

# Creating an Empowered Home Office



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**Eileen Levitan**

*Founder, Lead Designer and  
Certified Ergonomic Office Evaluator*

**SCORE**   
FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR BUSINESS

| Bucks County



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# A Little About Me



**Eileen Levitan, COEE**



**Born in Edinburgh, Scotland**



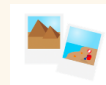
**Building houses since I first picked up wood blocks**



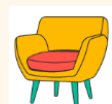
**Hobbies were drawing floor plans, visiting model homes, and writing stories**



**Majored in English Literature**



**First career as photo editor**



**Furniture sales / design for 18 years**



**Pandemic brought a new direction**



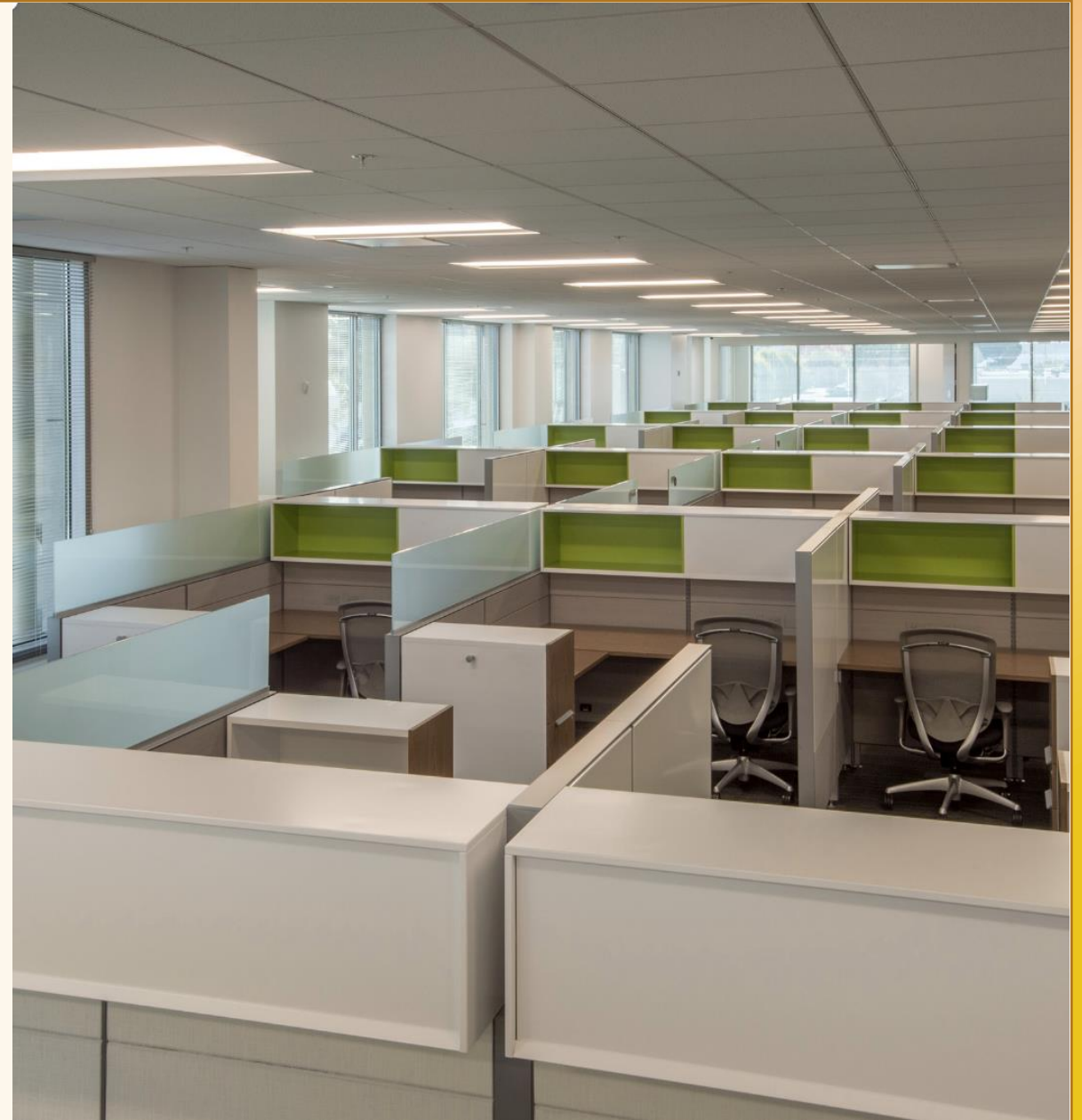
**Joy = hearing people say I LOVE IT!**



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# WFH vs The Office

- **Business owners free to create an office tailored to our preferences**
- **Opportunity to create a space that promotes happiness, health, and productivity**
- **Goal to empower you to make your home office all it can be**





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# **A successful home office will:**

- **Enable concentration (minimize distractions)**
- **Provide physical comfort**
- **Create a sense of effectiveness & well-being**
- **Make you want to be there!**



