



## Mind Your Posture: Advice for Office Workers

*Advice from the British Chiropractic Association on how to protect your back from your desk job*

*The proportion of the UK working population in desk-based jobs is increasing. Many workers take no proactive measures to help prevent back or neck pain even though, of those suffering from back or neck pain in the UK, work is one of the main triggers. When sitting and concentrating on the screen for so long we may not be aware that the position we are in could be harmful to our spine. To help maintain a better 'desk posture' and protect our backs, the British Chiropractic Association has some advice to keep in mind when working.*

### Essential Adjustments

Always take the time to adjust your chair, particularly if you share your computer with others.

- Your seat should be adjusted so that your feet are flat on the ground, your knees bent but with a slope from your hips to your knees. You should end up with your hips higher than your knees and your eyebrows level with the top of the computer screen. You may need to put the screen on a stand to bring it to the right height.
- Relax when sitting into your chair, sit up straight and make sure you have your bottom against the seat back with your shoulder blades touching the back rest of the chair.
- Arms should be kept close to your body, flat and with elbows level with the desk or table you are using. Use a seat with arm rests.
- Take regular breaks. Never sit at the computer for more than 40 minutes; less if possible.
- When you take a break, walk around and stretch a little; do something completely different.

- Remove any obstacles from under your desk to ensure you have enough leg room.

### On the move in the house or out and about with a laptop:

*The portability of a laptop makes it very convenient and flexible to use, but it is tempting to use them in situations where you might be in an awkward position. You may not realise that you are in an uncomfortable or potentially pain inducing position if you are concentrating on what you are doing.*

- If working at home, designate a specific area for working. This should be a table or desk with a chair to sit on; avoid the sofa or bed!
- If using a laptop invest in a stand to put it on (a ream of paper or thick book will also do the trick). This ensures the screen is at eye level. For laptops used in the home, it is a good idea to buy a detachable or normal keyboard and mouse to plug in, as this makes it much easier to use the laptop in a more 'back friendly manner'.
- When on the move with your laptop, take time to check your bag or briefcase for items you will not need and remove them. Use a rucksack design laptop case, carry it on both shoulders and adjust the straps so that the bag is held close to your back.
- Make sure you take regular breaks, change position and stretch. Setting an alarm in another room is a good way to ensure this. When taking calls, make sure you move around the house.

Further information about chiropractic can be obtained by logging on to [www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk](http://www.chiropractic-uk.co.uk)

For further information contact the British Chiropractic Association on 0118 950 5950

Scan here to view a short video on the subject.

Or go to [bit.ly/posturecomputer](http://bit.ly/posturecomputer)

