



**GUIDELINES ON
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
IN THE OFFICE**



DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES

MALAYSIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

This guide outlines minimum standards for the Occupational Safety and Health for workers in the office. The purpose of this guide is to provide practical advice on the principal office hazards that should be controlled in order to prevent accidents and work related disease. It is important to create a comfortable working environment so that workers feel less exhausted and stressed in places where they have to spend long hours. Creation of a comfortable working environment is also believed, will enable workers to put their abilities to use more effectively and revitalize workplaces.



2. OFFICE ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The office environment is a combination of lighting, temperature, humidity, air quality and decoration. The office can be a healthy and comfortable place to work in if the correct combination of these element is maintained.

In some of the larger offices, workers may experience some ill-health effect which may be due to the office environment (e.g. headaches, lethargy, eye, nose throat problems, stress and etc.) and require competent investigation. To prevent such ill-health in the office ensure the following issues are addressed.



TEMPERATURE

A comfortable temperature must be maintained. Most people work comfortably at temperature between 20 - 26 degree Celsius. Almost all office in Malaysia use air-conditioning system to maintain the comfortable temperature.

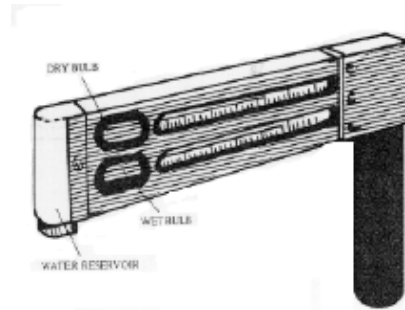
Office temperature can be localised. A desk situated in direct sunlight will be much warmer than the average temperature in the office and a desk situated directly under an air-conditioning vent can be cooler than average. So, additional windows, skylights or glass partitions in offices should not allow excessive temperatures during hot weather.



HUMIDITY

Refers to the amount of water vapor in the air. The optimum comfort range for relative humidity is 40-60 per cent.

- **Low humidity can cause dryness of the eyes, nose and throat and may also increase the frequency of static electricity shocks.**
- **High humidity, above 80% can be associated with fatigue and report of "stuffiness".**



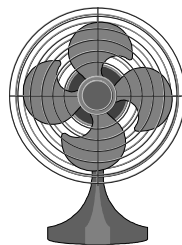
If relative humidity is consistently high or low call in an air-conditioning experts to conduct a review.

VENTILATION

Refers to the movement of the air and rate of fresh air input. Air movement of less than 0.1 meters per second can lead to stuffy rooms whereas above 0.2 meters per second, draughts can be felt.

Ventilation must be adequate. For each person a minimum rate of 10 liters fresh air per second per person for general office space or 10 liters fresh air per second for every 10 square meters of floor space is recommended.

Office should be ventilated either naturally or artificially. For most office opening windows or doors will provide adequate ventilation. Where mechanical ventilation or air-conditioning is provided make sure the system is regularly checked, kept clean and well maintained to prevent a growth of legionella bacteria or other organisms.



CONTAMINATED AIR

Contaminants in the office can include bacteria, viruses, mould spores and dust, solvent vapors, or chemicals generated or used in the building. Air conditioning unit that do not provide adequate amounts of fresh air can cause high levels of carbon dioxide. Stale air due to poor ventilation and excessive heat build-up or humidity can also contribute to air contamination. Appropriate control measures for the reduction of air contamination include;

- **Effective air filtration,**
- **Ensuring that adequate amounts of fresh air enter the building,**
- **Maintenance of air- conditioning units including regular cleaning,**
- **Preventing the obstruction of vent,**
- **Locating equipment using solvents in non-airconditioned area with substantial air movement and/ or installing local exhaust ventilation.**



SMOKING

Environment tobacco smoke is an indoor contaminant and there is growing recognition that non-smokers may suffer adverse health effects through inhaling tobacco smoke. Organisations are increasingly expected to limit passive smoking risks in office in the interest of their employees and clients.

A number of employers have fulfilled their legal obligations to provide a safe and healthy work environment by implementing no-smoking policies in their workplaces. Procedures such as consultation, education programs and the allocation of designated smoking areas are recommended for the development of an effective no-smoking policy.



OZONE AND PHOTOCOPIERS

Ozone does not build up in the air. It breaks down into oxygen quickly after it released into the air.

Photocopiers and laser printers produce ozone gas during operation. Concentration of ozone produce by that machine should, at any time not exceed 0.1 ppm.

At concentration above 0.1 ppm, ozone can cause eye and upper respiratory tract irritation, headache and temporary loss of the ability to smell.

Normally the modern photocopiers and laser printers fitted with an ozone filter do not present any hazard to health, provided they are properly maintained.

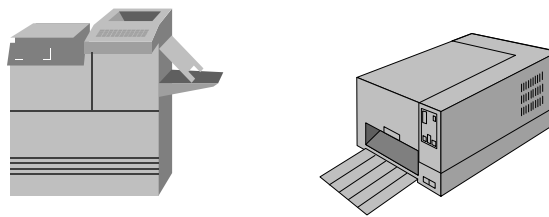
It is recommended that photocopiers are not placed on or in close proximity to the personal workstations of office workers because of possible discomfort from the heat, light and noise generated during the photocopying process.

