



BACK SUPPORT

Ergonomics Tips to Improve Your Support Your Back in Your Home Office

If you are telecommuting, it may be a new practice for you or something you do frequently. Nonetheless, it's important to continue to practice good ergonomics! Here are some ways to improve back posture in your home office. These tips are geared to help you sit with more neutral supported seated postures using the simple items that you have at home.

Back & Lumbar Support

Sometimes a back cushion or back pillow can provide you with needed support to put you in a more neutral position and aid in providing you with more comfort when seated.

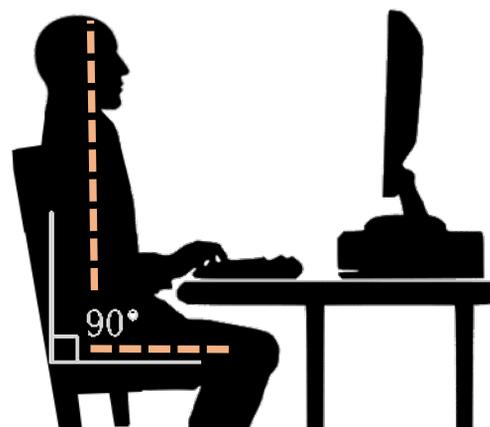
How do I know if I need more support? First, listen to your body. If you are not comfortable in your chair, sitting in a slumped position or have aches after working at home all day... you may need some added support. Sitting with bad posture is a common way to sit, but it is not desirable for prolonged periods! If done for long durations, you may feel it in the low back, upper back and neck and there is something you can do.

Keeping your lumbar curve supported is key. If so, there are several things that can help. If there is limited or no lumbar support/no back support on your home-based chair, a lumbar support pillow or the seat's backrest contour should provide this support.

Using this simple technique helps support the pelvis and provides balance for the spinal column.

Your buttocks should be pressed against the back of your chair, and there should be a soft item (e.g., cushion or towel) that causes your lower back to arch slightly so that you **avoid slumping forward**.

This **support is essential to minimize the load (strain) on your back**. Never slump or slouch in your chair, as this places extra stress on your spine and lumbar discs. Additionally, this supports the upper body, easing neck tensions and offering relief for vertebral discs.



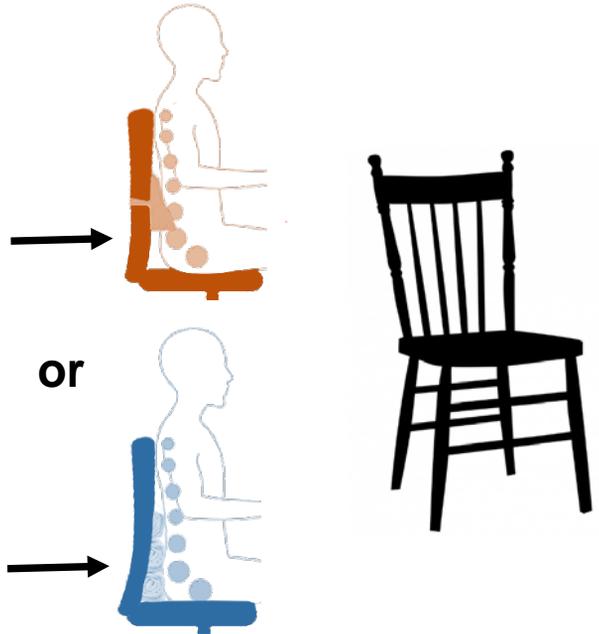
Chair Support

Have an **office chair**? If you are working using an office chair, it may have built in lumbar support. If you need assistance adjusting it, please contact ehsergo@ucsd.edu.

Working on an **alternate chair**? Most dining room chairs are not meant for long-term seating. If you are working on an alternate style chair (e.g., dining room or side chair), here are some simple tips for you:

Option 1: Traditional Backrest:

If you have a traditional backrest, you can position it or attach it to your chair back per the manufacturer's instructions. Make sure you adjust it to provide maximum lumbar support. Remember to adjust it regularly to assure continued fit and support.



Option 2: Non-traditional Backrest

Consider using a rolled-up towel to provide you with added lumbar support. This can be used if you are working in a chair or sofa and do not have enough back support.

How to Make Your Towel Lumbar Roll

1. Take your towel and open it up and lay it flat on a surface.
2. Fold the towel in half.
3. Roll the towel lengthwise, smoothing out the wrinkles as you go. If left in, the wrinkles could be uncomfortable against your back.
4. Once the towel is rolled, test it out. Place the roll up against the chair back right where you need support.
5. Make sure your lower back/hips are in contact with the "lumbar roll". Leave no space between chair and back!
6. Adjust to your comfort level.
7. Depending upon towel size, you may need to add an extra roll.



Towel rolls with either traditional or non-traditional back and lumbar support must keep the torso fully rested against the backrest when seated. **Shoulder blades must be in contact with backrest** or it is not providing you with the support you need.

Contact ehsergo@ucsd.edu for more information or assistance.