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# Minimizing Distractions

**What challenges your  
ability to focus?**



# #1 Challenge: Interruptions by family\*

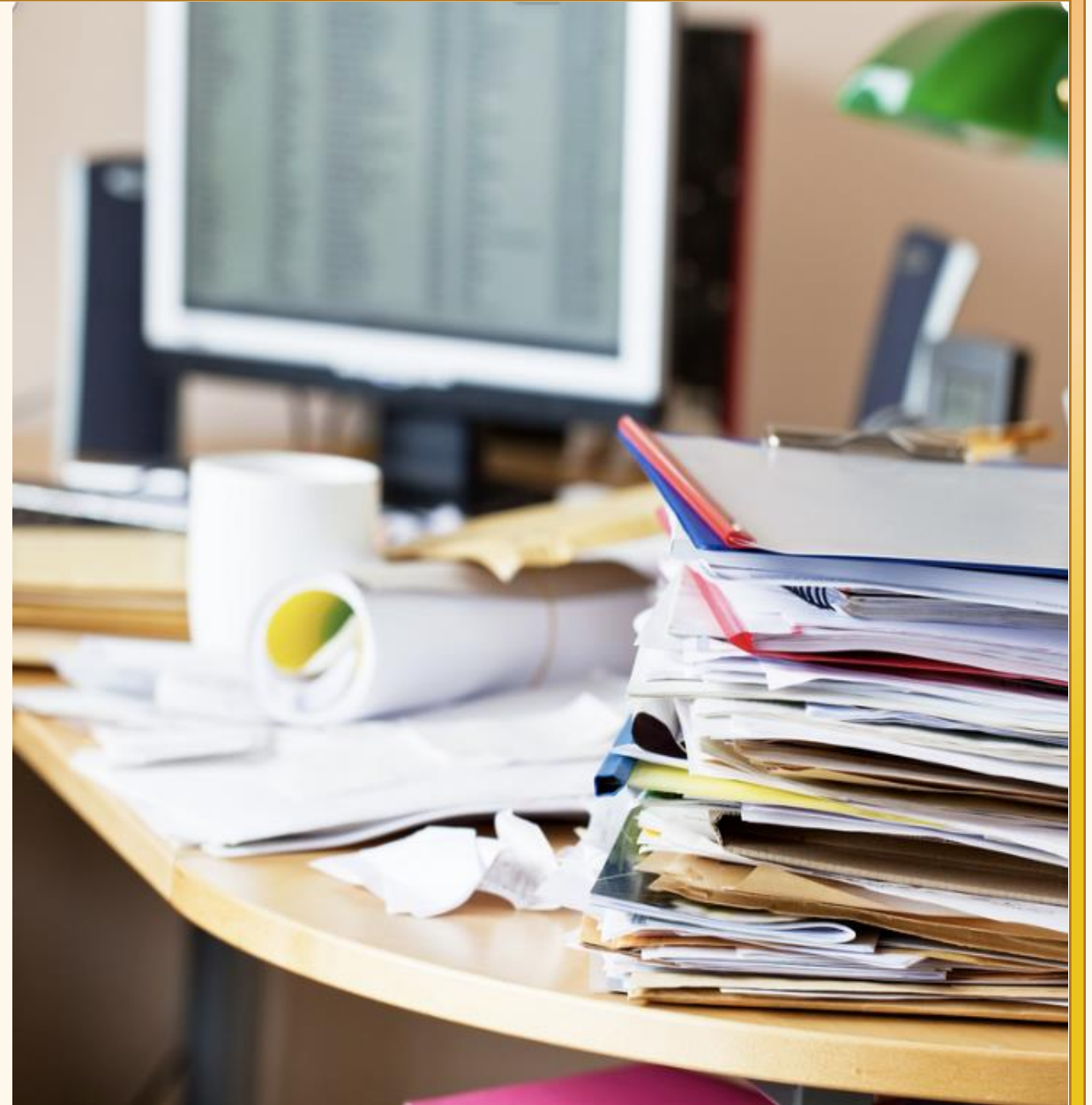
\*And by that they mean kids!



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## Disorganization

- **Is dispiriting**
- **Stifles productivity**
- **Decreases morale and engagement**
- **Can harm client relations**
- **Can destroy brand**





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## Other Distractions:

- Household chores
- Pets
- Temperature
- Noise
- Social media, email, phone calls

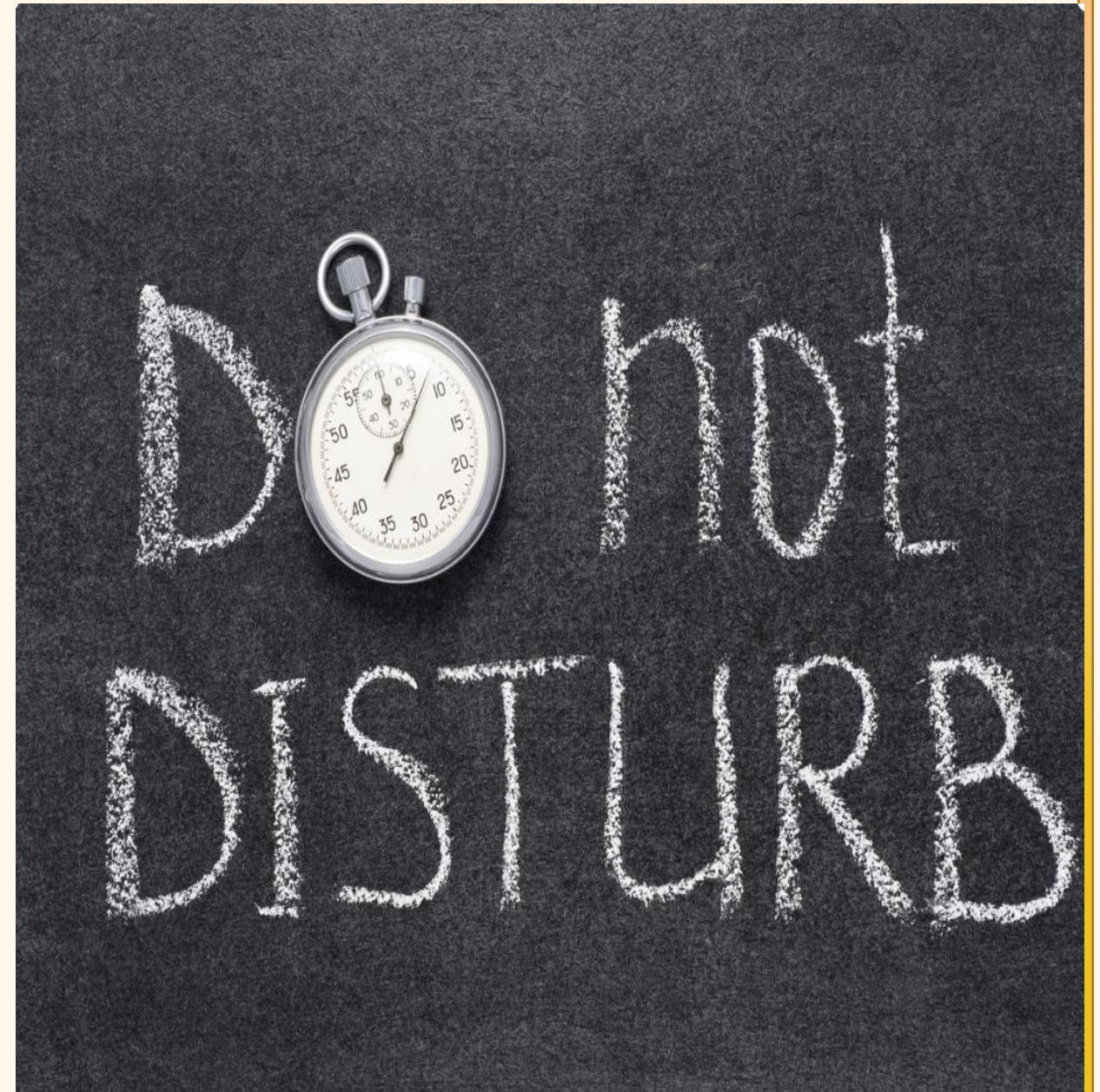




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## Set Your Boundaries

- **Keep normal business hours**
- **OR base hours on schedule determined by family needs**
- **Get noise cancelling headphones**
- **Put up a Do Not Disturb sign**
- **Have a designated office space!**





