

### Why are laptops bad for you?

Laptops are good if you need to carry them around, but not so great if you need to sit at one all day.

Because of their compact design, the keyboards are often small, and the monitor is attached to the keyboard (a good ergonomic set up requires the screen to be at a different level to the keyboard).

### How can I set up a laptop ergonomically?

For a good ergonomic set up that will put as little strain on your body as possible there are 3 main things you should think about.

- Is your screen level with your eyes?
- Is the screen an arms length away?
- Are the keyboard and mouse placed so that your arms are parallel to the desk when using them?

### How will this help me?

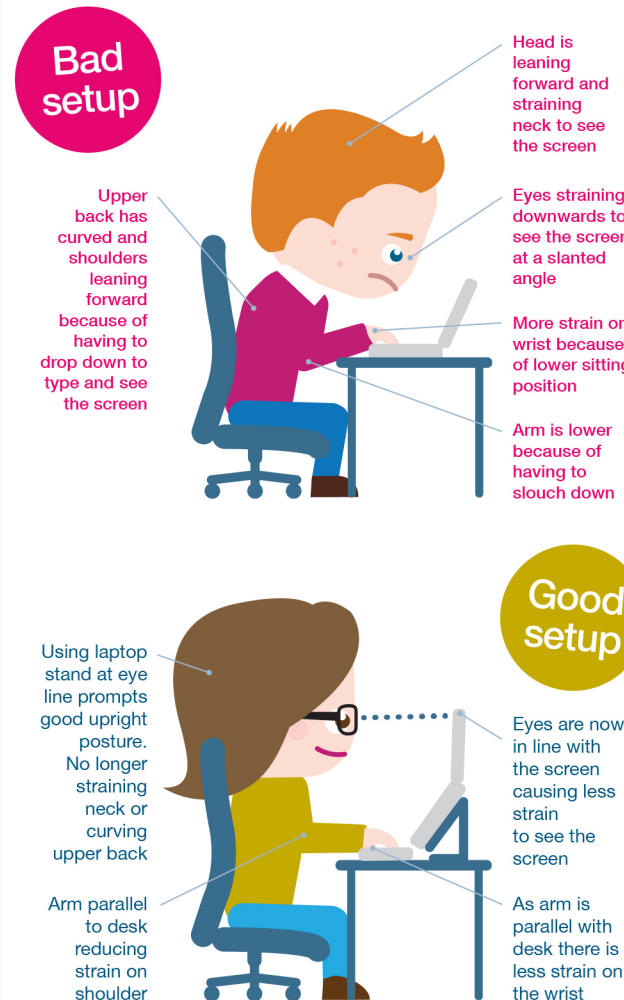
By setting your laptop up like this you will greatly reduce the strain on your body and lower your risk of repetitive strain injuries.

Having the screen at eye level will encourage you to sit up straight and prevent you from curving your spine or straining your neck, it will also lower the strain of your eyes as the screen will no longer be at an angle.

By having your keyboard and mouse correctly placed your arms should be parallel with the desk. This will take the strain off your shoulders and lower the strain on your wrists when typing.

### What is the difference between a good and bad set up?

The easiest way for us to show you the difference is by looking at these diagrams...



### What will I need?

- **A laptop stand** There are lightweight ones available for if you are on the move a lot or sturdier ones if your laptop station is likely to stay in the same place.
- **A separate keyboard and mouse** Whilst some people may get along fine with a standard separate keyboard and mouse, ergonomic keyboards and computer mice are available depending on your needs. These are designed to hold your hand in a more natural position.

### You may also wish to consider:

- **Footrest** These are needed if you are sat at the optimum height for your desk and find that your feet cannot be placed flat on the floor.
- **Support cushions** Designed to support your back.
- **Writing slopes or copy holders** These put whatever you are working on at an angle to stop you from straining your neck to look at it.

### What do I need to know when buying a laptop?

You may want to think about

- How far back the screen can be put at an angle. Is it far enough to be at the right height when it's placed on a laptop stand?
- Will you be carrying your laptop around a lot? If so, how much does it weigh?
- Will you need a laptop bag? The best ones are designed to be worn as a backpack.

### Extra tips

- ✓ Try to make the most of touch typing and try to learn as many short cuts on your keyboard as you can!
- ✓ Take regular breaks from your desk, even if it's just for a walk around the office!
- ✓ Have a look at our guide 'setting up your workstation' for more tips on improving how you sit at a desk.