Always put the cover down when using a photocopier. The fluorescent, metal halide, or quartz exposure lamps used in photocopiers can irritate the eye if viewed directly.

Dust from the toners (containing carbon black) should be less than 3.5 mg per cubic metre of air. It is possible, however, if toner dust is breathed in directly, that it could irritate the respiratory tract.

To keep ozone and dust containing carbon black levels well below acceptable limits;

- **Have photocopiers regularly serviced,**
- **Ensure that an ozone filter is fitted to photocopiers and laser printers,**
- **Ensure that there is adequate ventilation.**



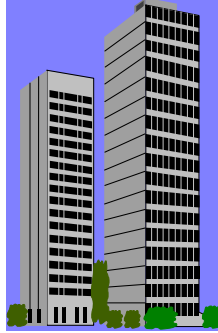
SICK BUILDING SYNDROME

The incidence of illness is significantly higher in some buildings than in others. The symptoms that characterise "sick building syndrome" are sore eye, running nose, headaches, mucous membrane irritation, dry skin, dizziness and nausea.

No single, specific cause has been found. It is believed that the syndrome is caused by a combination of poorly adjusted ventilation, air-conditioning,

temperature, humidity and lighting and psychological factors such as stress, management style and tedious work schedules.

Using the solutions to each individual aspect of the office environment offered in this guide may help in alleviating the symptoms that characterise sick building syndrome.



LIGHTING

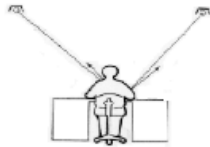


Adequate lighting must be provided. Where possible offices should have natural lighting. When artificial lighting is used it should be sufficient so as to avoid visual fatigue and prevent glare or reflection into the workers eyes.

The basic requirement for adequate lighting are that the work must be easy to see and the light comfortable to the eyes. Illumination is measure in units of LUX (Lumens per square metre).

Suitable light levels based on Malaysia Standard for interior lighting (see COP for Interior Lighting) are

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| • General background | 200 Lux |
| • Routine Office work | 400 Lux |
| • Work with poor contrast (Proof reading) | 600 Lux |



Sharp differences in illumination between adjacent area should be avoided. Ideally the surrounding area should be slightly lower in luminous background.

Light should fall from the side rather than from the front to avoid reflections on the work surfaces.

Glare causes visual discomfort and is usually caused by light sources which are too bright or inadequately shielded.

Light deteriorate with age and accumulate dirt over the surface. It is advisable to ensure that lights are cleaned at regular intervals, at least every 6-12 months. Fluorescent light flicker indicates either the tube or starter needs replacing.

COLOUR

Colour determine the level of reflectance as follows;

- **White reflects** 75% or more of light.
- **Light colours** 50% - 75% (subdued cool colours)
- **Medium colours** 20% - 50% (bright warm colours)
- **Dark colours** 20% or less

White or off-white is recommended for ceiling as they should reflect greater than 80% of light. Walls should have a reflectance between 50-70 per cent have a gloss or semi-gloss finish. Wall near windows should be light in colour whereas those away from windows should be medium coloured below eye level. Floor should be reflect less than 20% of light and therefore should be dark coloured. The use of colourful posters and pictures relieves the monotony of the surroundings and also provides relief from eye strain.

OFFICE FLOOR SPACE

Workstations should be comfortable with safe and suitable chairs and sufficient space.



A good rule of thumb for personal space is to allocate 6.25 square meters per individual workstation, including furniture and fitting, but excluding passageways and amenities.

WELFARE FACILITIES

Welfare facilities like eating facilities, sanitary facilities, washbasins etc. should be available. Ensure adequate facilities for boiling water and taking meals are provided for office employees or ensure they have reasonable access to these facilities.

Provided enough toilets for employees and keep them clean and in good order. For washing, provide running water, soap and towels or other means of drying. The minimum toilets facilities are given in table 1 below. A wholesome supply of drinking water should also be provided.

Sanitary facilities should be kept clean and well ventilated. They must not exit into a work-room except through the open air or intervening ventilated space. The facilities must be located as near as possible to the office.

Where there are no separate facilities provided for the public, the number of conveniences specified above should be increased as necessary to ensure that workers can use the facilities without undue delay.

One washbasin must be provided for every 20 employees up to 100 employees and one for every 40 employees, or part thereof, after that.

Table 1

number of people at work	number of water closets
1 to 5	1
6 to 25	2
26 to 50	3
51 to 75	4
76 to 100	5

CLEANLINESS

The standard of cleanliness required will depend on the use to which the office is put. Floors and indoor traffic routes should be cleaned at least once per week. Any waste material that accumulates should be removed on a daily basis. Interior walls, ceiling, windows and work surfaces should be cleaned at suitable intervals, so as to maintain an appropriate hygiene standard. Ensure contract office cleaners are given the same health and safety protection as regular office workers.

