



How Teachers Can STOP SCHOOL PESTS



EVERYONE HAS A ROLE IN PREVENTING AND MANAGING PESTS!



CLEAN UP

ELIMINATE FOOD DEBRIS AND CLEAN UP SPILLS. CLEAN OUT PLACES PEST LIKE TO HIDE-CABINETS, LOCKERS, DRAWERS, AND DESKS.



STORE

USE CONTAINERS WITH TIGHT LIDS OR SEALABLE PLASTIC BAGS TO STORE DRINKS, FOOD, AND SNACKS.



MAINTENANCE

REPORT BROKEN WINDOWS OR SCREENS, WATER LEAKS, TRASH, AND UNSEALED CRACKS AND CREVICES WHERE PESTS CAN ENTER THE BUILDING.



PESTICIDES

CALL YOUR SCHOOL IPM COORDINATOR FOR HELP WITH A PEST PROBLEM. SINCE ONLY A LICENSED APPLICATOR MAY APPLY PESTICIDES, YOUR IPM COORDINATOR WILL ORDER ANY NEEDED PEST TREATMENT.

TEACHER CHECKLIST

- Remove clutter to prevent potential living and nesting sites.
- Store students' coats and backpacks in an assigned area.
- Seal edible items (food, pet food, and art and science supplies) in airtight containers.
- Use plastic bins for storage instead of corrugated cardboard boxes.
- Empty trash containers daily.

If you see something, say something.

Notify your Campus Safety Coordinator or talk to your IPM Coordinator:

Brownsville Independent School District
Maintenance Department



Corpus J. Zorola, CTSBS, CTPM
Supervisor
Environmental, Health, Safety & Custodial Training

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WHAT IS THE CORRECT ERGONOMIC SITTING POSTURE IN THE OFFICE?

Sitting for a long time regularly is linked to many health issues including obesity, diabetes, heart diseases and other issues. However, we often forget that sitting for a long time is a common cause of posture issues. A large proportion of workers in the UK work in offices, where a large period of the day is spent sitting. This means following the correct sitting posture is even more important for office workers. However, many of us get this wrong.

This section will cover the health risks of bad sitting posture in the office, the correct ergonomic sitting position and how we can move around more in the office.

Click on a link to jump to that section:

- [What are the health risks of bad posture in the office?](#)
- [What is office ergonomics?](#)
- [What is the correct ergonomic sitting posture in the office?](#)
- [How do you improve posture in an office chair?](#)
- [Posture tips for office workers](#)
- [How can you keep moving at work?](#)
- [What is a workplace posture assessment?](#)

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF BAD POSTURE IN THE OFFICE?

Bad sitting posture in the office can most commonly cause back and neck pain, which are often the most popular complaints from office workers. This can be due to disc degeneration, or because of the excess pressure being suffered by the spine. Back and neck pain can also be due to a slumped position causing nerve constriction, as the spine and other bones change their position due to long-term effects of [bad posture](#). When this happens, the skeletal system begins to come into contact with surrounding nerves, “pinching” them. If nerves become pinched, this causes pain in the body, most commonly in the back and neck.



