

Practical office design guideline



A publication of VerV - Ergonomics Belgium



**“This directive reads
like the universal
declaration of the rights
of office workers”**

Content

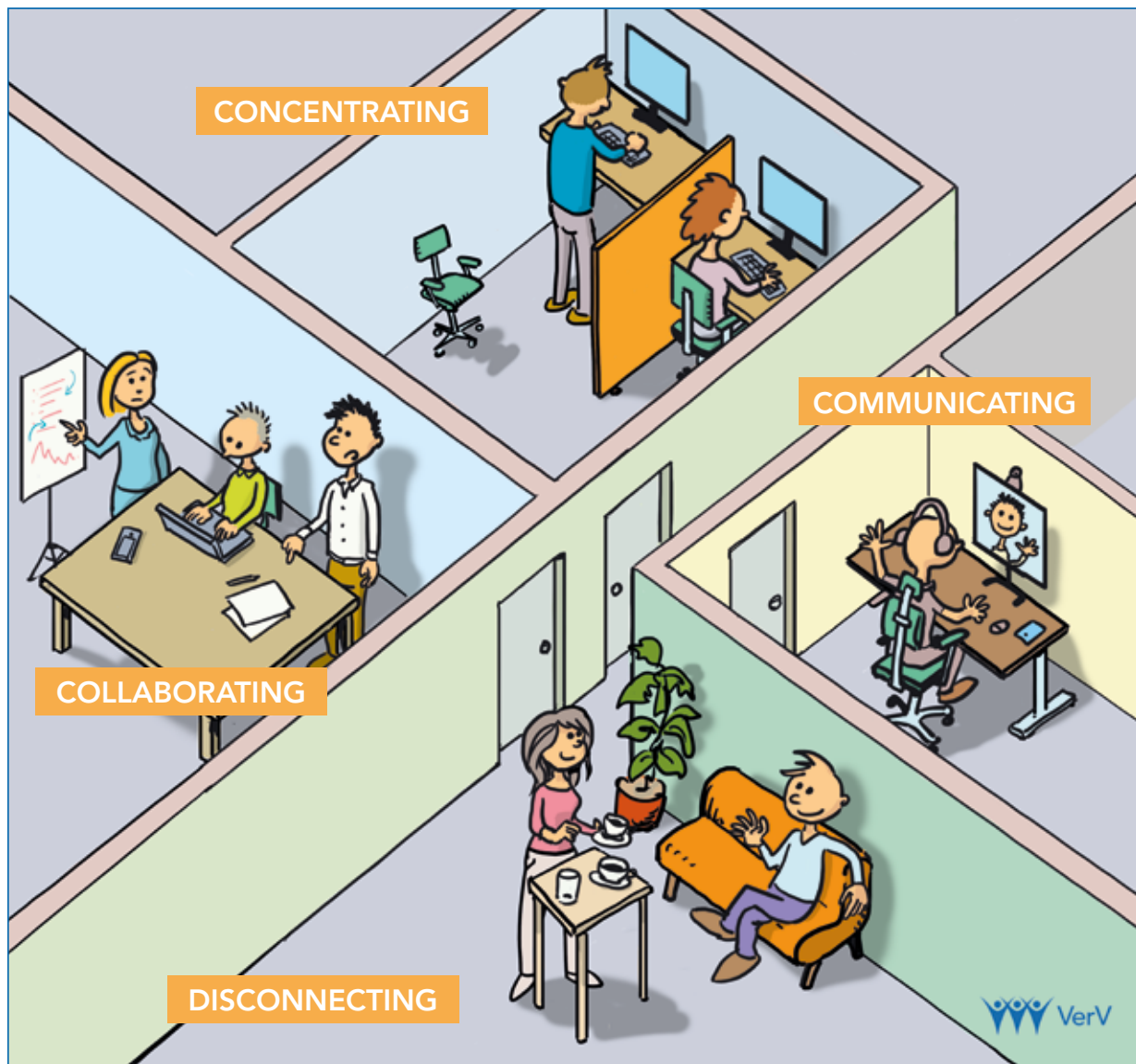
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Summary	7
3. Consensus	8
Office design needs to facilitate concentration, communication, collaboration and disconnection.....	8
Different basic activities should always take place in separate rooms	8
All office designs begin with an employee survey	9
Employees who come to the office 4 days a week should have their own workspace	11
Every employee has the right to an adjustable workspace.....	11
An office chair has to meet the adjustability requirements defined by standards EN1335 (type Ax) or u NPR1813.....	12
An office chair has to meet the adjustability requirements defined by standards EN527 or NPR1813	12
Screen work requires a large screen (min. 20 inch).....	12
A basic workspace has a minimum surface area (NEN 1824).	13
Each VDU operator receives instructions on screen work	13
Focused working requires a quiet and distraction-free workspace.....	14
No more than six workspaces in one room.....	14
A focused workspace has to meet acoustic requirements	15
Communicating and focusing take place in separate rooms	15
Acoustic etiquette in the office	15
Ambient conditions positively impact well-being and performance	16
75% of all employees have a view of plants or water	16
VDU workspaces have to meet lighting requirements (EN12464).	16
An office space has to meet indoor climate requirements (ISO 7730)	17
Room acoustics have to be adapted to the activity (ISO 22955)	17
All screen workers must be able to take a break from sitting and move around while working	18
Half of all workspaces must be dynamic	18
The implementation of a sit-stand table requires a multidimensional intervention	18
The working environment should encourage movement	19
Working from home calls for a structural telework policy	20
Types of telework	20
What are the requirements for a teleworker to work ergonomically at home?	20
How should a teleworker set up their workspace?	21
Telework policy	22

