Avoid sustained static postures. Remember that even appropriate postures become inappropriate when maintained for too long.

G1
Move the chair close to the desk and sit back on the seat. Adjust the chair back so that the upper body is relaxed and supported. Raise the chair seat so that, with the upper arms vertical, the elbows are level with or just above the desk.

B1
Sitting with the chair too low and too far from the desk encourages a slouched posture with no support from the chair back. The head is tilted forward. Feet are hooked around the chair base restricting blood circulation in the legs. Shoulders may be hunched.

G2
Set the chair position and height as described in G1 above. Use a foot rest if the feet do not touch the ground. Height-adjustable chair arms provide additional support for the upper body when not keying. If the armrests restrict desk access, consider removing them altogether.

B2
Shorter people often set the chair height so that their feet are firmly on the floor. If this is too low for the desk, it is likely to result in arms stretched forwards (or sideways) and/or shoulder lifting. This causes undue muscle tension.

G3a
TOUCH TYPISTS can raise the monitor so that the visible screen top is just below eye level. Any document holder should be at screen height and in the same focal plane to minimise head twisting and lifting. COPY TYPISTS may prefer the screen to one side and the document holder directly in front.

B3
If the monitor is set too low, this encourages the operator to tilt the head downwards. As a result, the whole body tends to lean forward, moving away from the support of the chair back and encouraging slouching.

G3b
"HUNT AND PECK" TYPISTS who need to look at the keyboard may want to position the monitor lower to minimise "nodding" between the two. The document holder should be placed between the monitor and keyboard to avoid twisting.

You will not be able to benefit from these instructions unless you know how to adjust your chair. If you are unfamiliar with the controls, consult your Health & Safety Advisor or chair supplier.
These drawings illustrate the most common posture problems and solutions to them using standard rectangular workstations. They are for guidance only and will suit the majority of situations. The products illustrated are representative rather than definitive (foot rests, for example, will not always be necessary). Corner or shaped desks may require slightly different configurations. Best practice will depend upon the needs of the individual and the nature of the activities involved.

Laptop Users - Special Notes

A separate keyboard and mouse will make a significant improvement to layout flexibility. By using one of the proprietary laptop stands to tilt the computer, it is also possible to raise the screen to an acceptable height and viewing distance.

Laptop use is a major source of musculo-skeletal problems. Using a laptop on its own for any length of time will inevitably cause poor posture which in turn is likely to lead to head, neck and/or back pain.