



VBG Info

Health and computer work

Check your workstation

Headaches, back pain, tense neck and shoulders – it doesn't have to be that way. Contribute to your personal health.

Am I sitting correctly?



Do you know how to adjust the height of your chair?
Is your desk height-adjustable?
Please inform yourself.

You are sitting at a desk with a fixed height

Sit in your office chair and check the following:

1. My upper arms hang loosely and my forearms form a horizontal line to the keyboard. My upper arms and forearms form an angle of 90° or more.

True False

...❖ *If that is not how you are sitting, adjust the height of your chair accordingly.*

2. My thighs and lower legs form an angle of 90° or more. I can put my feet flat on the floor.

True False

...❖ *If your feet are dangling in the air, a footrest can help. Setting the desk higher may be necessary for taller people.*

You are sitting at a height-adjustable desk

First, check your sitting posture:

1. My chair is adjusted so the seat is at knee height and the thigh and lower leg form an angle of 90° or more.

True False

...❖ If not, adjust the seat height.

Then check if the desk height is correct:

2. My upper arms hang loosely and my forearms form a horizontal line to the keyboard. My upper arms and forearms form an angle of 90° or more.

True False

...❖ If not, adjust the desk height.

What do you think – which of the four sitting postures is recommended?



Dynamic sitting (4) is the right answer. Frequently changing your sitting posture and standing up every once in a while is good for your back – and for your health.

Adjustment possibilities



Use the entire seat so your back is always supported. Check what other adjustment possibilities are available on your office chair. You will find this information in the instructions provided by the manufacturer.

For example, on some office chairs, you can adjust the

- pressing force and locking for the backrest angle,
- height of the backrest,
- lumbar support,
- seat inclination, and
- armrests.

...❖ *Inform yourself. Many manufacturers affix corresponding notices to the office chair.*

Do I have to sit all the time?

Remind yourself:

Frequently getting up and walking is good for your health. If you have a height-adjustable desk, standing up to work part of the time is a good idea. If you don't have one, you can stand up to make phone calls or sort documents.



Walking is also good for a change:

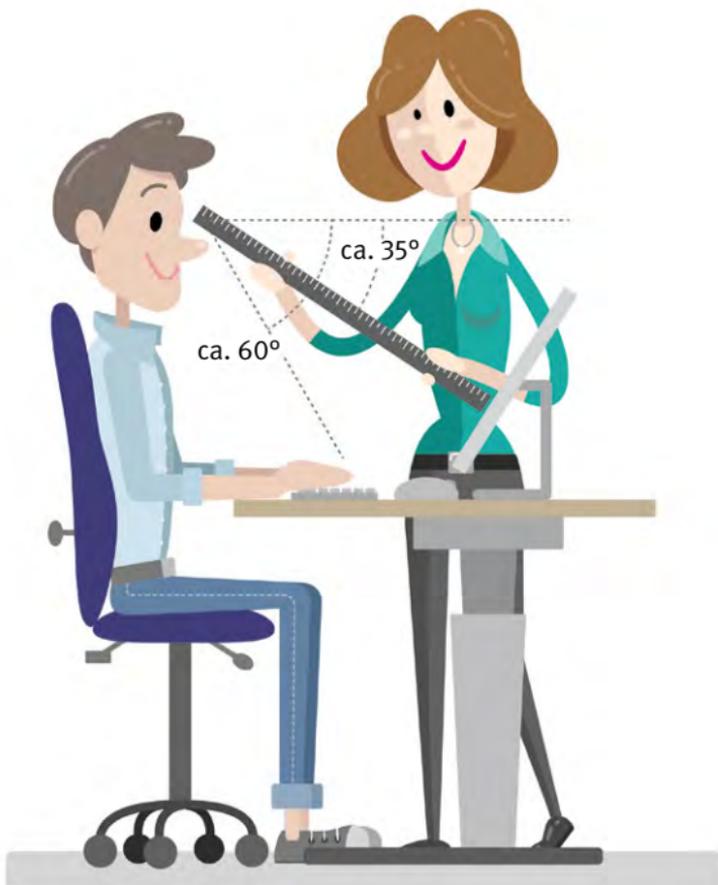
Instead of using the lift, take the stairs. Visit colleagues instead of sending them an e-mail.



Exercises

You can also do exercises during short breaks. See the VBG brochure **“Exercise at the office”** for tips.

Is everything properly arranged on my desk?



Distances to work equipment

Measure the distances to your work equipment

Screen _____ cm
Document or second screen _____ cm
Keyboard _____ cm

The distances to the screen, keyboard and documents should be close to the same and, depending on the work task, at least 50 cm and no more than 70 cm.