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## **Ideally, Designate a Room with a Door**

**Unfortunately, not everyone  
has a room available for a  
home office.**



Source: Hillsdale Interior Designers & Decorators Jennifer Pacca Interiors



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## Re-envision a Storage Space or Corner



Source: The Spruce/  
Laurel and Wolf



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# Convert a Closet



Source: The Family Handyman



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# Repurpose an Armoire or Cabinet



Source: Fotor.com



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# Tuck An Office Under a Staircase

[www.shelterness.com](http://www.shelterness.com)





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## Other Ideas:

- Room divider (or bookcase)
- Folding screen
- Study carrel
- Think outside the box!





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**A small space can do.  
Just make it an area  
designated  
specifically for work.**





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# Ergonomics

An applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely





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## **Musculoskeletal Disorders**

**Study by health & safety consultants Arinite showed that**

- **In 2019, 1.4% of MSD cases were connected to work**
- **In 2020, that number rose to 37.7%**
- **Keyboard work was 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of MSDs, behind heavy lifting and materials manipulation**

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/working-from-home-four-in-five-develop-musculoskeletal-pain/>





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**Don't Wait for Pain to  
Take This Seriously**

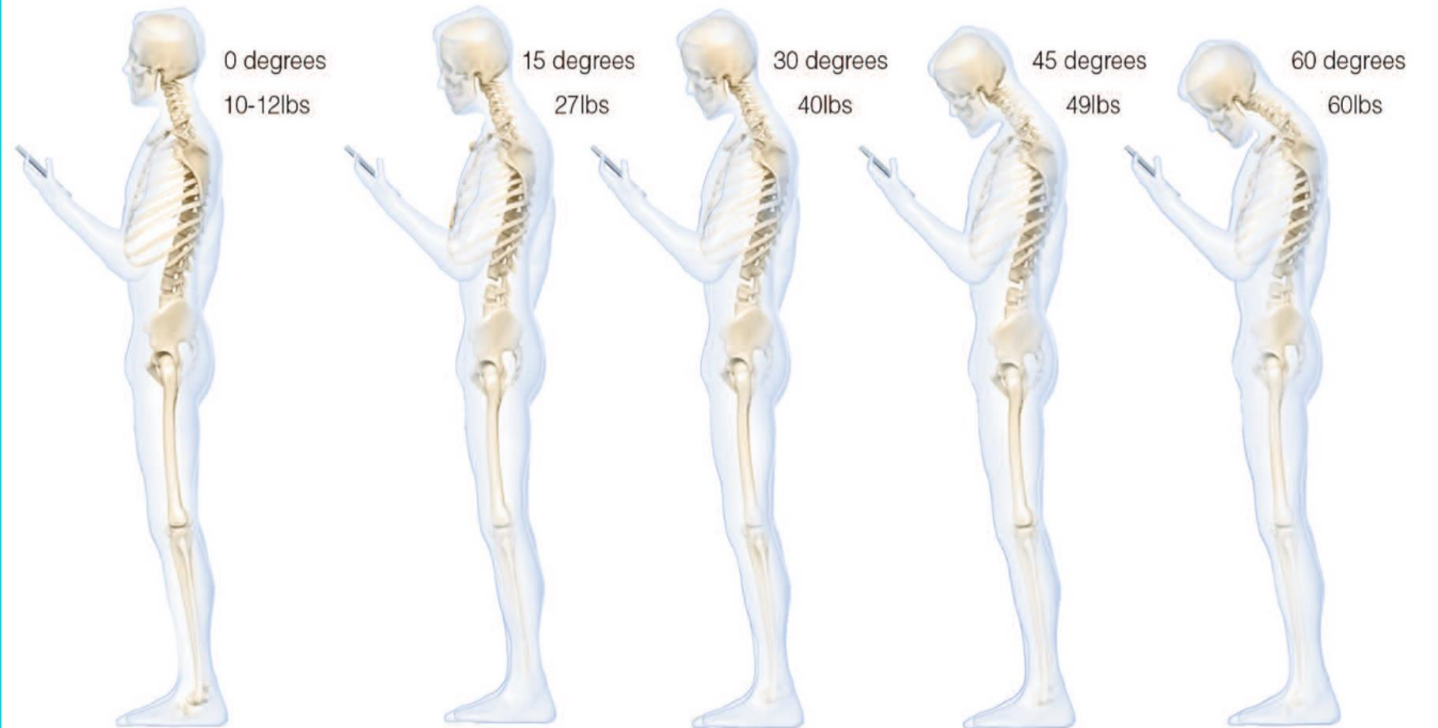




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## Study of cellphone use

- The head weighs 10-12 lbs
- At 15 degrees, 27 lbs pressure
- 30 degrees, 40 lbs pressure
- 45 degrees, 49 lbs pressure
- 60 degrees, 60 lbs pressure



Neutral	15 °	30°	45 °	60 °
10-12lbs.	27lbs.	40lbs.	49lbs.	60lbs.

Hansraj (2014). Assessment of Stresses in the Cervical Spine. Surgical Technology International.



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# Posture Can Change Your Sense of Powerfulness



[https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are)



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# Workstation Posture

- Desk
- Monitor
- Keyboard & mouse





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**Standard desk 29-30” high**

**The height of modern desks  
has nothing to do  
with the human body.**





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**That height fits a  
6'4" male.**

**Which is 2% of the  
population.**

**I'm 6'4"**

**And I'm not!**



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# Your Desk Chair

## Should Be Adjustable

- Adjustable height
- Adjustable seat depth
- Lumbar support
- Adjustable arm rests (up & down)
- Easy back tilt





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**When you are seated, your elbows should be even with the top of the desk.**





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**What happens when we raise chair to get your elbows even with the top of the desk?**

***Dangling legs!***

- **Compression at backs of knees**
- **Cuts off circulation to legs and feet**
- **Need to add a footrest**

# Office Chairs



Source: shortnsure.com



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## 90 Degree Angle Rule:

### STRAIGHT:

- Neck
- Wrists

### AT RIGHT ANGLES:

- Elbows
- Hips
- Knees
- Ankles





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## Prolonged Sitting:

- **Increases spinal disc pressure & can contribute to premature disc degeneration**
- **Causes fat-burning enzymes to shut down, resulting in weight gain, lower metabolism, and lower levels of good cholesterol**
- **Lowers demand of circulatory system, resulting in slow down of heart activity & blood flow, which accelerates fatigue**

Humanscale Consulting





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# Movement is Key!