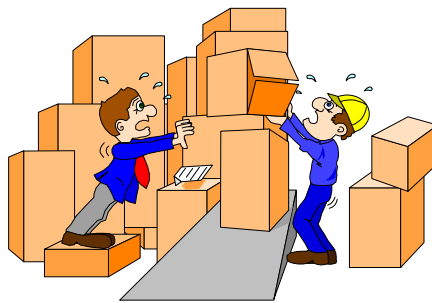


3 SAFETY IN OFFICE

OFFICE ACCIDENTS

Most office accidents result from slip, trips and fall, lifting objects, punctures or cuts and being caught in or between things.

Slips are caused by slippery floors, uncleaned spillages or gripless shoes. Trips occur over objects lying on the ground or jutting out into aisles or because of poorly maintained floor surfaces. Falls can be from ladders or from standing on chairs to reach an object.



Many of these accidents can be avoided by simple planning and good housekeeping.

- **Traffic ways and aisles should be well lit, and be kept clear of material, equipment, rubbish and electric leads,**
- **Floor should be level and the use of mats discouraged. Spilled liquids and anything else dropped on the floor should be immediately picked up or cleaned,**
- **Free standing fittings should be completely stable or secured to the wall or floor. Filing cabinets should be placed so that they do not open in to aisles and should never be left with cabinets drawers open. For stability load cabinets starting from the bottom and do not open more than one drawer at a time,**
- **Office machine and equipment should be kept in good working order. Equipment using hand-fed process such as electric staplers and paper guillotines should be guarded and staff trained in their proper use,**
- **Many pieces of equipment using electricity can mean trailing cables, overloaded circuits, broken plugs and sockets. Ensure that these dangers are seen to by qualified personnel.**

MANUAL HANDLING

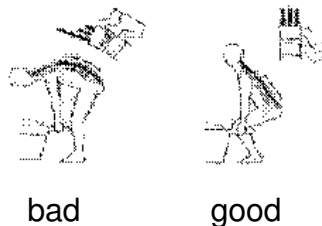
Manual handling is a term used to describe everyday type activities such as carrying, stacking, pushing, pulling, rolling, sliding, lifting or lowering loads. For office workers this can include task such as moving boxes of stores, filing, setting equipment from cupboards and filling the photocopying machine with paper.



A common office hazard is the manual movement of loads leading to back injuries and pain in hand, wrist and neck. To reduce the likelihood of these types of accidents the requirements are;

- **remove the need for manual handling that could be the cause of injury,**
- **identify those tasks where manual handling cannot be avoided and assess the risk of injury,**
- **reduce the risk of injury by rearranging the work being done (e.g. have paper delivered to photocopier by hand truck rather than manually carrying it from stores, reduce weight to be lifted, etc.)**
- **provided manual handling training to workers who need it (messengers, service attendants etc.) and give them information on the weights being lifted and how to plan a lift.**

If cabinets, desks or other heavy office equipment have to be moved, do take particular precautions which would include providing hand truck or trollies and using team lifting. More details, please refer to Guidelines on Manual Handling.



WORK EQUIPMENT

Equipment used in the office (e.g. paper shredders, photocopiers, fax-machines, printing machines) should be used in accordance with suppliers instructions and should be kept in good condition at all time, be repaired or serviced by qualified persons and any defects reported to the office manager. Passenger lift should be thoroughly examined on a regular basis by a competent person as required by the Factories and Machinery (Electric Passenger and Goods Lift) Regulations 1970. Ensure any contract maintenance staff using/operating office equipment are given the same health and safety protection as regular office workers.

CHEMICAL

Small quantities of chemical are used in the office and include printing inks, photocopier toners, cleaning chemicals and correction fluids. Ensure office workers are aware of their hazards. These hazards together with the appropriate safeguards are normally detailed in the material safety data sheets (available from supplier). Keep these sheet up-to-date and keep them in a location where workers can consult them easily.



EMERGENCIES

The type of emergencies that could occur in the office include fires, gas leaks and lift failure. To ensure an orderly evacuation from the office an emergency plan should be prepared and tested on a regular basis. The plan should cover fire drills/safe evacuation, how to shut off machine and leave the workplace safe, name persons who are responsible for the evacuation and calling the emergency services, and detail the assembly areas. The emergency plan can be part of a safe work procedure.

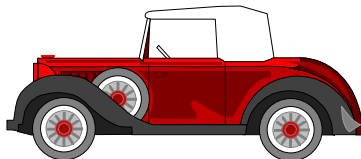
STRESS

Workplace stress is of increasing concern in offices and is still poorly understood. Stress arises when the demands on the worker exceed the capacity to cope. Stressful situations should be identified in the office and safeguards must be implemented at organisational level to minimise the risk. This might mean making changes in the organisation of the work.