Keyboard distance to edge of desk

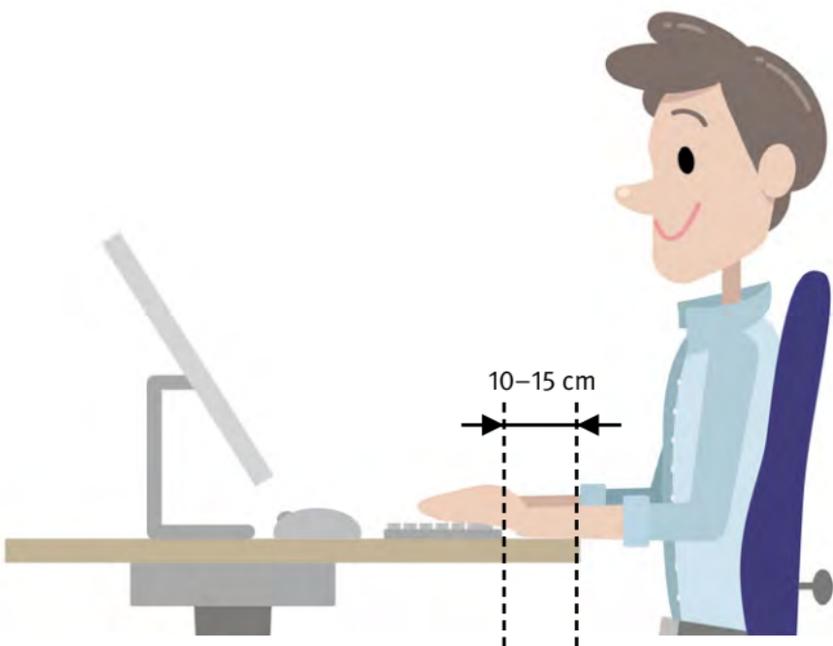
Now measure how far your keyboard is from the edge of the desk: _____ cm

Your keyboard should be about 10 to 15 cm from the edge of the desk, so you can rest your hands on the desk occasionally. That helps to relax the shoulder and neck muscles.

Any work equipment needed all the time while working on the screen should be directly in front of you. Everything else can be positioned off to the side. If you put some things further away, you have to get up every now and then, which is good for your health.

Make sure your screen is standing directly on the desk, is adjusted as low as possible and is tilted back. This allows you to look slightly downward at the screen, in a relaxed posture. That is how we normally read books, because this is the natural reading posture.

If you tend to experience pain in the forearms and wrists, get advice on alternative input devices from your company doctor.



Is my screen adjusted correctly?

Brightness and contrast

The brightness and contrast should be set so the presented information is easy to read.

When you can differentiate between all required shades of grey (greyscales), the contrast is adjusted correctly.

The brightness should be set so the information presented on the screen appears bright enough, but not too bright, and the screen does not blind you.

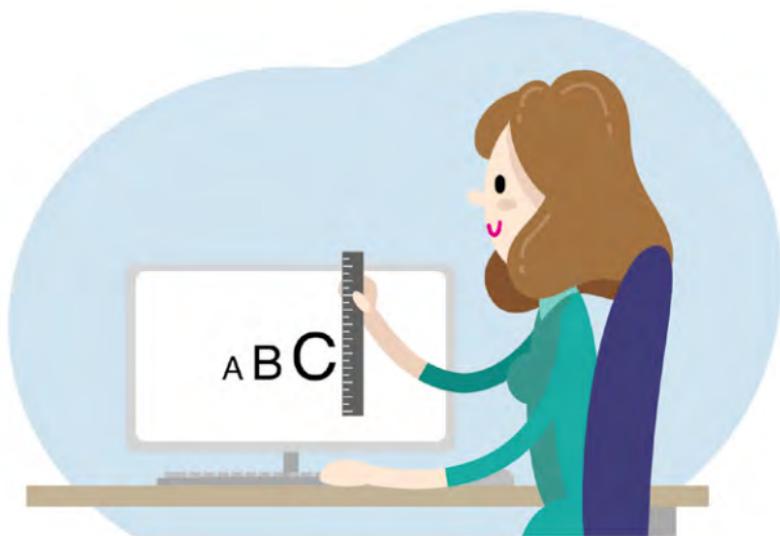
❖ *If these requirements are not met, adjust the contrast and/or brightness, or ask your IT department or experienced colleagues for help.*

Positive display

You should choose dark text on a light background (positive display) whenever possible.

Avoid selecting light characters on a dark background (negative display). In the negative display, the characters cannot be recognised optimally on the screen. Reflections are also more interfering compared to the positive display.

Character size



The letters on your screen have to be sufficiently large. At a viewing distance of 50 cm, capital letters should be slightly larger than 3 mm.

