

Workspace Ergonomics

How to set up your office workspace for functionality and comfort

Basic Office Ergonomics

Even if you are young and healthy, don't underestimate the importance of ergonomics in your workspace. Starting out with good posture and work habits will pay off in the long run.

Workstation Desktop Setup

When setting up your desktop arrangement, give a lot of thought to the relationship between all of the hardware pieces (**Fig. 4 & 5**). You will not want to make frequent changes once you have found the correct positioning. The relationship between your monitor and drawing tablet is especially critical because each time you alter their relative position, you will need to retrain your eye-hand coordination.

If you opt for a dual monitor setup, you will want to look straight at the main monitor. This way, you will not have to keep your head at an angle. You can use your peripheral vision and eye movements to glance at the secondary monitor.

Keep your keyboard and mouse as close to each other as possible to avoid large arm movements or reaching. Limiting arm and wrist movement will prevent conditions known as Repetitive Stress Injury (RSI), Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), or Overuse Syndrome.

Fig 4

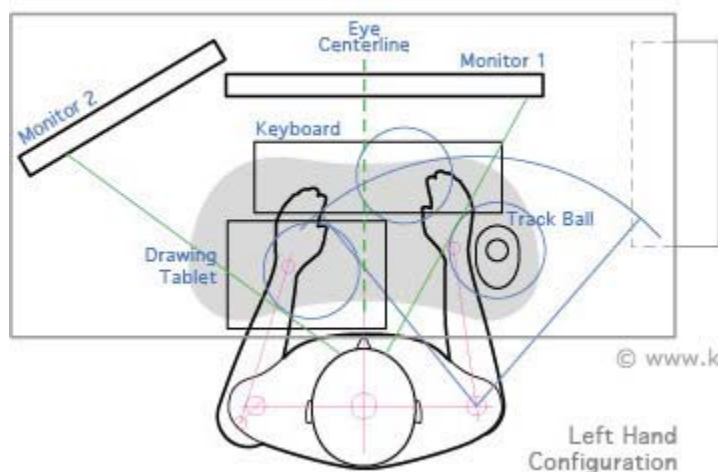
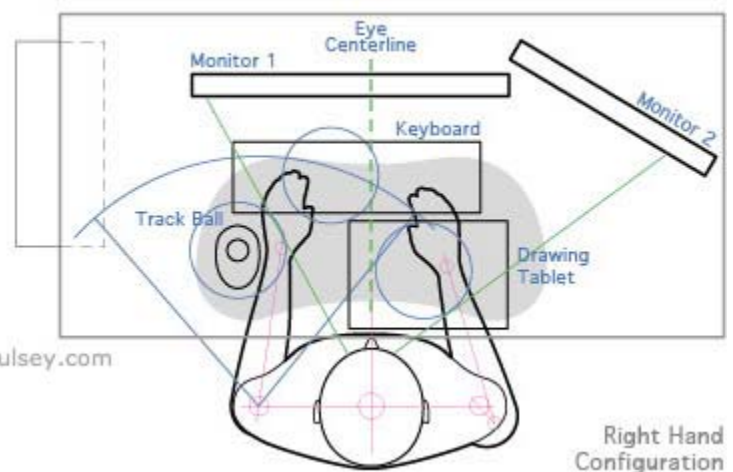


Fig 5



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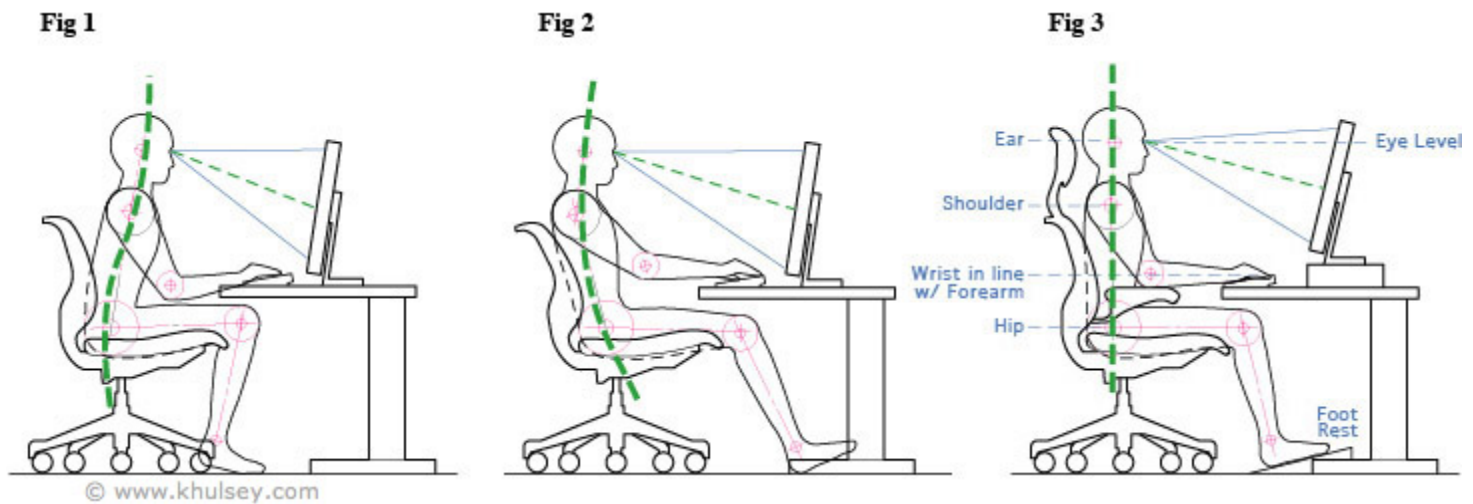
Seating and Posture

Posture and the placement relationship of chair, desk, keyboard, mouse, and monitor(s) play an important roll in how much fatigue you will feel at the end of a long work day.

The first two examples (**Fig. 1 & 2**) show the classic mistakes people make in their seating position. **Fig. 1** known as the "slump" puts tremendous strain on your lower back as your spine must carry all of the weight of your upper torso. This strain on your lower back can be further aggravated by tucking your feet under your chair.

The reclining position (shown in **Fig. 2**) puts strain on both your neck and lower back, especially if your chair does not have proper lumbar support. Both of these positions also give you a poor viewing angle of the monitor and negatively effect your arm and wrist position in relation to the desk and keyboard.

Our last example (**Fig. 3**) shows proper alignment between your head, torso, legs, and arms. Your upper body should be in perfect vertical alignment and your forearms should be as horizontal as possible to avoid wrist strain. Additionally, you want to be looking directly at the monitor to reduce side glare from the reflective surface of the screen (although good flat panel monitors give off very little glare).



It also helps to have your chair's seat bottom have a slight forward tilt and keep the upper portion of your legs parallel to the ground.

Invest in a top quality chair with arms, headrest and lumbar support.