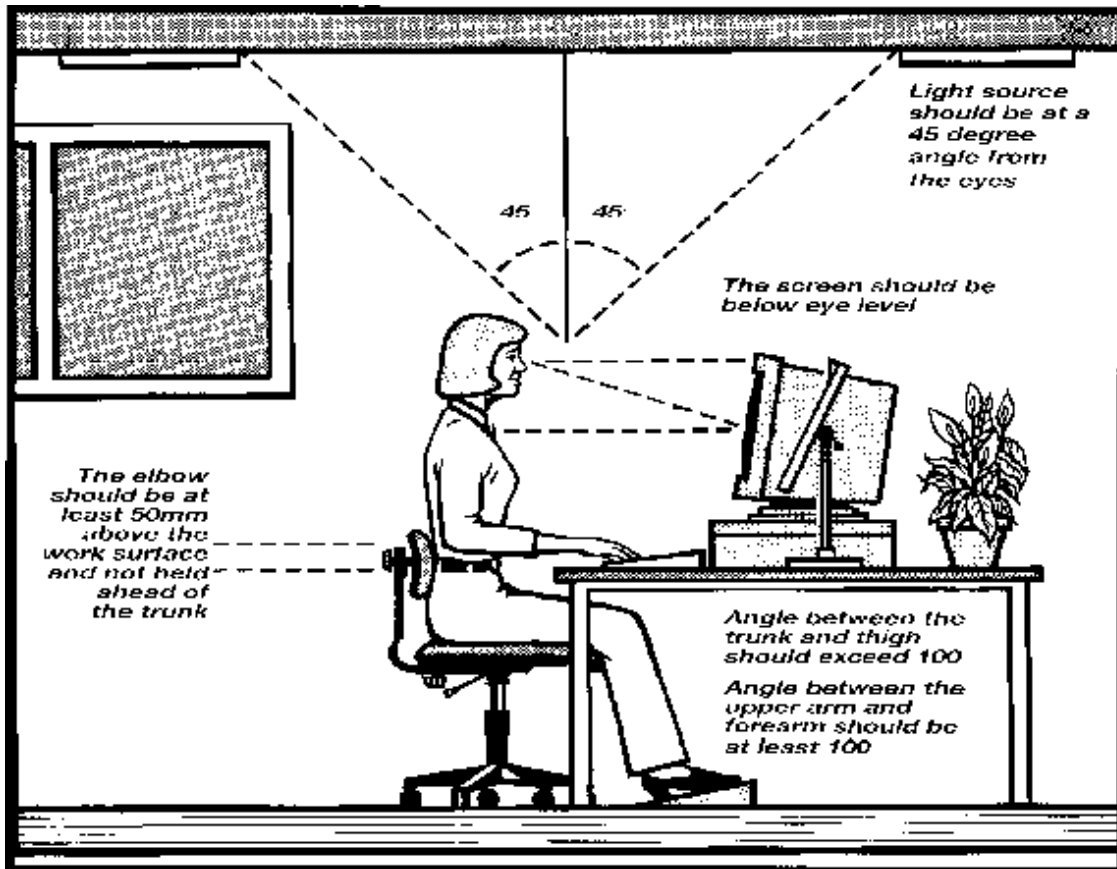
TRANSPORT

A number of office workers have been killed going to and coming from the office by car, lorries and other vehicles in the office car park. Make sure walkways in car park are suitably lit and there is safe means for pedestrians and vehicles to circulate.



4 KEYBOARD EQUIPMENT

Office workers of all kinds spend many hours using a variety of keyboard equipment. Keyboard equipment that is properly selected, coordinated and adjusted will help prevent a range of injuries caused by overuse, poor posture and poor lighting.



WORKSTATION CHECKLIST FOR KEYBOARD WORKERS

Well adjusted chairs improve body position and blood circulation, reduce muscular effort and decrease pressure on the workers back. Chair should swivel, have five wheels for stability, breathable fabric on the seat, a rounded front edge and have adjustable seat height and backrest for lumbar support.

Work surface height

Adjust the height of the work surface and/or the chair so that the work surface is approximately at finger length below the height of the elbow when seated. See figure 2.

Chair

Adjust the seat tilt so that you are comfortable when using the keyboard. Usually this will be close to horizontal but tilted slightly forwards. If this places an uncomfortable strain on the leg muscles or if the feet do not reach the floor then a footrest should be used. Adjust the back rest so that it supports the lower back when you are sitting upright. See figure 2.

Keyboard placement

Place the keyboard in a position that allows the forearms to be close to horizontal and the wrists to be straight. This is, with the hand in line with the forearm. If this causes the elbows to be held far out from the side of the body re-check the work surface height.

Screen placement

Set the eye to screen distance at the distance that permits you to most easily focus on the screen. Usually this will be within an arms length. Set the height of the monitor so that the top of the screen is below eye level and the bottom of the screen can be read without the marked inclination of the head. Usually this means that the centre of the screen will need to be near shoulder height. Recommended dimensions for viewing distance to work;

Minimum	350 mm
Maximum	750 mm
Height of display	10 - 40° below eye level

Desk-top layout

Place all controls and task materials within comfortable reach of both hands so that there is no unnecessary twisting of any part of the body.

Document holder

Place this close to the monitor screen in the position that causes the least twisting or inclination of the head.

Posture and movement

Change posture at frequent intervals to minimise fatigue. Avoid awkward posture at the extremes of the joint range, especially the wrists. Take frequent short rests rather than infrequent longer rests. Avoid sharp increases in work rate. Change should be gradual enough to ensure that the workload does not result in excessive fatigue. After prolonged absences from work the overall duration of periods of keyboard work should be increased gradually if conditions permit.

