

PLANNING YOUR HOME OFFICE

Whether you work from home fulltime or a few hours a week, setting up your home office properly is important for your comfort and productivity. Below are helpful tips on designing your home office space and purchasing office furniture.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

The first step in setting up your home office is determining your office requirements. To establish your office needs answer the following questions:

What type of work you will be doing? Make a list of your activities (ie. computer work, reading, writing, etc.) and note how much time you spend on each task. Then rank the importance of each activity in terms of time spent doing them and frequency of performance.

How much work area do you need? Consider how you like to work and the type of materials you use. Make a list of materials you need for reference. Next determine how much desk space you require.

How much storage do you need? Make a list of materials you need to store. Determine the type and the amount of storage you require.

How should your workstation be laid out? Use your ranking of work activities and consider how you work to determine what shape of desk (rectangular, L-shape or U-shape) best supports your work. Sketch out the shape of the desk and the location of equipment and materials. Keep in mind that all equipment and materials you use frequently should be within an easy reach. Avoid twisting and stretching.

Where should your desk be located within the office space? Before setting up your furniture and equipment, determine the best location for your workstation within the room. Take the following into consideration:

- Is the room an adequate size for an office?
- Are there sufficient power & phone outlets?
- How will you get to power and phone outlets?
- Avoid obstacles such as radiator and vents.
- Will light from the window cause glare on the computer monitor or desk surface? Are there blinds on the windows to control glare?
- Is the lighting in the room adequate? Do you need a task light?

Sketch out the room layout on a grid to help you visualize the space. Planning the office space before you move everything in will save you a lot of time, effort and frustration.

SELECTING OFFICE FURNITURE

Selecting the right furniture is essential for ensuring a comfortable office. Below are some things to look for when buying home office furniture.

The Chair

- Pneumatic seat height adjustment;
- The lumbar support should comfortably support the small of your back;
- Appropriate seat depth. You should be able to place your fist between the back of your calf & the front edge of the seat pan;
- Backrest angle adjustment and lock;
- Adjustable armrests;
- Seat pan tilt;
- Easy to operate controls;
- Five star base for stability;
- Appropriate castors for the floor surface;
- Covering should be breathable, and non-slip.



The Desk

- The desk surface should be at or slightly above sitting elbow level;
- You should be able to attach an adjustable keyboard tray to the desk, if required;
- Work surface size and configuration should support your work methods and materials;
- The desk must support the weight of your computer equipment without any deflection in the surface;
- Cable management features are beneficial;
- Can additional furniture pieces be added?
- The desk must be stable and free of sharp corners;
- Free of Knee-banging hazards.

Keyboard Tray

- Height adjustment range of 4-6 inches;
- Supports the mouse and keyboard at the same level;
- Provides adequate mousing surface;
- Removable, cushioned wrist rest;
- Adequate leg clearance under the tray.

Your office furniture and equipment are a system. Make sure the desk, chair, keyboard tray, and computer equipment interface well with each other.