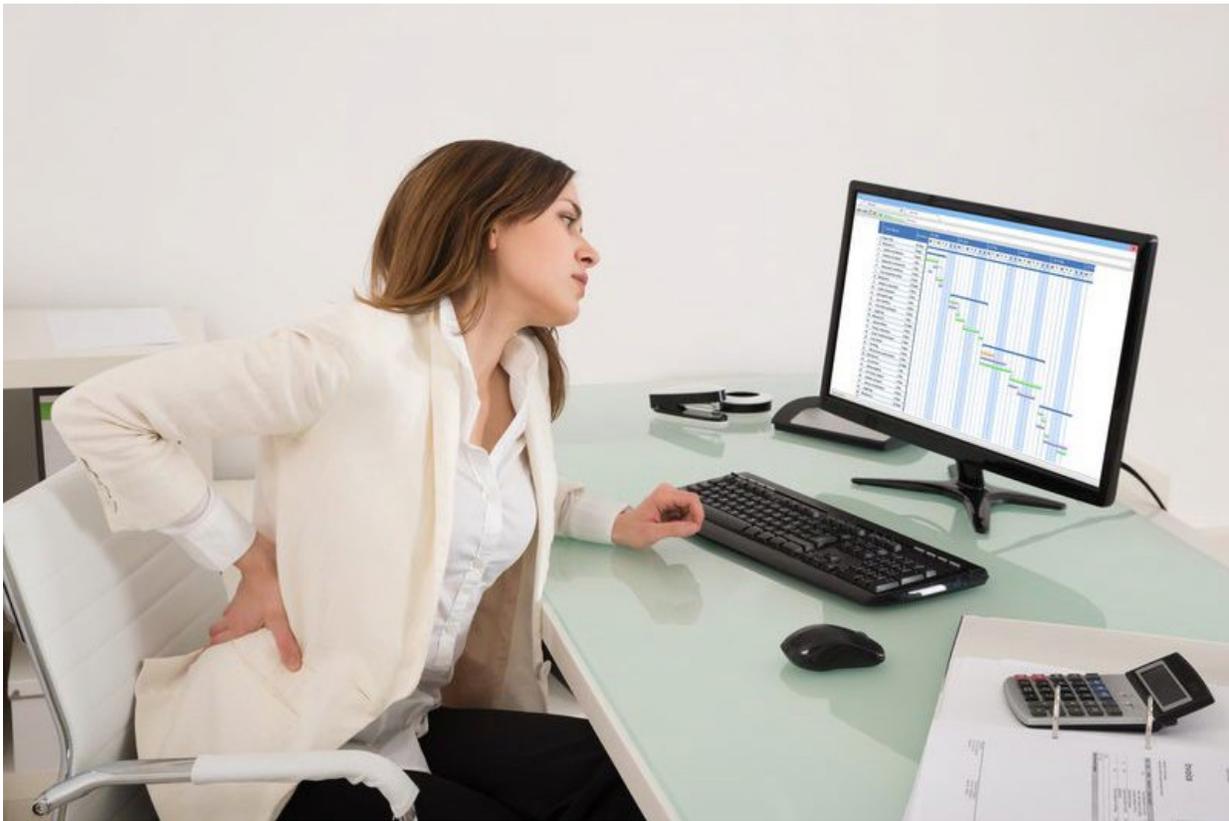
Slouching is directly related to nerve constriction

Health risks of practising bad posture in the office don't just include neck and back pain. There is a large variety of problems that can be caused by bad posture, including joint pain, muscle stiffness and permanent slumping. Bad sitting posture in the office can also cause hip pain, knee pain and ankle pain. [Studies](#) have shown that bad posture in the office is also linked to digestion issues. Sitting in a slouched position all day can compress your abdominal organs, which includes your digestive tract. This can have an impact on your metabolism and affects your ability to process food correctly.

Slouching in the office can even [negatively affect your lung capacity](#) and ability to breathe properly. This occurs as slouching causes the muscles and tendons in the front of your body to become shortened. The impact of this can make it difficult to take full, deep breaths.

WHAT IS REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURY?

Repetitive strain injury refers to the pain felt in muscles, nerves and tendons due to repetitive movements and overuse injury. The term not only refers to wrist and hand injuries caused by typing, but can be a range of painful or uncomfortable conditions of the muscles, tendons, nerves and other soft tissues. Most cases of repetitive strain injuries have their bases in the nerves in the upper body, from the nerves in the neck and shoulders down into the wrists and hands. Repetitive strain injury can be caused by consistently sitting in an uncomfortable, un-natural position, as well as common mistakes such as straining.



DANGERS TO AVOID WHEN SITTING AT YOUR DESK

When sitting at your desk, you should try and avoid slouching and leaning forward in your chair. These common errors can often be a main cause of back and neck pain.