WORKSTATIONS DIMENSIONS

Recommended dimensions for seated and standing work are given in figures 2 and figure 3. These recommendation are base on International Labour Office (ILO) Higher Productivity and A Better Place to Work - 1988.

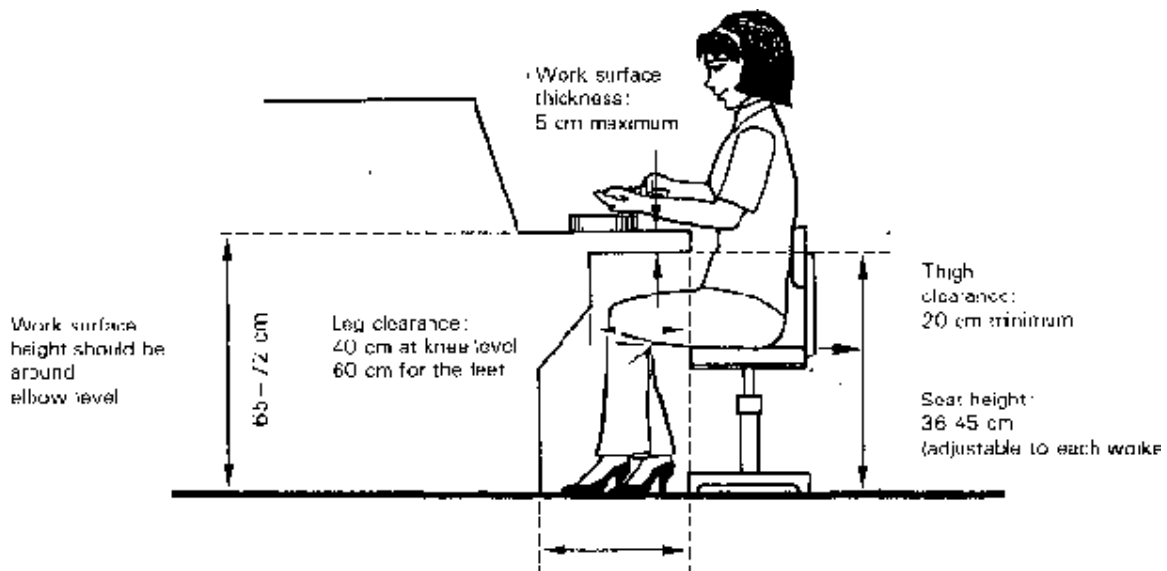
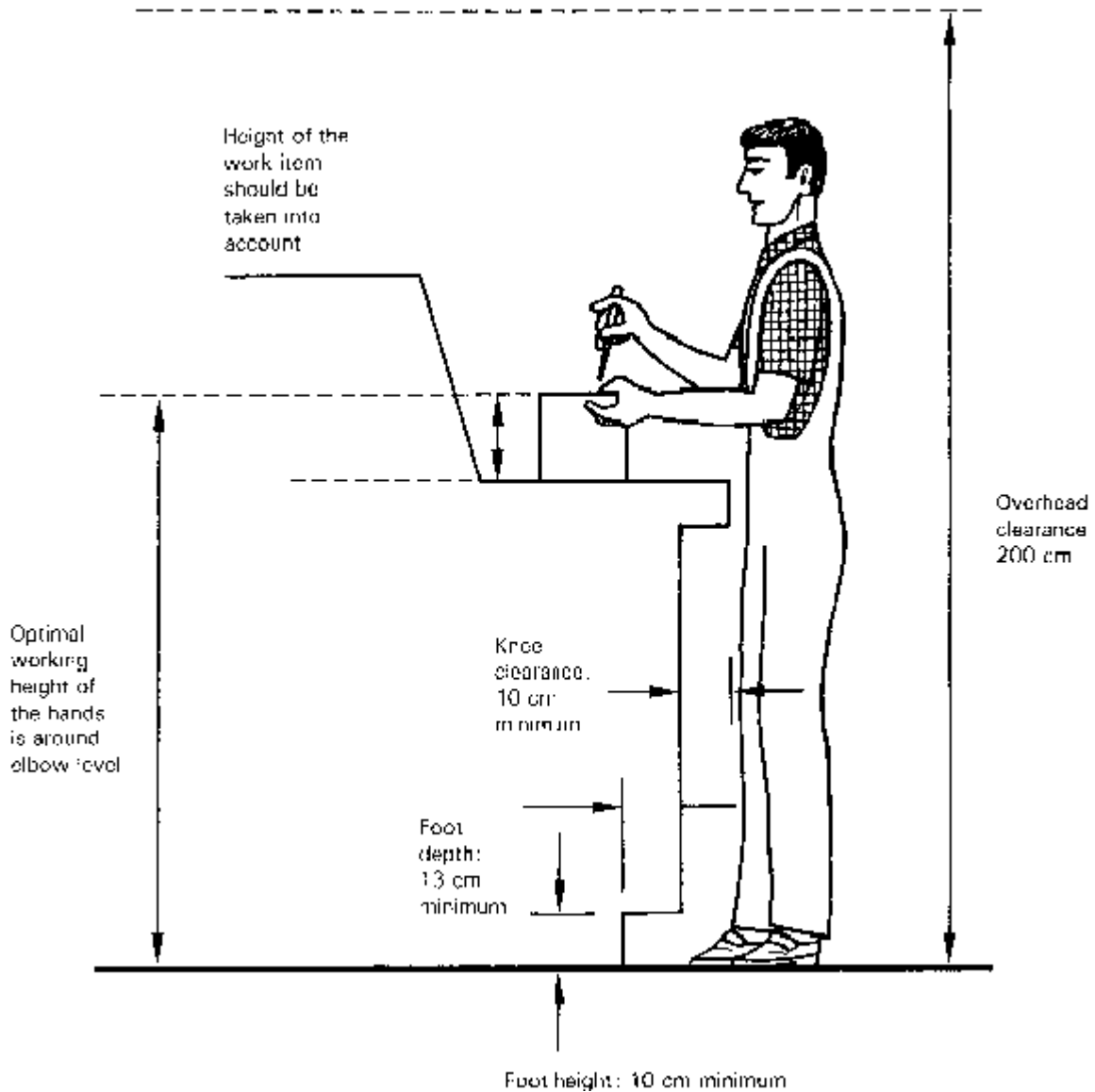


