

impact hr user's guide

DSE set-up

A well-arranged workstation and good posture are essential to prevent discomfort, fatigue, musculoskeletal injuries and work-related upper limb disorders as well as to promote long-term health and productivity. This guide will help you set up your DSE correctly, whether you work in an office, at home, or in another location.

Setting up your workstation

A. Chair

- Adjust your chair so your feet rest flat on the floor (or on a footrest if necessary).
- Your knees should be at roughly a 90° angle, with thighs approximately horizontal.
- Adjust to support the lower back's natural curve with firm, comfortable lumbar support.
- Ensure armrests do not prevent you from sitting close enough to the desk.
- The chair should be stable, typically with five castors for smooth movement.

B. Desk and Work Surface

- Adjust so that your elbows are level with, or slightly above, the desk surface when typing.
- Keep sufficient clear space under the desk for your legs to move freely.
- Place frequently used items within easy reach to avoid stretching.
- Use a document holder positioned at the same height and distance as the screen to reduce neck strain.

C. Screen

- The top of the screen should be at or just below eye level.
- Position the screen roughly at arm's length (50–70 cm), adjusting for comfort.
- Tilt the screen slightly backward for a comfortable viewing angle.
- Ensure text and images are sharp, adjusting brightness and contrast as needed.
- Keep the screen clean and free from dust or fingerprints.



D. Keyboard and Mouse

- Keep the keyboard directly in front of you, leaving about 10 cm between its front edge and the desk edge.
- Use or flatten keyboard feet depending on wrist comfort.
- Keep shoulders relaxed, elbows by your side, wrists straight, and fingers lightly resting on keys.
- Position the mouse close to the keyboard and keep your wrist straight and arm relaxed.
- Move the mouse using your whole arm rather than just the wrist.

E. Lighting and Glare

- Position the screen side-on to windows, not directly facing or backing them.
- Use blinds or curtains to reduce glare and reflections.
- Adjust lighting or use a task lamp if additional light is needed, avoiding reflections.
- Balance screen brightness with surrounding light.

F. Environment

- Maintain a comfortable temperature and airflow.
- Keep the area tidy to avoid cable hazards.
- Ensure sufficient space to move and change posture.
- Reduce background noise where possible.

Working posture and healthy habits

A. Sitting Posture

- Sit back into the chair with your lower back supported.
- Keep shoulders relaxed and elbows close to your body.
- Head should be balanced — avoid leaning forward for long periods.
- Keep feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.

B. Movement and Breaks

- Change position regularly — shift weight, stretch, or stand briefly.
- Take short, frequent breaks (30–60 seconds every 20–30 minutes).
- Incorporate task variation to help change position.
- Use longer rest breaks (5–10 minutes every hour or two).



C. Eyes and Vision

- Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds (20-20-20 rule).
- Blink frequently to prevent eye dryness.
- Report any persistent eye strain or headaches.
- Request an eye and eyesight test if you regularly use DSE.

Common signs of inadequate set-up

- Tingling or numbness in fingers, hands, or arms.
- Neck, shoulder, or back pain.
- Tired, itchy, or sore eyes.
- Frequent headaches.
- General fatigue or difficulty focusing at the screen.

Remember

Review your setup when you move workstation, change equipment, or experience discomfort.

Remember

Ensure hybrid or home working arrangements meet the same standards as office-based work.

Your next step to safer, smarter workplaces

For tailored advice, call **0330 236 9866** or email hello@impacthr.co.uk. Alternatively, explore more advice in the Impact Hub at [impacthr.co.uk](https://www.impacthr.co.uk).