## The 20/8/2 Rule:

*Every 30 minutes*

- Sit for 20
- Stand for 8
- Get up and move for 2

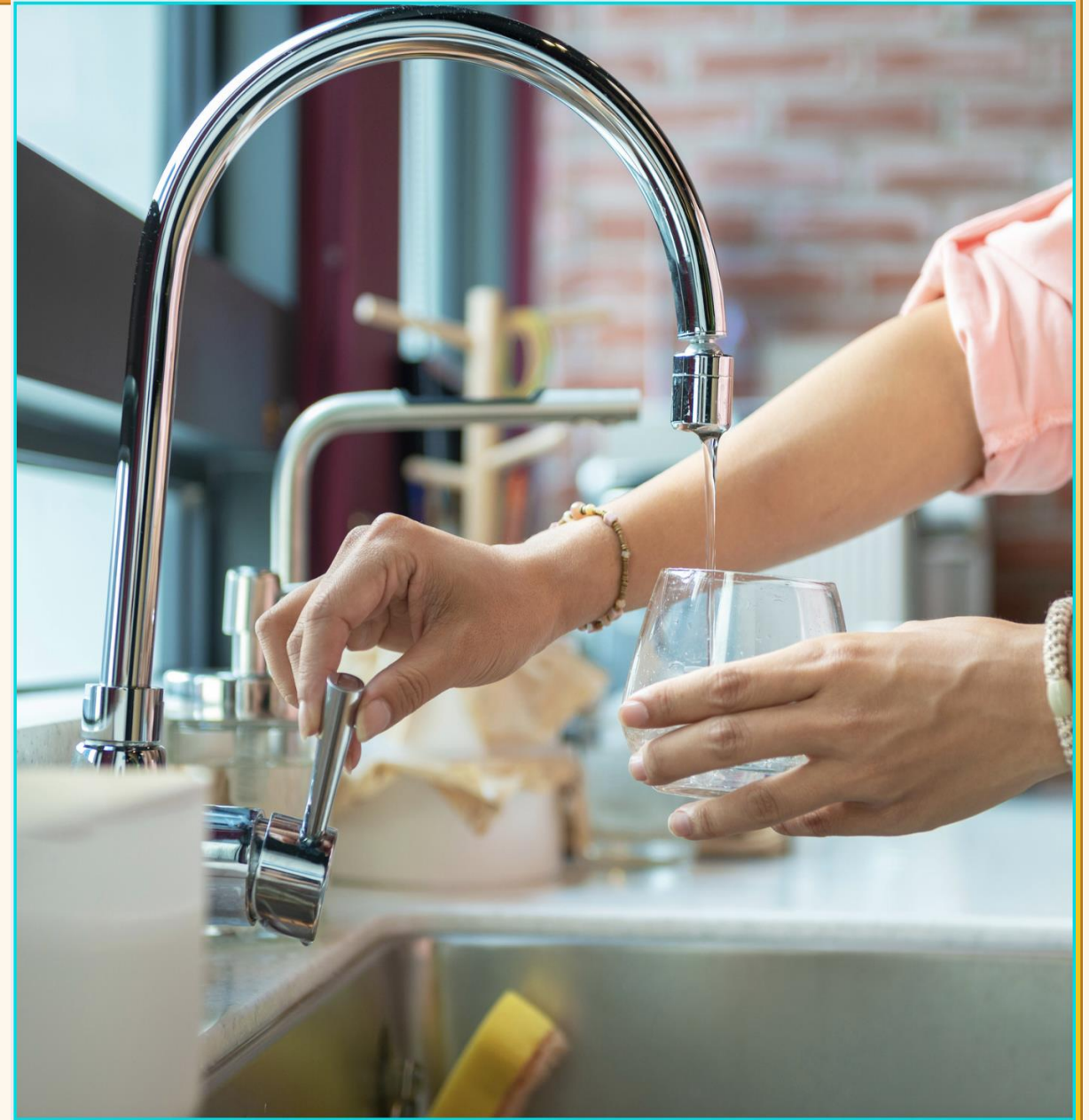




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## Ways to Add Movement

- **Build inefficiencies into your day**
- **Pace while talking on the phone**
- **Set a timer**
- **Move your printer to another room**





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# The Standing (or Sit/Stand) Desk