1. Introduction

This practical guideline contains specific recommendations for the ergonomic design of computer workstations in the office and at home. It aims to help VDU (video display unit) operators, commonly called screen workers, work more efficiently and healthily.

Ergonomists and prevention officers may use this guideline as a basis for advice. Architects, project designers, facility managers or executives can find clear outlines in it to organise their workspaces as efficiently as possible.

Screen work can be carried out in different locations, in the office, at home or on the move. This practical guideline applies to this hybrid work context and aims to combine the strengths of working from the office and from home to help create a healthy workspace where employees can focus. It puts four basic activities at the centre: concentrating, communicating, collaborating and disconnecting.



Ergonomics experts strongly agree that the centre of an office design is the employee. A workspace without visual and acoustic distractions, whether in the office or at home, helps keep workers motivated and productive. In turn, a good working posture that facilitates variation and movement is essential at all workspaces to address back, neck and shoulder pain.

An office design should align with how a company organises work. For every (re)design, it is therefore important to involve all stakeholders in a participative manner. The main stakeholders are:

- the employees involved
- the prevention department
- facility managers and building managers
- HR managers and supervisors
- IT managers

2. Summary

When creating this practical guideline, the authors considered six fundamental propositions:

1

Office design needs to facilitate concentration, communication, collaboration and disconnection.

Good office design begins by participatively interviewing employees about their work and needs. It will provide insight into the frequency and locations of their four basic activities.

2

Every employee has the right to an adjustable workspace.

All employees must be allowed to carry out focused work in a closed room for a single person, or in an area for up to six people with minimal meetings and phone calls.

3

Focused working requires a quiet and distraction-free workspace.

All employees must be allowed to carry out focused work in a closed room for a single person, or in an area for up to six people with minimal meetings and phone calls.

4

Ambient conditions positively impact well-being and performance.

All workplaces must consider ambient elements such as office plants, lighting, indoor climate and acoustic comfort.

5

All screen workers must be able to take a break from sitting and move around while working.

The best posture is the next one. One in every two workstations must be dynamic using a sit-stand table or dynamic alternative. Stand-up meetings also fall within this category.

6

Working from home calls for a structural telework policy.

A telework policy that pays attention to ergonomics establishes specific agreements about ergonomic equipment and ways to inform teleworkers about an ergonomic home office.

3. Consensus

FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITION 1:

Office design needs to facilitate concentration, communication, collaboration and disconnection.

In short

A screen worker's workspace should meet four basic needs: concentrating, communicating, collaborating and contemplating. Ergonomic office design begins by participatively interviewing employees about these four basic activities. The office environment must be designed so these activities can happen in separate rooms.

■ Different basic activities should always take place in separate rooms.

Typical of screen work are the four basic tasks of concentrating, communicating, collaborating and disconnecting. A human-centred working environment facilitates these four basic activities and moves them into separate spaces. It's not possible to concentrate in a space where colleagues are busy communicating; efficient collaboration won't work in an area where other colleagues are relaxing.

Concentrating: Concentrated work on tasks, projects, or reports demands mental focus, which requires a distraction-free environment that also boosts productivity. Concentrating on the task at hand is a requirement in any basic workspace and determines the level of job satisfaction.

