

# Ergonomics Tips for Laptop Users

## Poor Laptop Setup



One of the main reasons laptop computer users have to work in an awkward posture is that the keyboard and monitor are part of the laptop. This results in either the monitor being too low or the keyboard being too high. Using an external keyboard to plug into the laptop is probably the easiest solution to this problem. The laptop can then be placed on a riser so the top of the screen is at eye level. If the user wears bifocal or progressive lenses and uses the bottom portion of the lenses, the monitor should be lowered 1–2 inches below eye level.

## Ideal Laptop Setup



Frequent laptop computer users should use a docking station. Key components of this setup include:

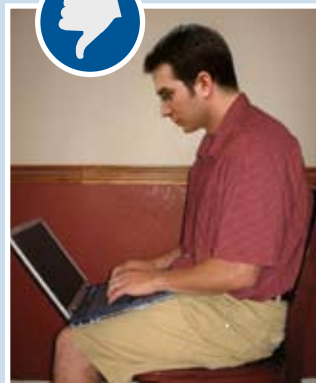
- **Docking station**—A standard keyboard, mouse, and monitor can be plugged into this device. When the laptop is docked, the user can use the standard components instead of the ones that are part of the laptop.
- **Detachable keyboard and mouse**—A standard, full-sized keyboard that can be easily adjusted to the proper height, distance, and angle, along with a stand-alone mouse or trackball.
- **Stand-alone monitor or laptop stand**—A standard, full-sized monitor that can be adjusted to the proper height, distance, and angle or a laptop stand as shown above.

## External Input Device



To avoid using an awkward laptop touch pad or mini-trackball, plug an external mouse or other input device into the laptop. Most laptop touch pads or trackballs are not meant to be used for long periods of time. If using a laptop on a regular basis for more than a few hours per shift, an external mouse or other input device should be considered to avoid awkward wrist and hand positions.

## Monitor Location



If you're on the road and do not have access to a docking station, try using a desk and an adjustable-height chair that allow your elbows to be at the same height as the keyboard. If a desk is not available and you have to place the computer on your lap as shown above, use a couple of books or pillows to raise the laptop's height. Since working on a laptop can often cause you to be in an awkward position, it's even more important to alternate your position frequently and stretch.

**Questions?** Contact your safety consultant at 303-361-4000 or 1-800-873-7242.

