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Ergonomics for Temporary, Non-Traditional Workstations

by Eric Lucero

There are times when traditional workstations may be temporarily unavailable or may not be warranted if used on an infrequent basis. Examples include while waiting for newly ordered equipment to arrive or when employees work remotely for only a few hours a week.

In traditional settings, the goal is to arrange the workstation to enable the work posture pictured in Figure 1. When using non-traditional equipment such as a laptop, tablet, or when a desk is temporarily unavailable, this can be difficult to achieve. In these instances, use the following tips to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal hazards for employees temporarily using non-traditional workstations and equipment.



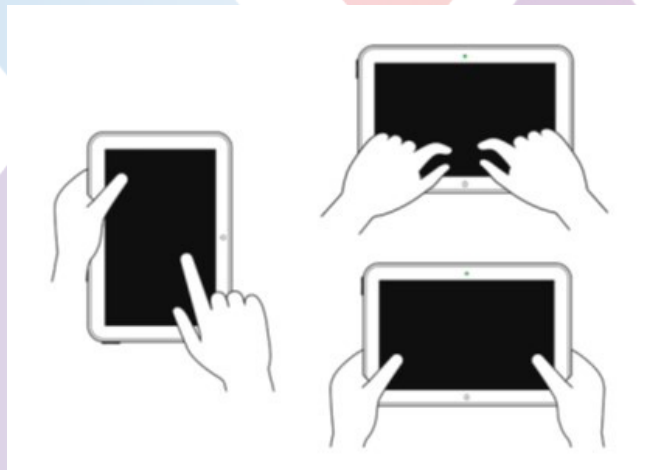
Laptops

Whenever possible use a standard keyboard/mouse and elevate the tablet to minimize neck strain. Laptop risers are available, but in a pinch, use a box or crate.

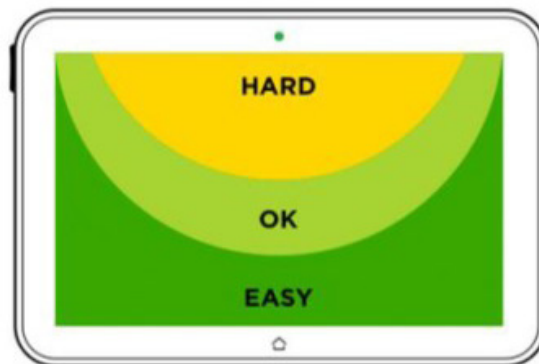
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Tablets

Like sitting, there is no single best static posture. Instead, rotate from one to another.



Avoid hard to reach areas of the tablet screen.



If available, use a Bluetooth or USB keyboard and mouse.



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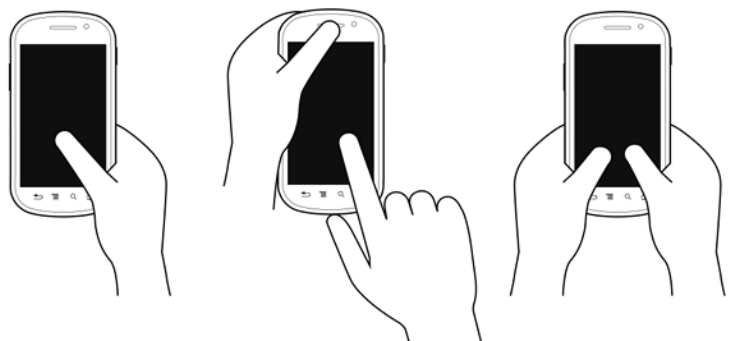
Work Surfaces

Avoid the couch, but as a last resort, prop cushions underneath your laptop to minimize awkward postures.



Mobile Phones

Use of mobile phones to conduct work should be limited as much as possible. Avoid hard to reach areas of the phone when using your thumb (Figure 2). Change grip posture frequently to ensure load rotation (Figure 3).



For any additional assistance, contact the [PRISM Risk Control Department](#).