You should also ensure your chair height isn't too high or low. When you are sitting with the knees significantly above the hips, this indicates that your chair is too low. This increases the risk of slouching, as sitting with your knees above your hips can promote the rounding of the spine, increasing pressure on the discs. You should also ensure your chair height isn't too high, as this can put pressure on your thighs. Sitting on a chair that is too high can also reduce the back flow of blood, sometimes causing swelling in the legs, varicose veins and swelling in the ankles. A seat height [ranging from 16 to 21 inches off the ground](#) is suitable for most workers.

Paying attention to how often you are standing and moving around at work is also important, as not doing so can result in repetitive strain injury and muscle stiffness.

The incorrect placement of your keyboard and mouse is also a common cause of repetitive strain injury, as this causes straining. You can read more

about this in [our guide to typing ergonomics](#).

WHAT IS OFFICE ERGONOMICS?

Ergonomics is the science of looking at how workers can be more efficient and comfortable when performing job functions. It involves establishing an ideal fit between a worker, their working environment and the tasks they carry out. When applied to an office setting, this means looking for the best way to sit comfortably and safe using ergonomic equipment such as computers and chairs. Office ergonomics looks at every aspect from monitor placement to [typing ergonomics](#). It also involves ensuring you are sitting in a position that poses no health risks.

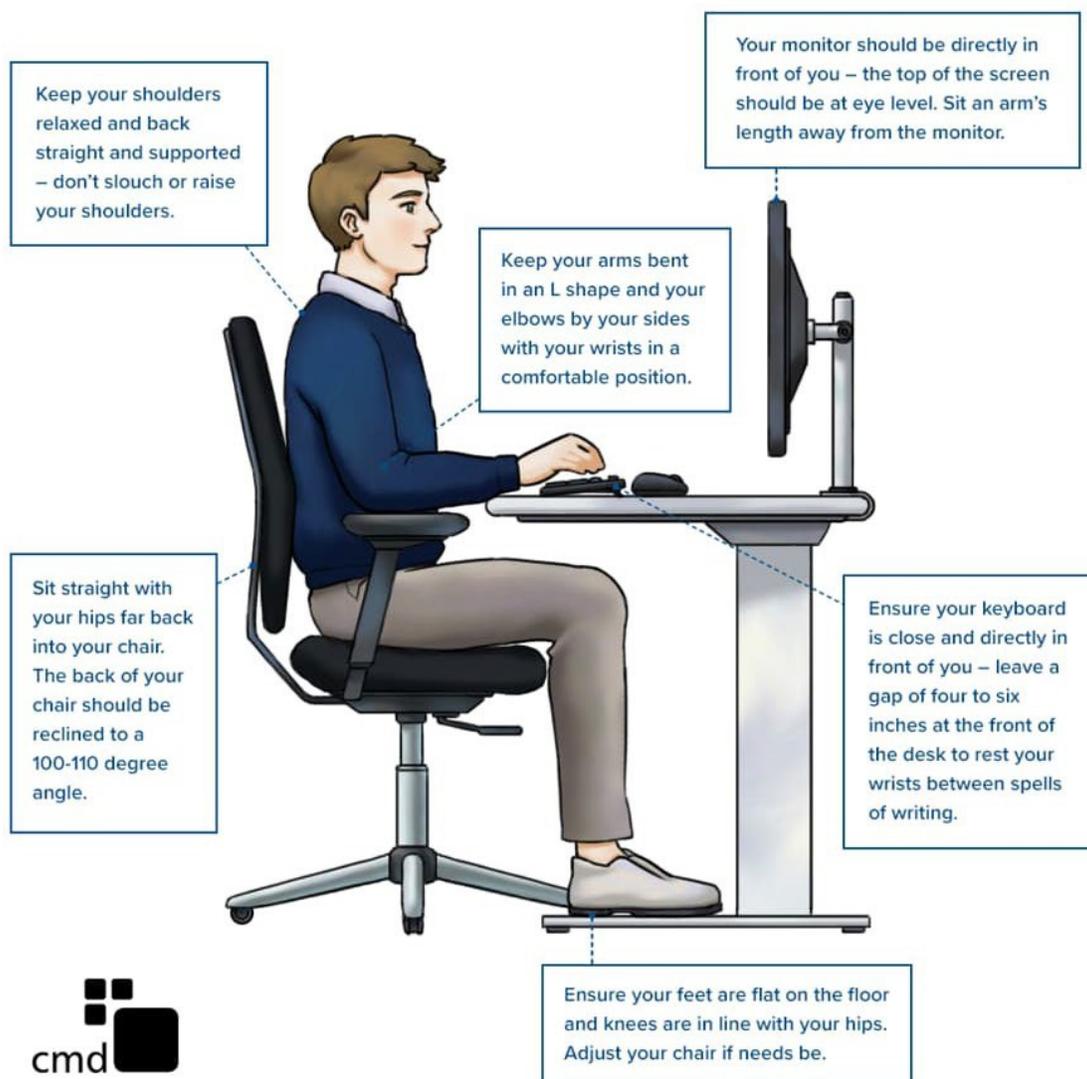
[Ergonomic sitting posture](#) means studying an individual's sitting position in the office. This focuses purely on following proper posture ergonomics to ensure you sit in a way that optimizes comfort and efficiency in the work environment. Following ergonomic sitting posture tips reduces your risk of pain, discomfort and work-related injuries. This concept focuses on an individual's back and neck position at work, and how their legs are positioned.

