Setting up your workstation

safe work australia

/ Manage the risk of MSDs

Screen-based workstations usually include a desk, chair, monitor, keyboard and mouse. However, a specific workstation set up will depend on:

- the work done including the tasks involved (e.g. headsets if making frequent phone calls)
- the working environment (e.g. laptop risers for temporary set ups while travelling), and
- workers individual needs (e.g. screen readers or height adjustable equipment).

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are Australia's leading cause of workers' compensation claims, accounting for over half of claims. A safe work station set up and working environment can help manage the risk of MSDs (e.g. from poor posture, prolonged sitting or moving equipment), as well as other injuries including eye strain or electric shocks from poorly maintained equipment.

For more information see the model Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities and the model Code of Practice: Hazardous manual tasks.

A **person conducting a business or undertaking** (PCBU) must ensure workers' health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes specific duties to manage the risks of MSDs.

PCBUs must consult with workers, and their health and safety representatives (if any), when identifying hazards and risks, and when proposing changes. PCBUs must also consult with workers when making decisions about how to control risks and reviewing WHS policies and procedures. By drawing on workers' experience, more informed decisions can be made about how to carry out the work safely.

Workers also have a WHS duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work. This includes complying with reasonable instructions, policies or procedures notified to them (e.g. following workstation set up instructions).

Workspace is comfortable (e.g. not too hot or cold)	Lighting is suitable for tasks and glare is minimised	Taking regular breaks and vary positions frequently	Workers can leave the workstation at the end of the day (e.g. equipment doesn't have to be packed away)	Dedicated workspace with minimal distractions

Eye level slightly below top of screen, use a stand if needed

Head is in neutral position, chin parallel to ground

Screen is about one arm length away and directly in front

Forearms angled slightly down to keyboard, wrists in a neutral position

Mouse, keyboard and other equipment is easy to reach

Backrest supports lower back

Thighs angled slightly down

Work surface is level and flat with enough room to do tasks

Electrical cords and cables are neat and safely stored

Use a chair with no armrests or ensure they do not stop the chair moving in close to the desk

Power outlets and boards are not overloaded

Electrical equipment in good condition and not damaged

Five point chair base

Feet rest on floor or a footrest is used