

Computers

Think of a home office these days and one piece of equipment comes to mind: the computer. Whether you work at home every day or just use your desk for paying bills, the position of your computer affects your productivity, and your mood. Here are some tips:

The ideal distance from your eyes to the computer monitor is 24 to 30 in. The top of the screen should be slightly below eye level.

Comfortable keyboard height is 26 in. Because that's a few inches below most desks, put your keyboard on a slide-out platform. Your arms will be grateful.

Lighting is a big factor. Don't place your computer right in front of a window - you won't be able to see the screen. Light from the side doesn't create much glare.

To avoid eye strain, never work on a computer in a dark room. Always provide ambient lighting in the room.

Desk lamps should illuminate your desk surface, not shine directly on the screen.

Computers come with a host of tagalongs, including printers, fax machines, modems and scanners. Tuck them into shelves or cabinets near the computer, so you don't take up valuable work space. Computer cabinets with doors to hide the equipment are especially useful for multipurpose rooms. A tower CPU--central processing unit) sits on the floor to free up desk space.

Office equipment needs lots of electrical outlets - the more, the better. A separate circuit for the home office is wise.