You can [read more about office ergonomics here](#)

WHAT IS THE CORRECT ERGONOMIC SITTING POSTURE IN THE OFFICE?

The correct ergonomic sitting position includes having both feet on the floor, as this keeps the pelvis balanced and makes it easier for you to arch your lower back. Your elbows should be by the side of your body so your arm forms an L-shape at the elbow joint. You should also sit straight in your chair, resisting the urge to slouch. Keeping a straight back and sitting up straight means your bones, ligaments, muscles and joints can properly align themselves. This means extra strain and stress is eliminated, preventing back ache and other muscle pains. Sitting up straight also means you keep your head straight rather than facing down, which prevents the risk of developing neck ache. Ensure you are sat with your hip far back in your chair. Your knees should ideally be in line with your hips.

For information on the correct wrist placement and the correct way to type, you can read our [guide to typing ergonomics](#).



HOW DO YOU IMPROVE POSTURE IN AN OFFICE CHAIR?

Your sitting posture in an office chair can often be improved through being more aware of how you are sat in the office. To ensure your posture doesn't worsen throughout the day, you can remind yourself frequently to ensure your back is straight and both your feet are planted flat on the floor. You should adjust your chair so your feet are flat on the floor and your knees are in line with your hips.

If you are struggling to follow the correct the posture in an office chair, you can invest in the correct ergonomic products. [Ergonomic monitor arms](#) provide an improvement if slouching is a problem. Monitor arms prevent you

from leaning forward and hunching, reducing the risk of eye, neck and back strain. You can read more about [how monitor arms can benefit office workers here](#). If you struggle to keep both feet on the floor, invest in a foot rest or ask your company if they can provide one of these. [Sit-stand desks](#) can also be useful if you experience stiff or cramped legs at the end of the day, as they help encourage stretching and movement. You can [purchase our Active Electric Sit Stand Workstation here](#).

