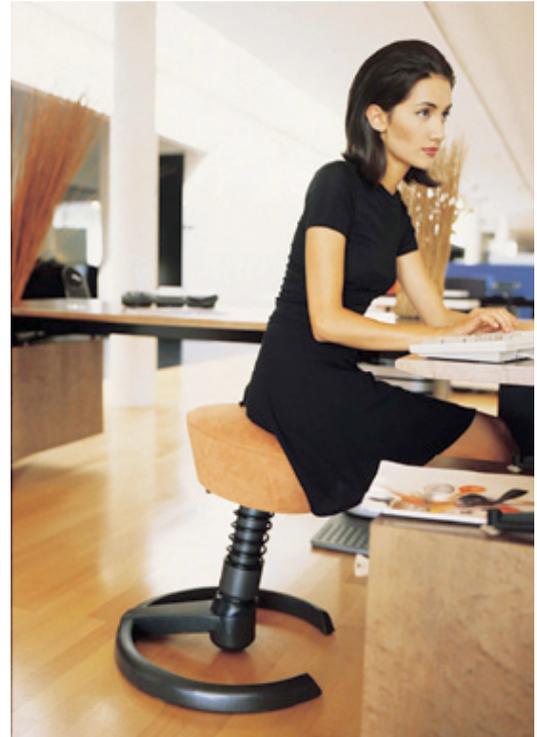


Posture - Ergonomics

Posture is the way we sit, stand, walk, kneel or squat. It is determined by the structure of the body and can be influenced by genetic and emotional factors. Our modern lifestyles, combined with forces of gravity, can ruin healthy posture.

The time spent sitting down (including commuting, at work or at home) equates to a significant portion of the day and has led to the label of 'couch potato generation'. As such, it is important to know that the way in which we sit is a key factor in improving our posture and preventing back pain.



What is a good seated posture?

There is no single perfect sitting position, however one that is comfortable and does not put strain on the back is best. Although less strenuous than manual labour, such as gardening or lifting, sitting requires the muscles in the back to support the trunk, neck and shoulders in a fixed position which, over a long period of time, reduces the blood flow to the working muscles when they need it most. A reduced blood supply to muscles accelerates fatigue, making them prone to injury.

Sitting comfortably is important. An easy way to do this is to adjust the angles of the hips, knees, ankles and elbows.

- Keep the ankles, knees, hips and elbows open slightly (more than 90°).
- Adjust the seat height to change the knee and ankle angle, or use a foot rest.
- Try to keep the upper body within 30° of an upright position. Always keep the head aligned with the spine.
- Keep the upper arms between vertical and 20° forward.
- Keep the elbows at an angle between 90° and 120°, keeping the forearms horizontal and supported.

Chairs with a lumbar support and headrest can help provide support to the lower back and neck.

Desk height

Ensure your desk is at the correct height. This usually falls within the ranges of 56-71cm from the floor, according to personal height. Ensure that you have enough room to move your legs under the desk and can sit up comfortably.



If you use a monitor, try to ensure you are looking at the screen within 30° of your eyesight. Try and avoid bending the neck down too much.

An easy way to avoid injury and fatigue is to take regular breaks and have a short walk every hour. This will help your circulation, as well as providing an important break for your mind. A few simple exercises can also help: Shoulder squeezes – squeeze your shoulder blades together holding for five seconds and relax. Shoulder shrugs – shrug both your shoulders to your ears and hold for three seconds. Roll and lower your shoulders backwards and relax. Repeat both these exercises ten times.

Chiropractic - Safe and Effective

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