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## Standing Desk Converter

Turn your existing desk into  
a sit/stand setup

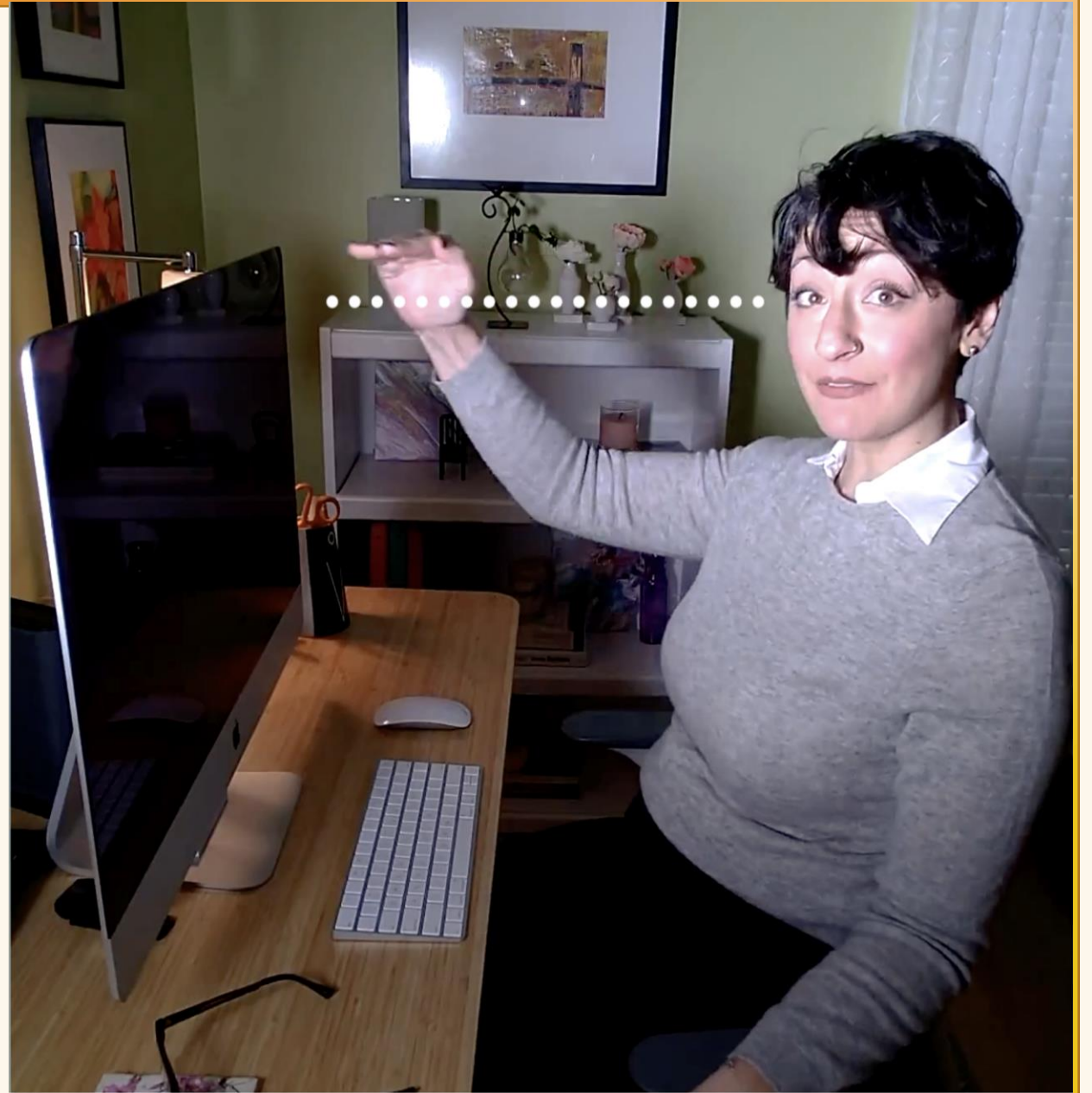




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# Your Monitor

- **Raise monitor so that top is at or slightly below eye level**
- **Push monitor back so that it is arms-length away (about 20"), more for a larger screen**
- **Your eyes should look slightly down when viewing the middle of the screen**
- **Tilt the monitor back 10-20 degrees**
- **Bifocals & Progressives need monitor to be lowered**



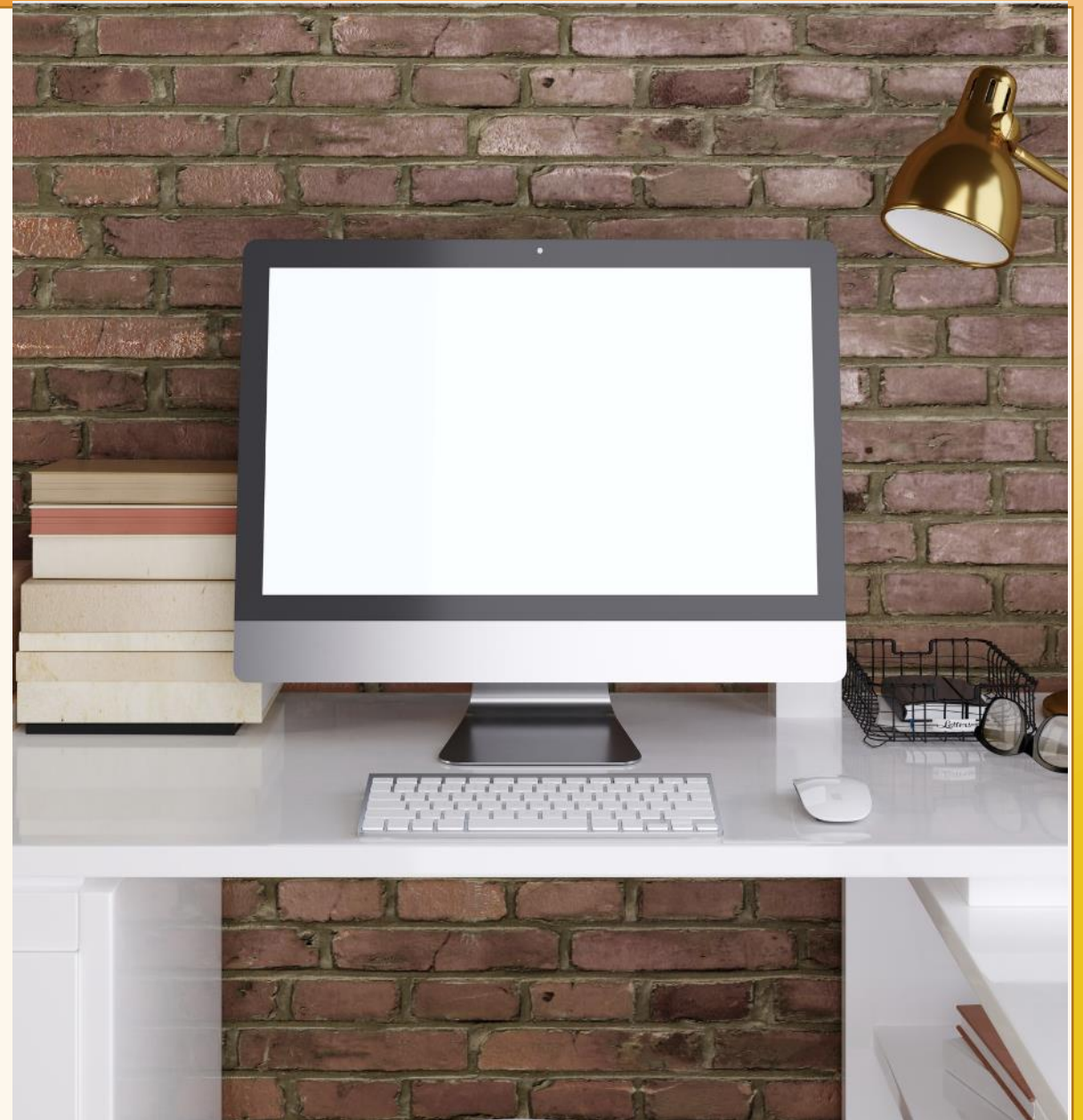


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# Your Keyboard

- Bring keyboard as close to lap as possible
- Keep keyboard flat (lower angle tabs)
- Maintain arms and elbows at sides while typing\* with your shoulders relaxed

\*Armrests are called “arm rests” for a reason. Only use the while resting.