Figure 54

Recommended dimensions for most seated tasks



LIGHTING FOR VIDEO DISPLAY UNIT (VDUs)

Place VDUs to the side of the light source(s), not directly underneath. Try to site desks between rows of lights. If the lighting is fluorescent strip lighting, the side of the desks should be parallel with the lights.

Try not to put the screen near a window. If it is unavoidable ensure that neither the screen nor the operator faces the window. If the VDU is well away from windows, there are no other sources of bright light and prolonged desk-work is the norm, use a low level of service light of 300 lux. If there are strongly contrasting light levels then a moderate level of lighting of 400 to 500 lux may be desirable but high quality antiglare screens may be necessary.

GLARE AND REFLECTION

It is important to detect the presence of glare and reflection. To determine whether there is glare from overhead lights the seated worker should hold an object such as a book above the eyes at eyebrow level and establish whether the screen image becomes clearer in the absence of overhead glare. To detect whether there are reflections from the desk surface the worker should hold the book above the surface and assess the change in reflected glare from the screen.

A number of ways are available to eliminate or reduce the influence of these reflections;

- **Tilt the screen so that reflections are directed below eye level.**
- **Purchase screens with matt or light diffusing surfaces.**
- **Cover screens with a light diffusing surface or antiglare screen.**
- **Negative contrast screens (dark characters on light background) will reduce the influence of these reflections.**

If VDU users experience eye discomforts when using a bright screen they should make the following adjustments;

- **Turn the screen brightness down to a comfortable level. This can be judged by placing a piece of paper next to the screen and adjusting the brightness control so that the screen is similar in brightness to the paper.**
- **Look away into the distance in order to rest the eyes for a short while every ten minutes or so.**
- **Change the text and background colours. Recommended are black characters on white or yellow background, or yellow on black, white on black, white on blue and green on white. Avoid red and green and yellow on white.**

USING A MOUSE

A well designed mouse should not cause undue pressure on the wrist and forearm muscles. A large bulky mouse may keep the wrist continuously bent at an uncomfortable angle. Pressure can be reduced by releasing the mouse at frequent intervals, by selecting a slim-line, low-profile mouse and by using the mouse at a comfortable distance from the body.

KEYBOARD EQUIPMENT AND RADIATION

VDUs emit radiation, particularly visible light which allows the characters on the screen to be seen. Weak electromagnetic fields and very low levels of other radiation, not visible to human eye, can be detected by sensitive equipments. Similar emissions are produced by television receivers.

The level of most radiations and electromagnetic fields emitted from VDUs are much less than those from natural sources, such as the sun or even the human body, and are well below levels considered harmful by responsible expert bodies such as the International Radiation Protection Association. The levels of radiation from VDUs are much lower than recommended limits, and that these limits themselves incorporate significant safety factors.

The weak electromagnetic fields produced by television receivers and VDUs extend in all directions, but their intensity decreases very quickly with distance from the source. A workplace should be organised to ensure that VDU operators are no closer to any other VDUs than they are to their own.

Flat screen displays, such as the liquid-crystal display used in some lap-top computers, produce even smaller amounts of radiation than those which use television-type tube. It may be sensible to use the new types for special purposes, such as to increase portability but concern about radiation emissions should not be a factor in their choice.

KEYBOARD AND TELEPHONE OPERATIONS

Lighweight adjustable headsets with a volume control should be provided for staff on continuous keyboard/telephone operation. For continuous, traffic dependent telephone operations a manual call facility should also be provided.

5 REST BREAKS AND EXERCISE

The key to preventing overuse injuries is to break repetitive work with non-repetitive task or exercises and/or rest breaks.

Employees need to move around and reduce the effects of fatigue by doing different task. However rest breaks should be taken if the job requires a sustained period of repetitive or static activity because task variation is not possible.

