

## ERGONOMIC WORKPLACE

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Ergonomics is the study of designing equipment and devices that fit the human body, its movements, and its cognitive abilities. Ergonomics is the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance. Outside of the discipline itself, the term 'ergonomics' is generally used to refer to physical ergonomics as it relates to the workplace (for example: ergonomic chairs and keyboards).

Today, changes in technology, changes in the way we perform work and where and how we work are occurring at a rapid pace. Nowhere is the change more evident than in the use of computers.

Today, almost every one of us interacts with computers on a daily basis to create new things and ideas, to produce documents, to correspond with friends, and to retrieve information. Along with the expanding use of this technology have come reports about adverse health changes for computer users. Many jobs require employees to sit at their computers all day and type. Unfortunately, this type of position requires a lot of repetitive body movement, including clicking a mouse. These repetitive motions can cause several injuries, including carpal tunnel syndrome and, in extreme cases, arthritis. Fortunately, by using ergonomic keyboard accessories, including an ergonomic mouse, some of these injuries can be avoided.

Ergonomic keyboards are becoming ever more popular as the number of daily computer users rises. The last 10-20 years have brought on a sharp increase in the number of people who use a computer nearly every day. Ergo models are designed to help keep your hands and wrists in a low-risk typing posture while computing. Those with professions or hobbies that involve heavy typing are the ones who are affected most by computer-related injuries; however anyone who uses a computer regularly is susceptible to these conditions. The most commonly known injury people develop is called Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. An ergonomic keyboard is a computer keyboard designed with ergonomic considerations to minimize muscle strain and a host of related problems. Your hands, wrists, shoulders and back are the areas of your body most vulnerable to repetitive strain injury (RSI). This is due to how we sit and move about when using computers under normal circumstances. A good ergonomic computer keyboard is going to keep your hands, wrists and shoulders in a better position than a standard model would.

An ergonomic mouse is one of the top 3 most important aspects of a highly ergonomic workstation. Along with ergonomic chairs and ergonomic keyboards, an ergonomic mouse can drastically improve comfort and productivity while computing. Ergonomic mice are designed to position your hands in a more natural posture, thereby minimizing the risks of long-term damage from computing such as carpal tunnel syndrome and other repetitive stress injuries (RSI). There is no doubt about it, using a standard computer mouse for hours and hours every day will result in pain and strain, and if not addressed within a reasonable amount of time this can escalate to long-term injuries and conditions. The function of an ergonomic mouse is to provide a mouse design that eases repetitive motion and strain. However excellent the functionality of the standard computer mouse - we all use it with great ease - most of the time it is too small for the hand while its shape forces your hand and fingers in an unnatural gripping position. Ergonomic mice are designed in such a way that the hand (or another part of the body) is able to control the computer's on-screen cursor in such a way that motions are more natural and less strenuous.

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