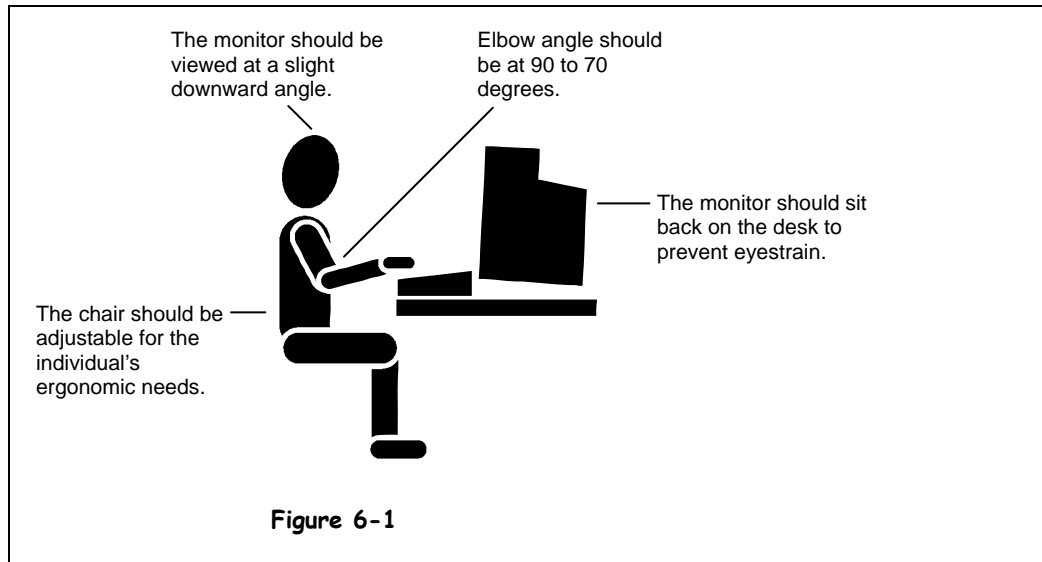


## Lesson 6-1: Ergonomics

**Figure 6-1**

A few examples of good ergonomics



### ① ECDL

Skill Set: 1.6.1.1

Req. File: None

We've all heard of ergonomics, but have probably brushed it off as old information: sit up straight, take breaks, etc. But ergonomics is more than just sitting with both feet on the floor; it is the application of scientific information concerning humans to the design of objects, systems and environment for human use. In other words, whenever something is created or designed, ergonomists want to make sure it is friendly to the way we operate. And, they want to make sure that people understand the best way to use that equipment.

So why should you care about ergonomics? In the case of computers, good practice of ergonomics keeps you healthy and injury-free, which makes long hours at the office not seem very long. Keeping you comfortable will raise your productivity and increase job satisfaction, which will make you and your boss very happy as well.

In addition to the diagram above, here are a few tips the experts have to say about good working form.

- **Work smarter, not harder:** Your eyes and body need a break from the computer just as much as your mind, because we are not designed to sit at such a close distance for a long period of time. The following is a suggested break schedule to maximize your eyes and body safety.

**Micro-Break:** This break is only for about 10 seconds and should be taken about every 10 minutes. Look far away from your terminal (at least 20 feet) and breathe and blink easily. Keep your eyes moving while looking at different distant objects. This should not interfere with your work or your concentration.

**Mini-Break:** Take this break about every hour; it should last about five minutes. Stand up and stretch. Try doing eye exercises during this break so the eyes can flex and be used in different seeing situations.

**Maxi-Break:** This could be a coffee break or lunch. The maxi-break is a “get up and move” type of break that will allow your blood to start flowing again and get you more energized. This kind of break should be taken every few hours.

- **Lighting:** Bright surrounding lights are the source of many eye strain complications. Dim your work area's lighting to reduce glare, and shield your eyes from bright light sources. Doing this will reduce competition from surrounding light sources, so your eyes can focus on light from the computer screen.
- **Seating:** Chairs should have adjustable features for the chair's height, the armrests, and the backrest. This should accommodate each individual's ergonomic needs.
- **Monitor:** The monitor should be viewed at a slight downward angle. A good reference point is if your eyes are level to the top of the screen or higher. You may also want to use a monitor filter to reduce the glare on your eyes.
- **Keyboard:** Use a responsive keyboard so that you don't have to pound the keys to type. Using a keyboard pad will also help reduce the pressure in your wrists.
- **Mouse:** Mouse mats ease the use of a mouse; mouse pads are also available on which to rest the wrist to alleviate pressure while using a mouse.
- **Feet:** A footpad or step on which to rest your feet may help individuals with short legs or in situations where the desk or chair cannot be adjusted.
- **Environment:** In addition to using your computer equipment correctly, the environment in which you work should be conducive to your human needs. The work area should be comfortable with a moderate temperature and adequate ventilation.

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 Quick Reference

### Ergonomics

- Practice good ergonomics when using the computer to prevent injury and raise production.