Communicating: Speech-based communication like phone calls, video calls and face-to-face meetings requires a private area where no one can be disturbed by the conversation. It can be a separate room or a small enclosed area for (video) calls and meetings.

Collaborating: Collaborer peut signifier des réunions courtes ou longues, des réunions de brainstorming en équipe ou du travail de projet avec plusieurs personnes. Les salles polyvalentes équipées de caméras et d'écrans permettent également des modes de travail hybrides. L'objectif de cet espace est de rencontrer d'autres personnes.

Disconnecting: This guideline covers relaxing during working hours at home or in the office. It could be in the coffee corner or an active outdoor area, but disconnection also refers to informal conversations in armchairs or outside on a footpath.



www.ergonomiesite.be/breinvriendelijk-kantoor-met-focus/

Compernelle T. 2014 The open office is naked. The fifth brain chain that ruins your intellectual productivity (.pdf)

■ **All office designs begin with an employee survey.**

During any (re)design, it is important to involve all employees or participatively question them about how, where and how long they perform these four basic activities during a working day, as well as about their requirements. This should also be reflected in the company culture or its vision of the working method.

The table below lists suggestions for designing and laying out working areas according to the four basic activities.

ACTIVITY	WORKING AREA	EQUIPMENT
Concentrating		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic workstation • Focus-intensive tasks • Focused telework 	Separate individual workspace	Standard equipment for a VDU workstation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustable office chair • Adjustable desk • Sit-stand table • Big screen (> 20") • External keyboard and mouse
	Noise-free zone with no more than 6 people	
	Separate or enclosed teleworking space	
	Touchdown workspace for brief use	Dynamic alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High table • Saddle chair • Dynamic stool
Communicating		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential phone calls • Video call • Short one-on-one meetings • Consultation with 2-3 people 	Small enclosed area, 1 person (min. 3m ²)	Opt for dynamic alternatives during short meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High table • Saddle chair • Dynamic sitting items (stool, ball, deskbike, etc.) • Sit-stand table
	Small enclosed area, 2-4 people (min. 5-6m ²)	
	Meeting pod / booth	
	Communication workspace (max. 6 people)	Standard equipment for a VDU workstation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustable office chair • Adjustable desk • Sit-stand table • Big screen • External keyboard and mouse

ACTIVITY	WORKING AREA	EQUIPMENT
Collaborating		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Brainstorming • Creative sparring sessions • Project work 	Meeting room for long meetings (2m ² per person)	Dynamic chairs
	Huddle room for short meetings, maximum 6 people (1,5m ² per person))	Provide dynamic alternatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High table (105 +/- 2cm) • Saddle chair • Sit-stand meeting table • Dynamic sitting items (stool, ball, deskbike, etc.) • Walking meeting
	Brainstorm room (2m ² per person)	Dynamic alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High table (105 +/- 2cm) • Saddle chair • Sit-stand meeting table • Dynamic sitting items (stool, ball, deskbike, etc.) • Walking meeting
	Project room (4m ² per person)	Standard equipment for a VDU workstation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustable office chair • Adjustable table or sit-stand table • Big screen • External keyboard and mouse
Disconnecting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break • Recovery moment • Informal meetings • Exercise moment 	Coffee corner	Dynamic alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High table 105 +/- 2cm • Saddle chair / bar stool • Dynamic sitting items (stool, ball, deskbike, etc.)
	Dining area / cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic chairs • Multipurpose room
	Meeting space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seats • Lounge • Dynamic chairs
	Exercise area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table tennis table • Dartboard • Table football etc.
	Outdoor space with greenery	Active outdoor destination (footpath, fountain, greenery, art, etc.)

■ **Employees who come to the office 4 days a week should have their own workspace.**

A workspace type is an assigned VDU workstation (in a particular working area) based on the user's profile. For this purpose, we define 3 types:

- a fixed workspace
- a flexible workspace in a fixed working area
- a flexible workspace without a fixed working area

The workspace is assigned based on the user's presence at that location.

Use the selection guide below to determine the type of workspace to use for each employee profile:

	At least 4 days per week at the same location	2-3 days per week at the same location	At most 1 day per week at the same location
Mobile function (<50% of the working day in own workspace – often on the move, in meetings, etc.)	Flexible workspace in a fixed working area	Flexible workspace in a fixed working area	Flexible workspace without a fixed working area
Non-mobile function (>50% of the working day in workspace, rarely on the move or in meetings)	Fixed workspace		

Fundamental proposition 2:

Every employee has the right to an adjustable workspace.

