

Working from home: top tips for looking after your posture

Get your screen height right

Using a laptop? Make sure you can either dock it onto a larger screen that's at eye height, or raise it onto books or a laptop holder so you aren't slouching to read the screen, putting pressure on your lower and upper back. Use a separate keyboard and mouse if you can.

Take your mouse to the house

Bring home your own keyboard and mouse if you can (remember, because a lot of our office space is used by others, give them an antibacterial wipe first.) Using a separate keyboard and mouse to the ones on your laptop helps keep your arms relaxed by your side instead of stretching forward and up to a raised laptop, which would build tension in the shoulders, wrists and upper back.

Prepare your chair

Ideally, you'll be mostly using a chair, so if it's a dining chair, rather than an office one, use a cushion or rolled-up towel for extra support. Better still, try an inflatable lumbar support cushion for your lower back curve.

Blow away brain cobwebs

Keep blood and oxygen moving around your body to avoid tension building up. Take your laptop to a higher surface, like a kitchen worktop or tall chest of drawers, and stand for a while.

Don't sofa-slouch

If you only have your sofa to work from, mimic a good setup. Build a supportive back using cushions (deep sofas cause slouching). Put a cushion under your laptop to protect yourself against heat and raise it up. Try an adjustable laptop holder that's made for sofa or bed use.

Protect your shoulders and wrists

When using a keyboard and mouse, keep them close to you so you don't have to extend your arms forward when typing (shoulder and neck tension can quickly follow). Keep wrists relaxed and straight, reducing pressure buildup.

Listen to your body

If you feel tense or experience pins and needles, it's usually your body telling you to change posture (or stop slouching). Find ways to support your body so muscles relax.

Remember to exercise

Working from home without commuting means exercise becomes especially important. If coronavirus worries mean you're avoiding the gym, check YouTube exercise videos and exercise routine apps. Aim for at least 30 minutes a day.

Take regular breaks

These are harder to remember working at home, so set automatic reminders on your phone.