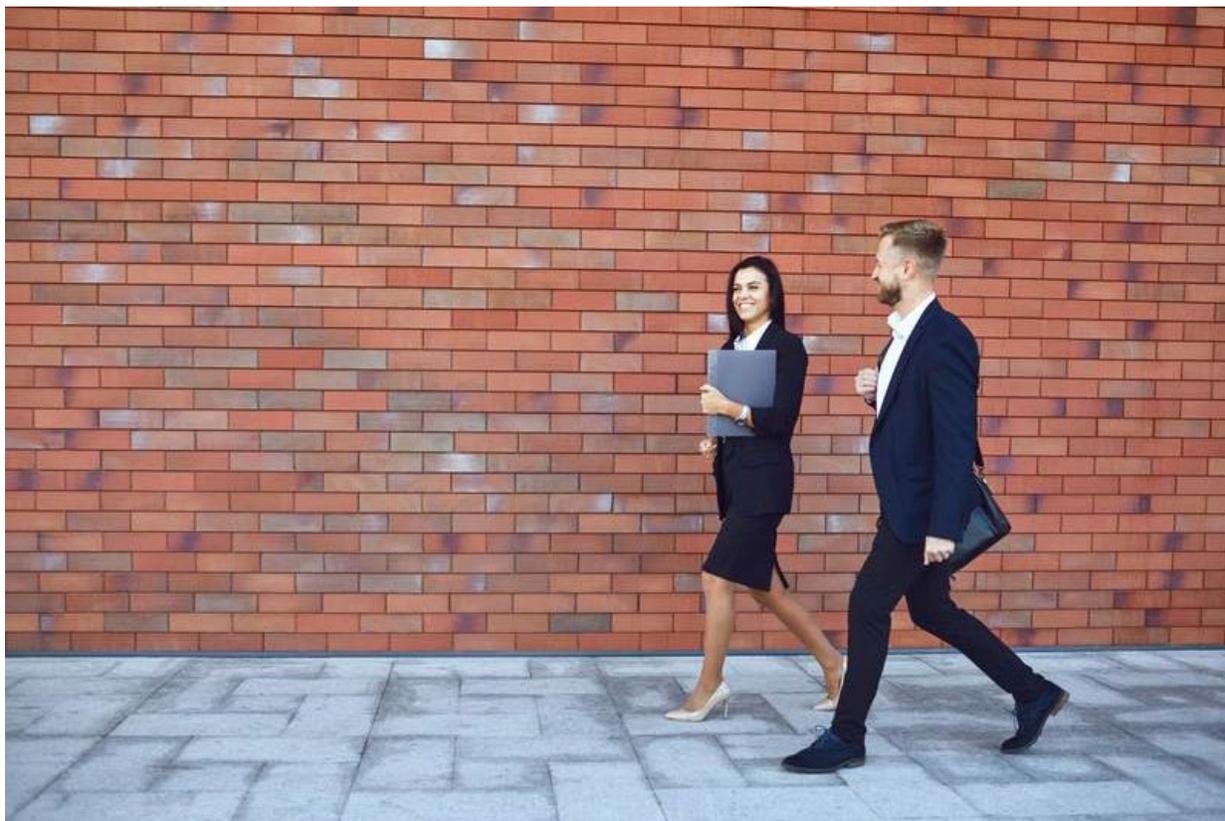
WHAT IS AN ERGONOMIC KNEELING CHAIR?

An ergonomic kneeling chair positions you with an open hip angle with your thighs supported by one pad, and your knees and shins supported by another. Ergonomic kneeling chairs are designed to engage your core as you sit. Although they have many health benefits, they are generally designed for short-term tasks that require reaching forward, such as short-term writing.

POSTURE TIPS FOR OFFICE WORKERS

- Adjust your chair so your forearms are straight and level with the floor. This prevents repetitive strain injuries.
- Don't cross your legs, as this can contribute to posture-related health problems. Crossing the legs puts pressure on the peroneal nerve, which supplies sensation to your legs and feet.
- Avoid phone strain. If you spend a lot of time on the phone in your office, consider exchanging your handset for a headset. Cradling a phone between your ear and shoulder can strain the muscles in the neck.
- Avoid wearing bifocals. Bifocal glasses mean you may not be able to see the screen properly without having to raise or lower your head frequently.
- Take regular short breaks, as these are better for your back than fewer long ones.

HOW CAN YOU KEEP MOVING AT WORK?



Exercise and movement can prevent common workplace problems such as muscle stiffness and aches. You can keep moving through stretching exercises, taking breaks, moving neck regularly and reducing muscle stiffness. Take a short break and walk once every half hour if possible. If you have a standing desk, it is still important to move around as much as possible during working. Try and step backward and forward for a while throughout the day to stretch your legs. If you enjoy running and your workplace is within reasonable distance to your home, you could even challenge yourself to run to work frequently.



WHAT IS A WORKPLACE POSTURE ASSESSMENT?