...❖ *Measure and check.*

Colour of light and brightness

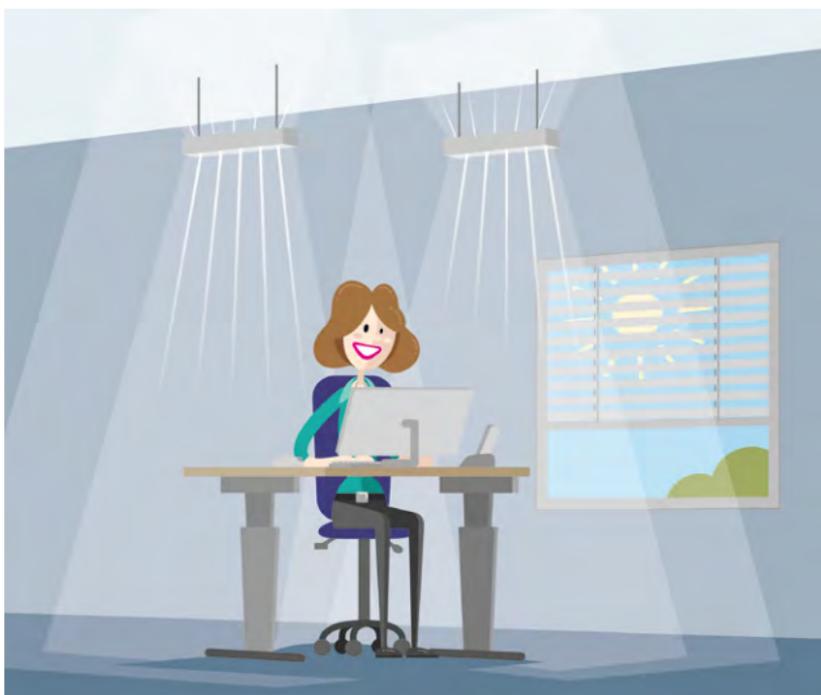


If you work on the screen in the evening or at night, adjusting the colour of light and brightness of the display is recommended. A corresponding night shift setting can be selected on some devices.

This is less disruptive for your biorhythm and you are able to sleep better later on.

Is my workstation properly lit?

Ideally, you have a non-reflecting display. In that case, bright surfaces in your surroundings are unlikely to interfere and your workstation can be more freely positioned in relation to lighting.



Check your workstation:

1. Do you face into the room, not towards a window, when looking at your display?

Yes No

2. Are the display and work surface free of reflections, such as a window or a luminaire?

Yes No

If you answered both questions with yes, everything is fine. Excessive eye strain is avoided and you are not forced to assume an incorrect posture to avoid interference. Having light coming from the side, rather than sitting

directly below a luminaire, is also beneficial. The risk of glare or the reflection of luminaires in your display is reduced.

...❖ *If you are blinded by sunlight or it interferes with the display on your screen, use the shade on the window.*

For further information and helpful hints on the topic of working at office workstations, please visit our website at www.vbg.de/bueroarbeit.



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Massaquoipassage 1

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VBG Customer Service: 040 5146-2940

Emergency hotline for employees working abroad: +49 40 5146-7171

Secure contact link: www.vbg.de/kontakt

Here for you locally – the VBG regional offices:

Bergisch Gladbach

Kölner Str. 20 · 51429 Bergisch Gladbach
Phone: 02204 407-0 · Fax: 02204 1639
E-mail: BV.BergischGladbach@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 02204 407-165

Berlin

Markgrafenstraße 18 · 10969 Berlin
Phone: 030 77003-0 · Fax: 030 7741319
E-mail: BV.Berlin@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 030 77003-128

Bielefeld

Nikolaus-Dürkopp-Str. 8 · 33602 Bielefeld
Phone: 0521 5801-0 · Fax: 0521 61284
E-mail: BV.Bielefeld@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 0521 5801-165

Dresden

Wiener Platz 6 · 01069 Dresden
Phone: 0351 8145-0 · Fax: 0351 8145-109
E-mail: BV.Dresden@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 0351 8145-167

Duisburg

Wintgensstraße 27 · 47058 Duisburg
Phone: 0203 3487-0 · Fax: 0203 2809005
E-mail: BV.Duisburg@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 0203 3487-106

Erfurt

Koenbergstraße 1 · 99084 Erfurt
Phone: 0361 2236-0 · Fax: 0361 2253466
E-mail: BV.Erfurt@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 0361 2236-439

Hamburg

Sachsenstraße 18 · 20097 Hamburg
Phone: 040 23656-0 · Fax: 040 2369439
E-mail: BV.Hamburg@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 040 23656-165

Ludwigsburg

Martin-Luther-Str. 79 · 71636 Ludwigsburg
Phone: 07141 919-0 · Fax: 07141 902319
E-mail: BV.Ludwigsburg@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 07141 919-354

Mainz

Isaac-Fulda-Allee 3 · 55124 Mainz
Phone: 06131 389-0 · Fax: 06131 389-410
E-mail: BV.Mainz@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 06131 389-180

Munich

Barthstraße 20 · 80339 München
Phone: 089 50095-0 · Fax: 089 50095-111
E-mail: BV.Muenchen@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 089 50095-165

Würzburg

Riemenschneiderstr. 2 · 97072 Würzburg
Phone: 0931 7943-0 · Fax: 0931 7842-200
E-mail: BV.Wuerzburg@vbg.de
Seminar bookings:
Phone: 0931 7943-407

● VBG academies

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For contribution matters:

Phone: 040 5146-2940

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