REST BREAKS AND KEYBOARD WORK

Frequent short breaks are most effective in relieving the strain associated with keyboard work. For reasonable sustained keying activity a break should be taken for a few minutes every hour. During this break workers should walk around and perform whatever movement relieves the feeling of muscle fatigue. Movements that are a natural response to fatigued muscles such as shrugging the shoulders are generally the most effective in dealing with the fatigue.

A particularly useful method of relieving muscle fatigue is to occasionally alter posture. That is, to change from the recommended posture for the short duration. Some chairs have a forward which can sometimes help to reduce fatigue to the muscles of the forearm, neck and shoulder.

EYE STRAIN

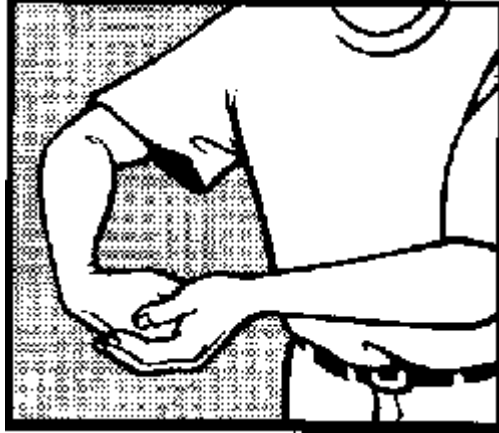
Working with VDUs can produce tired and sore eyes and eye strain. To reduce strain take short rests and look into the middle distance or if necessary close the eye and cover them with the hands without pressing and breathe deeply eight or nine times.

MUSCLE CARE AND PREPARATION

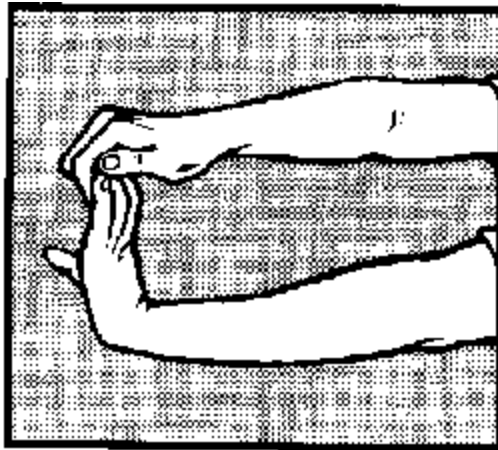
The following exercise should be done before commencing work and after lunch breaks. However it is important to;

- **Never stretch to the point where pain is experienced.**
- **Refrain from doing these exercises if you have a medical condition that could be made worse by stretching.**

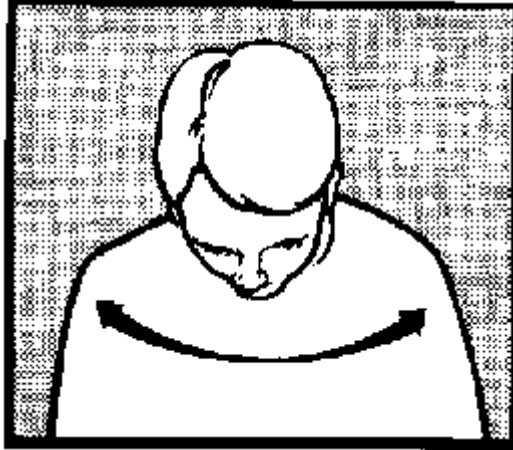
The benefit of these exercises is best achieved by a gentle stretching action over periods of at least 30 seconds.



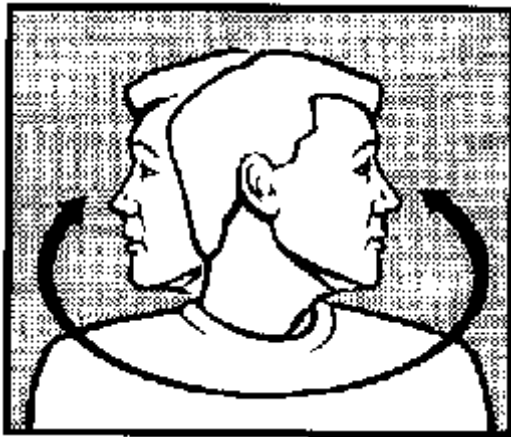
Bending your wrist and fingers with your other hands, bending your elbow slightly at the same time, until you feel the stretch over the back of your forearm. Hold the position for 30 seconds.



Stretch your arm out in front of you with your elbow straight, palm facing away from you (fingers pointing up or down). Then with your other hand pull your fingers backwards until you feel the stretch over the front of your forearm. Hold the position for 30 seconds.

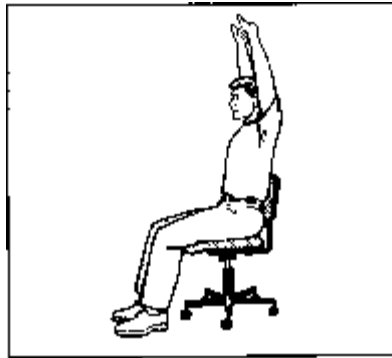


Tuck your down chin down onto your chest and gently turn your head from side to side, keeping your chin on your chest. Do this ten times.