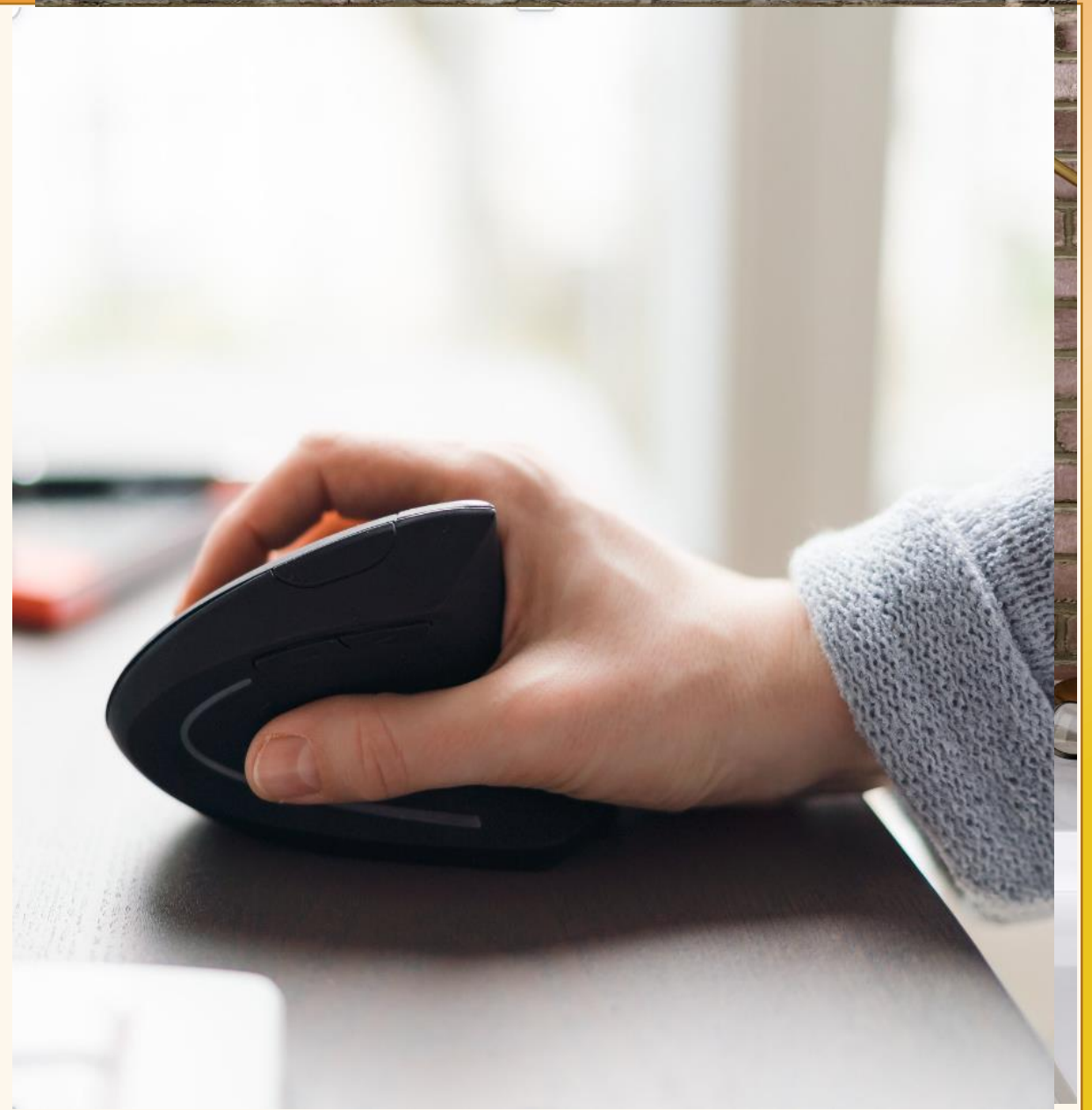




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## Your Mouse

- Handshake position best
- Palm down overworks muscles
- Consider switching hands
- Vertical mouse for correct posture
- Cannot switch hands with vertical mouse
- Some need to be sized for the hand





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## What About Laptops?

Some bad news here:

- You can *never* get correct, neutral posture from a laptop alone.
- Must separate hands and eyes
- Need a laptop riser (aka a “kickstand”)
- Need a wireless keyboard & mouse

