

# ERGO BULLETIN

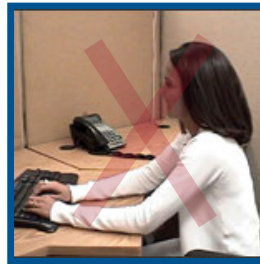
## Keyboard Use: Ergonomic Tips

Millions of people work with computers every day both at the office and at home. Learning how to keyboard safely and efficiently can help prevent or minimize the development of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). Awkward postures of the neck, shoulders, elbows and wrists can be linked to the position of the keyboard or the operator's orientation to the keyboard. There are two key elements to proper keyboard placement: distance and height.

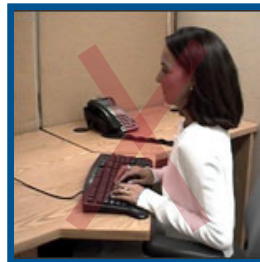
**DISTANCE:** Position yourself to your keyboard so your elbows stay close to your body and your upper arm aligns with the midline of your body. This will allow your neck, shoulders and arms to hang naturally and more comfortably.

**HEIGHT:** Start by setting the keyboard slightly below your seated elbow height. There is an acceptable elbow range so make minor position changes as necessary. Achieving the proper height will depend on your workstation set up:

1. If you place your keyboard on a fixed height surface, you will need to properly adjust the height of your chair to achieve the desired keying posture.
2. If you place your keyboard on an adjustable height tray, adjust the seat height so your feet are fully supported by the floor and then adjust the tray for the desired keying posture.



Too Far



Too Close



Acceptable Range

### Comfortable Keyboard Tips:

1. Keep the keyboard as level as possible by folding up the legs on the underside of the keyboard.
2. Use a light touch. If keys do not function properly, report issues to your supervisor or IT department.
3. Begin and end all keystrokes with fingers comfortably curved over home row keys.
4. Learn to key with the correct finger(s), i.e. right thumb for the space bar, "little" finger of the right hand for the enter or return key.
5. Learn keyboard short cut keys to reduce mousing.

*Photos courtesy of U.S. Dept. of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration*



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