Tasks associated with computer work may pose risk factors that can contribute to the development of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). Risk factors can include awkward posture(s), reaching, bending, twisting, pressure point, lifting, pushing, and vibration. When computer users are exposed frequently to these and other risk factors, or for long periods of time, an employee must change the way they work. Recognizing your body posture in relation to your computer equipment and furniture may prevent a MSD injury.

This checklist offers suggestions for improving your workstation and work practices. This checklist can also be used as a training tool.

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| **Employee Name:** | **Date:** | **Location:** |
| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Prolonged hunched or elevated shoulder while holding the phone | * [Telephone headset](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_telephone.html) * Speakerphone |  |
| Elbows splayed out (shoulder abduction) | * [Lower work surface](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_chair.html) * Lower chair armrests * Bring chair [armrests in closer](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_chair.html) |  |
| Raised or tensed shoulders | * Lower work surface or keyboard * Lower chair armrests * Raise chair, if foot contact with the floor can be maintained * Stretch breaks |  |
| Twisting the head to the side | * Bring [viewed item](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_monitors.html#Angle) closer to centerline of view * Stretch breaks |  |
| Elbow flexed for long periods using the telephone | * Telephone headset * Speakerphone |  |

**This model form/template must be customized to meet your Agency’s needs.**

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Elbow or forearm resting for long periods on a hard or sharp work surface, chair armrests | * Pad or round surfaces, corners, and armrests * Replace armrests * Telephone headset |  |
| Wrists bent to the sides when using side keys | * [Keyboard](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_keyboards.html) with more accessible keys or split keyboard design * Stretch breaks |  |
| Wrists bent back (extended) or forward (flexed) for prolonged periods | * [Palm rest](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_wrist_rests.html) * Lower, raise, or change the slope of the keyboard * Stretch breaks |  |
| Wrists or palms resting for long periods on hard or sharp keyboard or work surfaces | * Palm rest * Padded or rounded surfaces, corners |  |
| Hands held actively over the keyboard during keying pauses | * Palm or forearm rest |  |
| Rapid, sustained, or prolonged keying | * Greater work variety * Break schedule * Reduce overtime |  |
| Forceful keying, key pounding | * Light-touch keyboard * Stretch breaks |  |
| Significant amounts of hand stapling, punching, lifting, opening mail, or other forceful exertions, especially combined with awkward postures | * Mechanical aids, such as electric stapler or punch * Reduce the size of lifted loads * Bring heavy loads [close to the body](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/poultry/additional_material/niosh.html), at a medium height * Substitute sliding (work surface) or wheeling (floor) * Sharpen letter openers |  |

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Prolonged mouse use | * Greater work variety * Stretch breaks * Alternate hands * [Alternative pointing devices](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_pointers.html) * Arm support, including small table * Mouse close to the body (extended keyboard tray) * Learn keystroke substitutes for menus |  |
| Prolonged sitting, especially in only one posture | * Greater work variety * Stretch breaks * [Chair that supports posture](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html) change, through movement, size, or easy adjustability * Move the phone and printer to the other side of the office to force standing, or suggest standing when on the phone * [Monitor](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_monitors.html) in-out mechanism * [Sit-stand work station](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html) |  |
| Lumbar back area not supported | * Lumbar cushion * Backrest height and tilt * [Check chair fit](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/positions.html), backrest/lumbar height |  |
| Feet dangling, not well supported, or a posture that seems to put pressure on the backs of the thighs | * Lower chair * Lower work surface * Footrest (last resort) |  |

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Chair backrest not used for long periods | * Check [chair](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_chair.html) fit, especially seat pan depth and height * Check legroom * Check monitor distance and character height |  |
| Twisted torso | * Rearrange work * Provide more knee space * [U-shaped](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_desk.html) work surface layout * Swivel chair |  |
| Frequent or prolonged leaning or reaching | * Rearrange work * Mouse pad, palm, or forearm rest * Bring mouse and keyboard closer to the body |  |
| Working with one or both arms "reaching" toward a mouse or keyboard | * Bring keyboard closer to body * Mouse pad, palm, or forearm rest * Bring mouse closer to the keyboard |  |
| Light sources that can be seen by the worker | * Cover or shield [light sources](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/wkstation_enviro.html) * Rearrange work arena * Lower other viewed objects to lower field of view |  |

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Reflected glare on the screen | * Shield light sources * Shade screen * Glare screen * Move monitor so light enters from the side angle, not back * Do NOT tip monitor down * Lower light levels * Move light sources |  |
| Too much contrast between the screen and surroundings or document; worker feels relief when bright areas are shielded | * Lower ambient light levels * Turn off, reposition, or dim task lights * Block offending light sources * Change screen polarity to black on white |  |
| Very bright ambient lighting (above 500 lux or 50 fc) or shadowed areas caused by over-illumination | * Lower ambient light levels to 200-500 lux (20-50 fc) and use task lights |  |
| Monitor closer than approximately 65 cm (25") | * Push monitor back (enlarge font size) * Computer glasses * Bring keyboard forward, possibly with a keyboard tray |  |
| Chair backrest not used for long periods | * Check chair fit, especially [seat pan depth and height](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_chair.html) * Check legroom * Check monitor distance and character height |  |

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Different viewed objects (screen, documents) at different distances from the eyes | * Use [document stand](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/components_doc_holders.html) or otherwise equalize distances to within about 10 cm (4") if rapid viewing changes are required |  |
| Screen or documents not oriented perpendicular to the line of sight (tipped back slightly is even better) | * Change monitor, document stand angle |  |
| Prolonged near focusing throughout the day with few far-focusing opportunities | * Move the monitor back as far as possible * Rearrange space to provide a view |  |
| Monitor image dim, fuzzy, flicker, small, or otherwise difficult to read | * Upgrade monitor * Use software to enlarge the image |  |
| Shiny, low-contrast, or small-print documents | * Improve lighting on documents if documents cannot be changed |  |
| Forward head posture (peering) or squinting | * Lower monitor * Tilt monitor back * Check for monitor image quality problems, character height or monitor distance * Suggest consultation with a vision specialist |  |
| Eyestrain complaints | * Check all aspects of the visual environment * Suggest consultation with a vision specialist |  |

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| **Computer Use Risk Factor** | **Possible Solutions or Further Analysis** | **Other Corrective Action Taken (List)** |
| Neck extended backward, head tilted back, even slightly | * Remove CPU from under monitor * Remove the tilt-swivel base from the monitor (leave ventilation space) * Check for bifocals and suggest full-frame "computer glasses" prescription |  |
| Neck severely flexed (downward) | * Tilt face of monitor back * Tilt document - do not lay flat on the work surface * Raise document or monitor to a comfortable height * Adjust posture * Check glasses for proper prescription |  |

Additional Resources

For a visual guide on proper office Ergonomic setup view these [videos](https://thebackschool.net/resources/video-solutions-series).

[The Back School Video Solutions Series](https://thebackschool.net/resources/video-solutions-series)

* Episode 1: Have a Seat. Dr. Bob walks through what to look for in an ergonomic chair as well as what each chair adjustment is for.
* Episode 2: Adjusting and Ergonomic Chair. Dr. Bob walks us step-by-step through adjusting an ergonomic chair.
* Episode 3: Mightier than Mickey. Dr. Bob guides us through the selection and setup of the perfect mouse for you or your client.
* Episode 4: The Keys to Your Success. Dr. Bob teaches us what to look for when purchasing and setting up an ergonomic keyboard.
* Episode 5: The Sit-Stand Workstation. Dr. Bob walks us through the ins-and-outs of adjusting a sit-stand workstation.