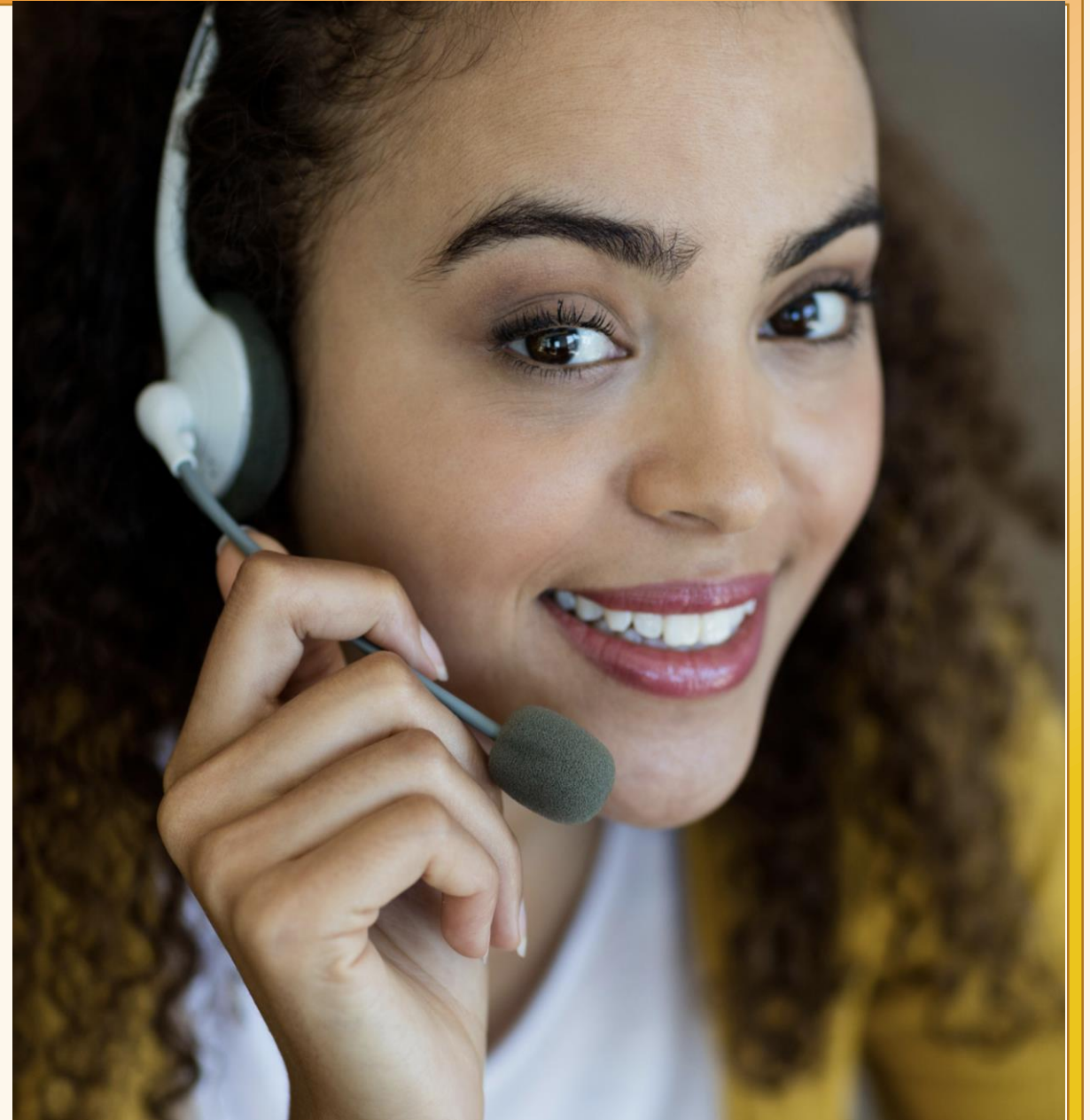




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## Your Phone

- **Crunching phone between neck and shoulder can lead to problems.**
- **For frequent phone use, better to get a headset.**





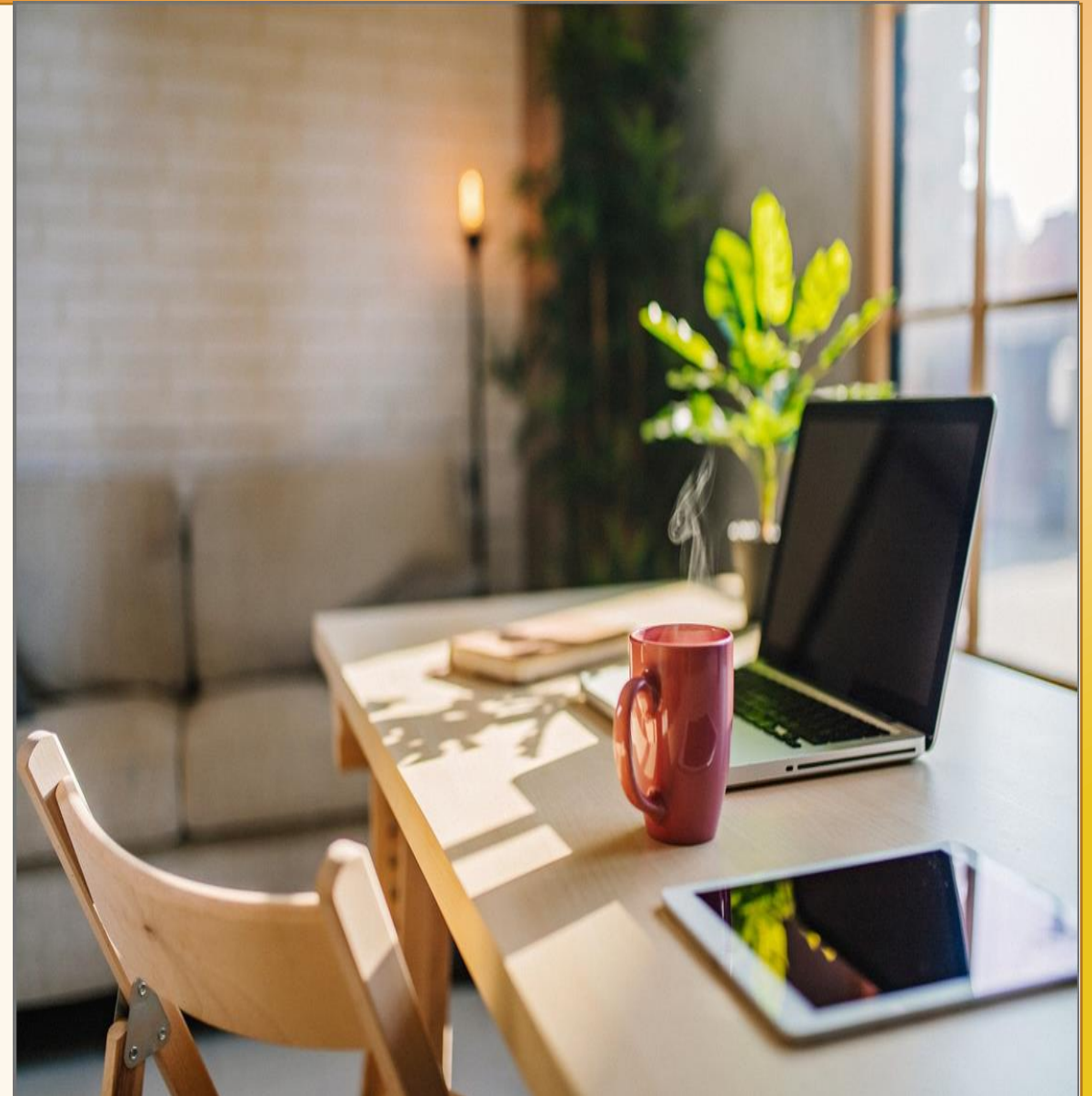
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# Your Lighting

## Natural light beneficial

- 51% drop in incidence of eyestrain
- 63% drop in incidence of headaches
- 56% reduction in drowsiness

Harvard Business Review 09/03/2018





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## The 20/20/20 Rule

- Every 20 minutes
- Look at something 20 feet away
- For 20 seconds





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- **Enable concentration (minimize distractions)**
- **Provide physical comfort**
- **Create a sense of effectiveness & well-being**
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# Color Affects Mood

## Cool Colors



## Warm Colors





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# Keep Things Neutral





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**Or "Pop" Some  
Exciting Color**