A [workplace posture assessment](#) is a measure of the risk factors in your work environment that are capable of causing physical issues such as musculoskeletal disorders or injuries. The assessment involves identifying any risk factors in terms of how individuals are sitting, and making measurable improvements in the environment. This can involve purchasing new equipment or adjusting existing equipment to make it safer and more sufficient.

You can view our [full range of ergonomic solutions here](#) to help improve your sitting posture in the office.

TAKE 5 Ergonomics

A 5-Minute Safety Training Aid

HS99-149C (12-20)

An increasing number of companies are developing workplace ergonomic programs to reduce injuries, illnesses, and workers' compensation costs. Creating a successful program requires understanding what ergonomics is and why it is important.



What is ergonomics?

Ergonomics is the science of work. The term **ergonomic** comes from the Greek words *Nomos*, meaning "the study of," and *Ergos*, meaning "work." Literally, ergonomics means "the study of work." In the workplace, ergonomics means designing a job to fit the employee, so the work is safer and more efficient.

The science of ergonomics pulls from the disciplines of **physiology** to understand how human anatomy and body mechanics operate and **engineering** to help develop new processes, tools, and workstations. **Ergonomists** -- people who study ergonomics -- use ergonomic principles to design workplaces that increase employee comfort, safety, and productivity.

Injuries occur when the demands of a job exceed the abilities of the worker. The object of ergonomics is to prevent these injuries.

The general goals of an ergonomic program are:

- to reduce occupational injuries and illnesses;
- to reduce workers' compensation costs;
- to increase production;
- to improve the quality of work; and
- to decrease absenteeism.

Applying ergonomics in workplace design helps meet these goals and improve the quality of life for employees.

Why is ergonomics important?

Ergonomics is important because when employees are doing a job and their body is stressed by an awkward position, extreme temperature, or repeated movement, their musculoskeletal system is affected. Their body may begin to have symptoms such as fatigue, discomfort, and pain, which are often the first signs of musculoskeletal disorders.

Musculoskeletal disorders affect a person's muscles, joints, tendons, ligaments, and nerves. These disorders can develop over time or can occur immediately due to overload.

Applying ergonomic principles in the workplace can reduce the risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders.

Some common risk factors are:

- awkward postures;
- using excessive force to move objects;
- repetitive or prolonged actions; and
- localized pressure.

Ergonomic programs include methods to:

- identify risk factors;
- implement controls to reduce or eliminate risk factors; and
- educate supervisors and workers on spotting and removing risk factors.

How can companies reduce ergonomic risk factors?

All workers and employers can do something to improve the ergonomics of their worksites.

Reduce repetitive or prolonged actions

- Use electric tools instead of mechanical tools.
- Reduce the quantity of work performed in a given period.
- Rotate workers among different tasks.
- Vary the work throughout the shift.

Reduce the need to use excessive force to move objects

- Carry fewer objects at a time or use tools that help lift the weight. Get help lifting hefty or bulky objects.
- Use hand trucks, dollies, or conveyors to move heavy materials.
- Supply training on proper lifting techniques.
- Do not bend the waist or twist the torso when lifting or handling any object.

How can companies reduce ergonomic risk factors?

Reduce localized pressure

- Use elongated handles on tools such as pliers and scissors.
- Consider using padded handles or thick gloves.
- Choose handles and work surfaces with rounded edges.

Reduce awkward postures

- Change work methods to allow employees to maintain a neutral posture.
- Provide adjustable workstations to help employees maintain a neutral posture.
- Encourage employees to change body positions periodically throughout the day.

For more information on ergonomic solutions, download the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation-Workplace Safety's (DWC) free publication, [Ergonomics for General Industry Workplace Safety Program](#), or contact a DWC Safety Training Specialist at www.txsafetyatwork.com or 800-252-7031, options 2.



Safety Violations Hotline

1-800-452-9595

safetyhotline@tdi.texas.gov

The Texas Department of Insurance,
Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC)
E-mail resourcecenter@tdi.texas.gov
or call 1-800-687-7080 for more information.

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