Computer Safety and Health Basics

Safety and health issues when using computers affect the operator of the equipment, other persons in the environment, and the equipment itself.

Electrical Equipment

1. Do not unplug equipment by pulling on the electrical cord. Instead, grasp the plug at the outlet and remove it.
2. Do not stretch electrical cords across an aisle where someone might trip over them.
3. Avoid food and beverages near equipment where a spill might result in an electrical short.
4. Do not attempt to remove the cover of equipment for any reason while the power is turned on.
5. Do not attempt to repair equipment while it is plugged in. To avoid damage, most repairs should be done by an authorized service technician or knowledgeable expert.
6. Always turn the power off when finished using equipment.
7. Do not overload extension cords.
8. Follow manufacturer recommendations for safe use.
9. Replace frayed electrical cords immediately.

Computers

1. To prevent overheating, avoid blocking air vents.
2. Position keyboards to prevent bumping or dropping them off the work surface.
3. Take care not to spill food or liquid on or in any computer component. If you do, turn off the computer immediately; unplug it; and notify your instructor before cleaning up the spill or turning on the equipment.
4. Avoid jostling computer if it becomes necessary to move it.
5. Do NOT attempt to open or repair any part of the computer or monitor unless directed to do so by your instructor.

Monitors

1. Most manufacturers advise repair by authorized service technicians only.
2. Adjust brightness and focus for comfortable viewing.
3. Reposition the monitor to avoid glare on the monitor screen or use glare visors
4. Do not leave fingerprints on the screen. Keep the screen clear of dust. Only use a soft cloth for cleaning the screen.

Magnetic Media

Protect the CDs and disks your media is stored on.
1. Store software installation disks and CDs in a safe place.
2. Protect personal data disks and CDs. Make backup copies of critical files.
3. Keep disks and CDs away from extreme hot or cold temperatures. Do not leave disks in a car during very hot or cold weather.
4. Keep magnetic media away from magnetic fields such as transformers and magnets.

Health concerns

Improper body position or equipment arrangement can lead to various health effects, from headaches, to joint pain and carpal tunnel syndrome. You may have little control over the position of equipment in school. However, proper body position can increase comfort during periods of long computer use.

Reduce stress and strain with a body position in which your joints are naturally aligned.

1. Your back should be fully supported when sitting.
2. Your feet should be fully supported flat on the floor or on a footrest.
3. Your thighs and hips should be parallel to the floor.
4. Your knees should be at the same height as your hips and your feet slightly forward.
5. Elbows should be close to the body and positioned in a 90-degree or slightly more angle.
6. Your shoulders should be relaxed and your arms should hang naturally.
7. Your hands, wrists, and forearms should be straight and parallel to the floor.
8. Your head should be level or bent slightly forward.
9. For prolonged sessions at the computer, change your body position frequently.
   Stand up and walk around for a few minutes.
   Stretch your hands, fingers, arms, and torso.
   If possible make small adjustments to your chair or chairback or backrest.