



IMPORTANT ERGONOMIC TIPS FOR SELECTING AND USING MOBILE DEVICES SAFELY.

As the working world increases its use of mobile devices, such as tablets, laptops and mobile phones, practicing good ergonomics is a challenge. Limiting time on the devices is good advice, but not always practical. While on the road, it's possible to reduce the impact by adding USB-compatible accessories and other workarounds to make it easier to work in neutral postures.

Ideally, we should work with good ergonomic working postures, such as:

- Neutral head and back postures
- Straight wrists
- Ability to sit and/or stand comfortably while working

ENHANCE COMFORT BY SELECTING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

While achieving good ergonomic work postures is challenging, more and more accessory equipment is allowing us to work comfortably. Whenever possible, USB-compatible accessories can be used to reduce the cramped, pinched postures inherent with using hand-held mobile devices.

Since the array of available devices is ever-changing, consider the following:

- Portable input device/mouse
- Plug-in foldable keyboard
- Headset to prevent awkward neck cradling
- Secondary monitor available while working at home

With wireless technology, portable input devices are becoming easier to carry (and use) when traveling. The portable mouse and folding keyboard are readily available and come in a variety of models to customize to the needs of the user. Use of these two input devices can help keep the wrists in flat, relaxed postures, and reduce hunching the back to type on a small keypad.

An equipment list that matches the company's mobile devices should be developed so that workers can maximize their comfort. This list should be updated frequently so technology can match the demands of the users.

TRAIN PEOPLE TO USE EQUIPMENT PROPERLY

Effective integration of new technologies depends on how comfortable users are with the changes that come about as new technologies are introduced. Successful use of new technology depends upon our ability to work with it comfortably. In order to facilitate this process and to maximize proper use of mobile device equipment, users must be knowledgeable in several areas:

- Familiarity with the equipment itself, including design features and components.
- General understanding of the principles of body mechanics and the importance of moving around frequently.
- General understanding of ergonomic principles and the application of these principles to the work and workstations.
- Familiarity with appropriate channels of communication, particularly with respect to seeking assistance with equipment and ergonomic issues when necessary.

ERGONOMIC TIPS FOR USING TABLETS, LAPTOPS AND MOBILE DEVICES

- Use your mobile device for short periods of time. If extended use is required, take frequent breaks.
- For regular desktop use, use external monitor, keyboard and pointing device (e.g., mouse). If an external monitor isn't available, elevate the laptop screen by using a mobile device stand and plug in an external keyboard and pointing device.

- In flight, position the mobile device so that your wrists are straight, your upper arms are close to the sides of your body and your elbows are at about a 90-degree angle. Close the window shade to reduce direct sunlight and reflections on the screen.
- When using a mobile device in flight or remotely in other circumstances, take frequent breaks. Get up and walk around if possible. Look away from the display periodically.
- Avoid awkward, unsupported postures when using a mobile device casually. Try to get yourself into a supported, seated position.
- Use a carrying bag with a wide, padded strap to distribute the weight. When carrying your computer bag long distances, such as in an airport, switch sides frequently. If possible, stack computer bags on rolling luggage to reduce fatigue from carrying it.

SUMMARY – 4 STEPS TO GOOD ERGONOMICS WHILE WORKING

- 1> Select the right equipment.
- 2> Train people how the equipment works and how to use it properly.
- 3> Provide accessories to achieve better working postures and reduce ergonomic strains.
- 4> Train people to move around every 20 minutes, or so, to maintain blood circulation through the spine and extremities and to keep the entire musculoskeletal system healthy.

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