



NO PAIN, NO STRAIN:

Accommodations That Work (At Work!)

Whether you have chronic back pain, arthritis, or any condition that causes pain and stiffness, there are initiatives you can take to make work easier—namely, creating an ergonomic workspace. But what exactly does ergonomic mean? Ergonomics is a science that studies the way people interact with things to identify the safest, most comfortable way to complete tasks. It's most often applied in work settings to help people avoid injuries.

Creating an ideal ergonomic workspace varies depending on the work as well as the person. Each person's abilities and limitations, past and present injuries, medical conditions, and preferences all need to be accounted for. Here are some of the most important considerations for an ergonomic workspace.

- **Positioning:** Your body should be in as close to a neutral position as possible, meaning your head should be centered, you should have good posture, and your feet should be flat on the floor or positioned on a footrest. Your neck and wrists should be relaxed, and your knees should be no higher than your hips.
- **Work at proper heights:** Make sure your desk, keyboard, and chair are at the appropriate height to facilitate a neutral body position while working.
- **Keep everything within reach:** Make sure your keyboard, mouse, and other items you frequently use are within comfortable reach.
- **Avoid repetitive motions:** Keep items you use frequently close by and group items you use in the same order in a way that makes sense to help avoid injuries from repetitive motions.
- **Use ergonomic tools:** Maintaining a neutral posture, working at proper heights, and abiding by other ergonomic principles requires the use of ergonomic-friendly tools, including furniture and equipment.



FOLLOW THE MOUSE:

We've hyperlinked resources you may want to access. Just hover and click!

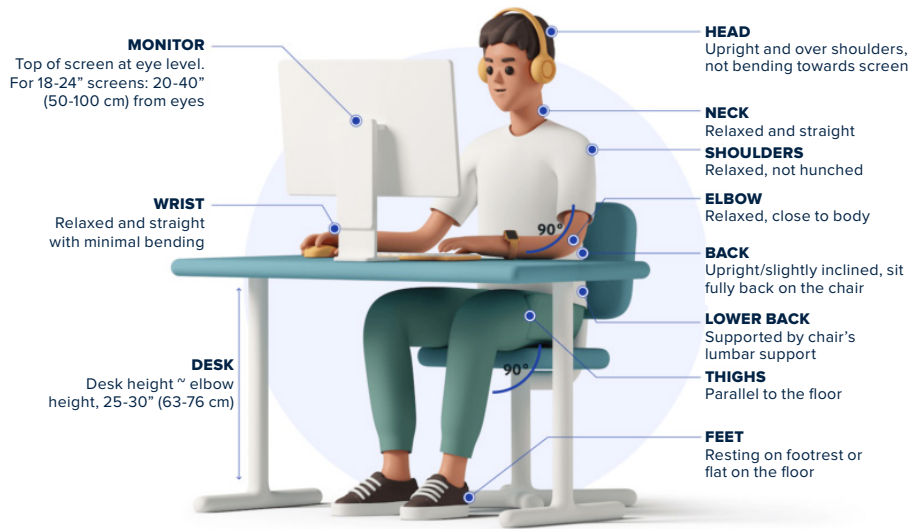
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Maintaining an ergonomic workspace can help prevent musculoskeletal strain and injuries in the workplace. Everyone can benefit from such accommodations, but they're especially helpful for people with chronic pain, arthritis, and other musculoskeletal conditions.



Click the mouse to see this graphic in greater detail.

Source: Quidlo.com



BENEFICIAL BREAKS

Taking a break at work has numerous benefits for your overall health. While benefits vary, according to studies that evaluate the benefits of taking breaks at work, taking the right break at the right time can boost creativity, calm your nerves, help you shift your focus, and even improve your overall well-being.

- **WALK THE WALK:** Taking a moment to step away from your workstation can be more beneficial than stopping for a quick stretch. The physical benefits of stretching versus taking a walk are similar because they both get your blood flowing, but the mental impact is different. Your mind has a better chance of recharging if you're able to take a quick moment away.
- **WHAT YOU DO ON YOUR BREAK MATTERS:** There are numerous benefits to exercise, but these benefits are short-lived. You have to be consistent in moving your body to experience lasting benefits, so it's not always the best choice for a work break. But scrolling on social media or watching the news isn't a good substitute as it can cause mental or emotional distress. Find a middle ground that meets your needs.
- **TIMING BREAKS:** Studies show that longer breaks don't always lead to better outcomes. Shorter, more frequent breaks work better in the morning, while longer breaks seem to be better in the afternoon. This may be because you get more tired throughout the day and need more time to recharge during breaks

Taking breaks that involve stepping away from the workstation and finding the right activity can significantly boost creativity, focus, and overall well-being. By incorporating these practices, you can enhance both your physical and mental health in the workplace.



SOURCES: [EPA.gov](https://www.epa.gov/), [HBR.org](https://www.hbr.org/)



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QUICK WORK BREAK IDEAS

1. Take a five-minute brisk walk
2. Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea
3. Stretch at your desk
4. Listen to calming music
5. Meditate
6. Repeat affirmations
7. Enjoy a healthy and energizing snack
8. Check-in with a loved one

• OPEN ENROLLMENT IS 19 DAYS AWAY! OCTOBER 14 – 31 •

Helpful Tips for Open Enrollment:

MARK YOUR CALENDAR TO ATTEND AN OPEN ENROLLMENT ROADSHOW



EVENT DATES (Time: 10 am – 3 pm):

- Tuesday, October 1: Cook County Building
- Thursday, October 3: Stroger Hospital
- Tuesday, October 8: Juvenile Temporary Detention Center
- Thursday, October 10: Criminal Courts Building



- Get ready to schedule your one-on-one session with a member of the Risk Management Benefits team starting on October 1.
- Visit the [Cook County Benefits site](#) to learn more about Open Enrollment and your benefit options.
- Discuss your family's healthcare needs for 2025 with your family members.
- If you're adding a dependent start gathering the needed documentation. [Click here for documentation requirements.](#) All applicable documentation must be upload by October 31, 11:59pm CST.