Turn your head slowly from side to side ten times.

EXERCISES FOR REST BREAKS



Tall stretch:

Interlock fingers, palms up. Stretch arms above the head until they are straight. Do not arch the back.



Toe-in, toe out:

Place feet shoulders - width apart, heels on the floor. Swing toes in, then out.



Shoulder roll:

Roll the shoulders - raise them pull them back, then drop them and relax. Repeat in the opposite direction.



Side stretch:

Drop left shoulder, reaching left hand towards the floor. Return to starting position. Repeat on right side.



Back curl:

Grasp shin, lift leg off the floor. Bend forward curling the back, with nose towards the knee. Note: This exercise should be avoided in pre - or post - natal conditions.



Ankle flex:

Hold one foot off the floor, leg straight. Flex ankle (pointing toes up) and extend (pointing toes toward the floor). Repeat with other leg.

**Leg lift:**

Sit forward on the chair and place feet on the floor. With a straight leg, lift one foot a few centimetres off the floor. Hold for a second and then return it to the floor. Repeat with other leg.

6 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT 1994

The Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 aims to secure the safety, health and welfare of persons at work, for protecting others against risks to safety or health in connection with the activities or persons at work. Under the Act employers, employees and the self-employed are required to meet certain standards on safety, health and welfare.

Employers must ensure the safety, health and welfare of their employees. To comply, employers must;

- **Provide or maintain equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.**
- **Ensure that equipment and substances are used, stored and transported safely and without risks to health.**
- **Provide information, instruction, training and supervision that ensure the safety and health of employees.**
- **Maintain their workplace in a safe condition including entrances and exits.**
- **Employers must also ensure the safety and health of visitors to the work places.**

Employees must;

- **Cooperate with their employers in their efforts to maintain the required level of safety and health.**
- **Take reasonable care of the safety and health of one-self and others.**

Manufactures and suppliers of equipment and substances must;

- **Ensure that products are safe and not a risk to health when properly used.**
- **Provide clear information about the safe use of their products.**
- **Make available information about research and testing.**

People in control of workplace (that is building owners who are not the employer) must ensure that the workplace including entrances and exits is safe and without risks to safety and health.

Section 18(1) of the Act, require that an occupier of a non-domestic premises which has been made available to persons, not being his employees, as a place of work, or as a place where they may use plant or substance provided for their use there, shall take such measures as are practicable to ensure that the premises, all means of access thereto and egress therefrom available for use by persons using the premises, and any plant or substance in the premises or provided for use there, is or are safe and without risks to health.

SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

The employer must prepare a written statement of his general policy with respect to the safety and health at work of his employees and the arrangement for managing safety and health in the workplace. It should begin with a policy statement on how the employer intends to comply with the law. The statement should be based on an identification of the hazards and an assessment of the risks in the office. Employees should be informed of the policy. The risks assessment results should be incorporated into the safety and health policy where appropriate.

In preparing the statement it is useful to review the most common causes of office accidents and if these hazards exist in your office, deal with them in the statement. The statement should name those person in the office who are responsible for ensuring that safety controls are put and retained in place.

SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEES

The Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994, requires that occupational safety and health committees be established in workplaces with forty or more employees or when directed by the Director General of Occupational Safety and Health. (For further detail please refer to The Occupational Safety and Health (Safety and Health Committee) Regulations.

FIRST AID

A first-aid box should be available in the office and kept fully stocked. Someone should be appointed to look after it, take charge in an emergency and call an ambulance.

The smaller office might not need a trained first-aider but the bigger office should have an appropriate number of trained first-aiders, depending on the risk involved, the accidents likely to arise, the size and location of the office, the distribution of employees and the distance from external medical services. For more details please refer to The Guide on First-aid Facilities in the Workplace 1996.

ACCIDENT REPORTING

The Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 require an employer to notify the nearest occupational safety and health office of any accident, dangerous occurrence, occupational poisoning or occupational disease which has occurred or is likely to occur at the place of work. For further detail please refer to the Occupational Safety and Health (Reporting of Accident, Dangerous Occurrences, Occupational Poisoning and Occupational Diseases) Regulations.

SAFETY AND HEALTH TRAINING

The types of training required for office workers includes;

Induction - so that new entrants get to know the basics such as fire evacuation, good housekeeping, electricity and VDU safety and the safety and health policy.

Skill - so that staff who have specific responsibilities under the safety and health policy can undertake them in a competent manner e.g. manual handling training, VDU assessment, office inspections and accident investigations.

Management training - which gives a good overview of the law including guidance and need for risk assessment and preparing safety management programmes.

For a well organised office the safety and health policy should spell out the training programme and commitment to provide resources to implement it. The key to induction and skill training is that office workers require the knowledge to do what is expected of them. Management training involved in particular understanding the process of risk assessment and their legal obligations. The training can be based on the accident trends for the office environment such as slips, trips and fall, back injuries from manual handling, upper limb disorders etc.

7 REFERENCES

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