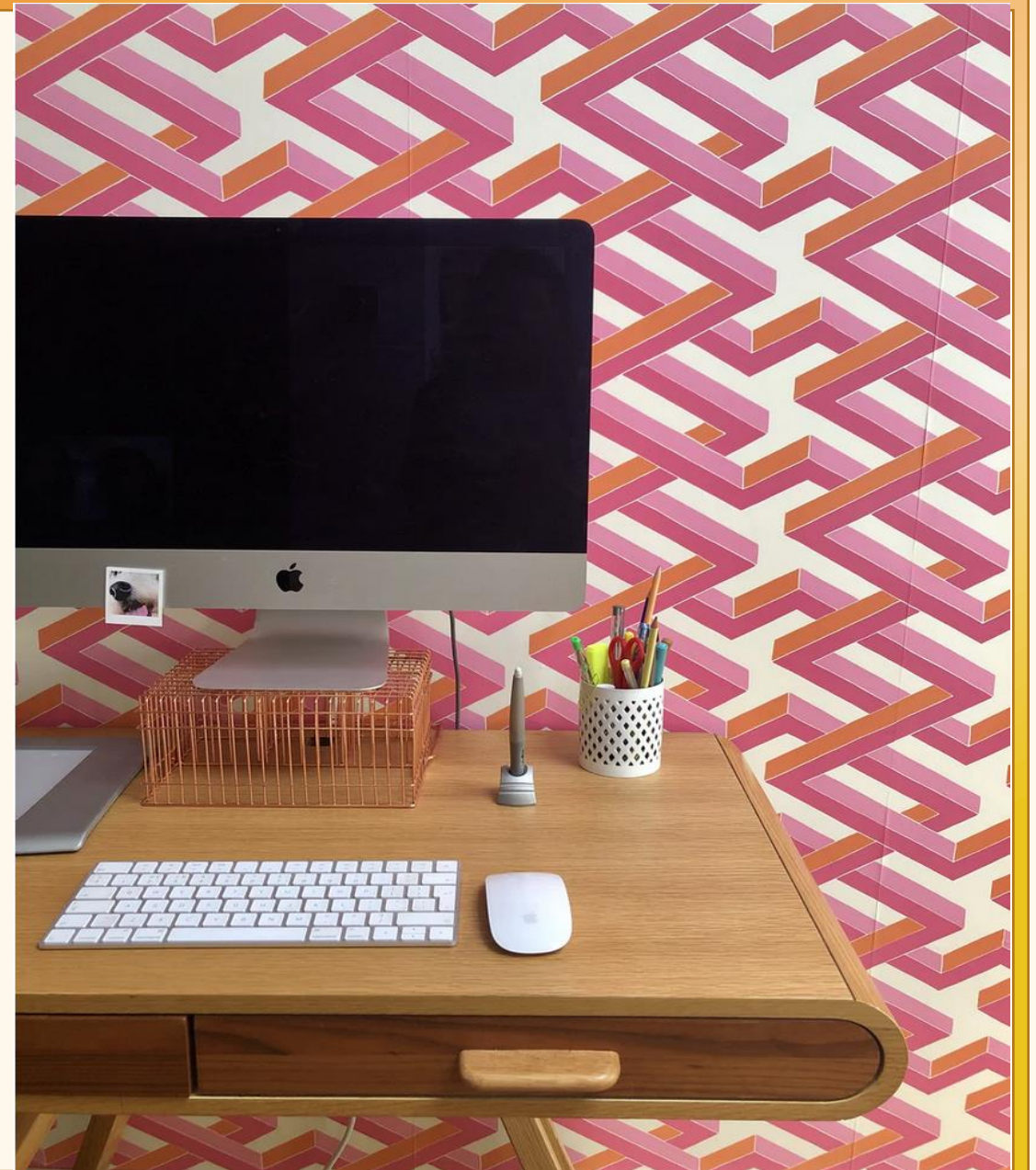
Photo by [Yehleen gaffney](#) on [Unsplash](#)



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## Aesthetics & Personalization

- Textures
- Plants and/or flowers
- Wallpaper
- Rugs
- Decorative items
- Art, photographs





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# Make Your Space Represent You



Photo by [Paige Cody](#) on [Unsplash](#)



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## TAKEAWAYS

- Designate a space
- Set boundaries
- Prioritize your desk chair!
- Move! A lot!
- Make your space personal and appealing



Unsplash/collovehome



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**Feeling happier,  
healthier and more  
productive at work can  
effect the bottom line...**





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**...and can make you  
more present and  
effective in the other  
areas of your life.**





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# Here's how we can help:

- Design office setup in any room in your home
- Floor planning – maximizing your space
- Furniture, rugs, lighting & accessory selection
- Basic ergonomic evaluations & recommendations
- Window treatment design
- In-home or Zoom consultations

<https://workspacehomeofficedesigns.com>



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**Call for a free 20-  
minute consultation:**

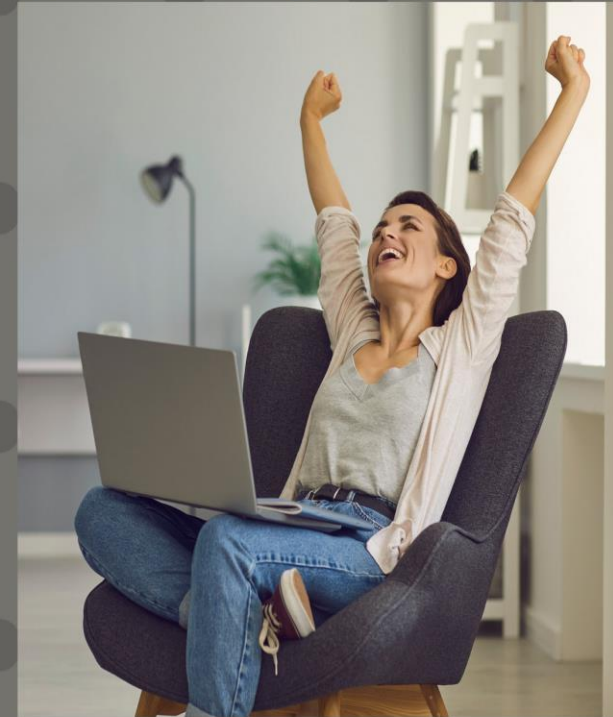
**215-516-6633**

<https://workspacehomeofficedesigns.com>

[info@workspacehomeofficedesigns.com](mailto:info@workspacehomeofficedesigns.com)



**On my way to a great home office!**



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*Home office to whole home, we make it simple!*