

Tips on health and safety when working from home

Working from home is maybe something you have done previously or maybe something you have never done or very infrequently. To support all colleagues now working from home detailed below are some practical health and safety tips.

If you have not already done so, complete the on-line [Working with Computers](#) training course. This will provide colleagues with guidance on setting up and using a workstation primarily at work but in conjunction with the advice below at home as well.

Home Workstation set up

- Where you have been provided with specialist equipment as a part of a Reasonable Adjustments Display Screen Equipment risk assessment then you should arrange with your line manager the provision of these at home. Agreement regarding being permitted to taking home IT equipment must be made with your line manager initially and in line with the IT process communicated previously and which can be found [here](#).
- Always try to work at a table or desk as this will allow you to adopt a better posture. Do not work off your lap or whilst sitting on a sofa or a bed.
- If you have an adjustable office chair at home please use this. If you do not have access to an adjustable chair then it will not be practicable to provide all colleagues with these whilst they work at home. In using a non-adjustable chair at home, however, you can make sure your lower back is supported by using a folded towel or cushion between your back and the backrest of the chair. Similarly cushions can be used to raise your seating position so you can keep arms at right angles and your forearms horizontal working from a table or desk. This ensures you keep your wrists in a neutral position, not excessively flexed up or down.
- If you have or can obtain from your office a laptop or tablet stand, use this to raise your screen. If you do not have one of these, raise your laptop / tablet up as best you can using books or something equivalent. You may not achieve the ideal position but aim to raise your laptop / tablet by a minimum of 15 cm. Your eyes should naturally hit the top third of your screen when you are looking straight ahead. Even a small height adjustment should help. The goal is to avoid dropping your head as much as possible to try and avoid neck and shoulder strain.
- If you are raising up your laptop / tablet use an external keyboard and mouse so that you are not working with your arms too high. The provision, at home,

of wireless mouse / keyboard sets available within work should be discussed with your line manager in line with the link provided above. If you can't attach an external mouse and keyboard, leave your laptop in place on the table rather than raising it up but you must take more breaks. See below for more information on taking breaks and exercises.

- Ensure your working area has good lighting and ventilation in particular.

Ensure any electrical equipment you use, either from work or your own, is in good condition and safe to use ie do not overload sockets or daisy chain extension leads

Wellbeing

Regardless of your workstation set up, the best way to look after your health and wellbeing whilst working at home, is to take regular breaks and to move around as much as possible. The more 'makeshift' your set-up, the more important it is for you to get up regularly and move around. If you have a good home office set-up, take a break for 5-10 minutes every hour. For other set-ups take a break every 15-20 minutes.

Here are some tips to help you to move more:

- Stand up every time you use the phone
- Try and do more activities away from the screen e.g. reading paperwork
- Set up a break / exercise / tea break reminder on your phone
- Carry out workstation exercises such as those explained by Posturite® [here](#)
- Remember to keep hydrated and drink water and eat healthy snacks.

Your line manager will stay in contact with you but also remember you can ring them as well as speaking with your team and colleagues regularly.