieve correct posture without adaptations	Varies – often poor without proper equipment
Main risk	Poor adjustment of otherwise suitable equipment	Hunching, neck strain, and awkward arm positioning	Inconsistent setups and poor long-term habits
Screen position	Easily adjusted to eye level	Usually too low, causing neck strain	Often too low or poorly positioned
Keyboard & mouse use	Separate and well-positioned	Integrated (trackpad/keyboard can cause strain)	May be improvised or non-ergonomic
Duration of use	Designed for long-term use	Often used for longer than intended	Often extended with fewer natural breaks
Key controls	Adjust chair, screen, and desk setup properly	Use laptop stand + separate keyboard and mouse	Create a dedicated workspace and improve setup as much as possible
Overall DSE risk level	Low (if set up correctly)	Medium to high (without adaptations)	Highly variable (depends on setup and behaviour)

QUICK QUIZ

What small changes have you made—or could you make—to improve your setup in each of these situations?



Toolbox Talk – SUPERVISORS NOTES

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

2026/27

All employees should have a DSE workstation assessment within four weeks of their initial employment or whenever there has been a material change in their workstation layout or equipment. If an employee is struggling or is experiencing pain/discomfort because of their DSE setup, it must be easy for them to report the problems and seek appropriate support.

DSE Assessments should be applied to all new starters, anyone who experiencing a change to their task or environment or anyone who experiences a change of their self, for example new and expectant mothers.

There are template DSE assessments available as a part of the online training relating to DSE, an these are applicable to workplace desktops, laptops and home setups.

DSE Workstation Assessment

Notes for completion:
 *Yes/No answers require no further action.
 *Yes/No answers will require investigation and/or remedial action by the Manager or Supervisor. They should record their decisions in the 'Action to take' column.
 If the Business has a DSE Assessor, they should follow up to ensure actions have been taken and resolved the problem.

DSE Workstation Assessment type	Office	Home/Remote	Portable
DSE User Name:		Manager/Supervisor Name:	

Ref	Risk factor	Yes	No	If 'No' - Things to consider	Action to take
1	Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, documents etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create more room by moving printer, reference materials etc. elsewhere.	
2	Is the workstation set up so that users should be able to comfortably reach all the equipment and documents they will need to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reorganise equipment, paper etc. to bring frequently used items within the easy reach zone. A document holder may be needed, positioned to minimise uncomfortable head and eye movements.	
3	Is the chair adjustable? The chair should have seating and back height/tilt adjustment, seat height adjustment, swivel mechanism (castors or glides and be stable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The chair may need repositioning or replacing if the user(s) find it uncomfortable, or adjustment mechanisms do not work. The chair arms should not obstruct the chair from getting close to the desk.	
4	Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider mats or filters to reduce reflections and glare.	

Risk factor	Yes	No	If 'No' - Things to consider	Action to take
Is text size adjustable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Software settings may need adjusting to change text size or zoom.	
Is image stable, for glare free off flicker/jitter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try using different colours to reduce flicker, for example darker background and lighter text. If problems still exist, you may need to replace your screen or graphics card with your computer.	
Are the display settings adjusted for a user?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brightness, colour and contrast can be adjusted in Windows settings, and separate monitors have specific image settings that can be changed.	
Is screen adjustable (capable of being used in a desirable user font)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storabile screens can generally tilt, rotate, swivel and be vertically adjusted. This mechanism can sometimes be added if it is not adequate. Laptop screens can tilt, and the laptop itself swivelled, but laptop stands are recommended to ensure the correct height of the screen.	

Recording DSE Workstation Assessment Actions

Manager/Supervisor or designated DSE assessor must record below the recommended actions to take in order to resolve the issue(s) identified in the DSE workstation assessment. The assessor must review the actions since they have been implemented to make sure they have fixed the problem.

No	Action	Person Responsible for Action (Name)	Due Date	Have actions resolved the problem?*
				YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
				YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
				YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Are the actions haven't resolved the problem, then the issue will need to be reassessed. If new actions identified?

Specialist DSE assessor required? YES NO

Specialist DSE assessor's name: _____ Date: _____

DSE Assessment - Review

When (i.e., two years or significant change) or reason for review**

Review the DSE workstation assessments must be reviewed if there is a significant change to workstation, or if the DSE uses situation changes.



QUICK QUIZ

“How should each of these elements be adjusted to ensure you are working in the most comfortable way?”

Chair

Your back is a natural S shape. To find out the shape it should be whilst you are sitting, place your hands under your bottom and find your sitting bones. Sit up straighter until they feel at their most prominent. Make sure your back is well supported in that shape by sitting right into the chair and moving the chair back rest up or down, and backwards or forwards. The seat depth should be adjusted to ensure optimum support for your legs.

Desk

If your legs are not clear of the underside of the desk, it may be necessary to raise the height of your desk.

Footrest

If you cannot support your feet firmly on the floor without applying undue pressure to the back of your legs, use a footrest.

Keyboard

Place your keyboard parallel with the front edge of your desk, at a comfortable distance from your body so that you don't have to arch your wrists to type. Position the keyboard so that the keys you use most are in front of you. You can use the keyboard feet to tilt the keyboard up slightly.

Mouse

Place the mouse or input device so that your forearm is supported and your wrist straight whilst you use it. Make sure it is as close to your body as possible.

Display Screen

Make sure the screen is positioned correctly, at the correct height, angle and distance. Your neck should be straight so that the neck muscles are relaxed. The top of the screen should be level with your eyes. The screen should be positioned about an arm's length away.

Telephone

Make sure telephones are within easy reach but never type whilst on the phone.. If you need to input whilst on the phone, use a headset.

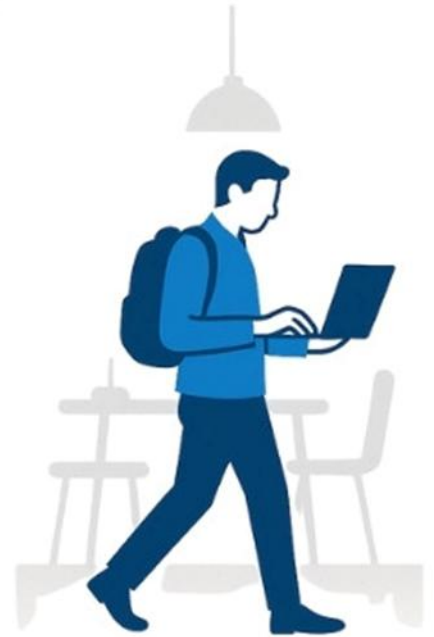




OFFICE



HOME



HYBRID

QUICK QUIZ

“What small changes have you made—or could you make—to improve your setup in each of these situations?”

For a **desktop** setup, small changes might include adjusting the chair height so feet are flat on the floor, raising or lowering the screen to eye level, and bringing the keyboard and mouse closer to avoid reaching.

For a **laptop**, adding a stand or even using books to raise the screen, along with a separate keyboard and mouse, can make a big difference. Also being more aware of posture and avoiding working hunched over the screen.

When **working from home**, creating a dedicated workspace is a key improvement—even if it’s just one consistent spot. Using a supportive chair instead of a sofa, improving lighting, and building in regular movement breaks can all help reduce strain.



Toolbox Talk - Attendance Sheet

Site/Department Name:

Trainer Name:

Signature:

Toolbox Talk Topic:

Date:

Name	Signature

Any further feedback or questions from attendees regarding this toolbox talk topic?