In short

The recommended standard equipment for a display workstation:

- An ergonomic office chair
- An adjustable table (preferably a sit-stand table)
- An external monitor (min. 20 inch)
- An external keyboard
- An external mouse

During the purchase procedure, select a test group of employees to try out several chairs, desks or monitors with different options. List their findings on a checklist to make an informed and well-founded choice.

■ **An office chair has to meet the adjustability requirements defined by standards EN1335 (type Ax) or u NPR1813.**

The European standard 1335-1 (2020) describes the minimum dimensions for office chairs. The seat height, depth, lower back support and armrests must be adjustable. An office chair of the Ax type from the standard has a wide range of adjustability. So does an office chair that meets the adjustability requirements of the Dutch Code of Practice, NPR 1813. These office chairs fit both larger and smaller VDU operators.

When buying or selecting office chairs, EN1335 and NPR1813 certifications are therefore a good criterion. These are dynamic office chairs that encourage posture change. In terms of ergonomics, a movement mechanism in which the seat and backrest can move is a must to avoid prolonging the same posture.



ergonomiesite.be/arbeid/en1335.htm
ergonomiesite.be/kantoor/NPR1813.htm

■ **An office chair has to meet the adjustability requirements defined by standards EN527 or NPR1813.**

Every VDU workstation in use by an employee for more than two hours a day should have an adjustable desk or sit-stand table. The European standard, EN527, specifies that a desk must be adjustable between at least 65 and 85cm. For a sit-stand table, the adjustment range is at least 65 to 125cm. The Dutch Code of Practice, NPR1813, goes a step further. It states a sit-stand table must be adjustable in height up to 130cm. A sit-stand table should be the norm for anybody sitting at a workstation for more than six hours each day.

As such, desks should be at least 120cm wide and 80cm deep. Moreover, the thickness of the worktop should be limited to no more than 5.5 cm at the front and no more than 8cm at 50cm deep, to provide sufficient legroom for the knees and feet.



ergonomiesite.be/arbeid/en527.htm
ergonomiesite.be/kantoor/NPR1813.htm

■ **Screen work requires a large screen (min. 20 inch).**

Large screens increase readability. Eye complaints are the most common ailment among screen workers. These complaints also increase with age. As screens have become larger, screen resolution has increased as well. It also means the characters have remained the same size. Every VDU workstation should have a sufficiently large screen for the employee to connect their laptop to at all times.

Laptop screens do not offer sufficient readability. Combined with the growing trend for laptops to become smaller and smaller, connecting to an external monitor is the only ergonomic solution. In fact, laptops do not comply with the Belgian legislation on screen work, which states that a keyboard and screen must not be combined in one unit.



www.ergonomiesite.be/kantoor/richtlijn-computerwerk.htm

■ **A basic workspace has a minimum surface area (NEN 1824).**

The Dutch standard (NEN 1824) describes a practical method for calculating how many m² are needed per workspace and what passageways to provide. This calculation gives a minimum area of 6 m² per workspace for a basic workspace with a monitor and storage space (cabinet).

Surface area	
Basic workspace (chair and passageway)	4 m ²
Worktop with flat screen	+ 1 m ²
Reading and writing surface	+ 1 m ²
Freestanding cabinet	+ 1 m ²
Door in area	+ 1 m ²
Freestanding drawer unit	+ 0,5 m ²
Meeting room per person (=< 6 personen)	+ 1,5 m ²
Meeting room per person (> 6 personen)	+ 2 m ²
Room for explaining illustrations	+ 2 m ²
Passagewayss	
Passageway	90 cm
Space behind desk to wall/cabinet/obstacle	90 cm
Passageway as a walking route	120 cm
Space behind desk with passageway	120 cm
Sitting back to back	180 cm

INFO www.ergonomiesite.be/arbeid/kantoorruimte.htm

■ **Each VDU operator receives instructions on screen work.**

Make sure to provide the necessary instructions on the use of tables and chairs when these are first used or when welcoming new employees. A prevention advisor or ergonomist can also give individual users on-site workspace advice. Always keep a finger on the pulse through a VDU risk assessment. This assessment is mandatory every five years for each VDU workstation group and individually. In case of questions or physical complaints, an employee can request a workspace visit.

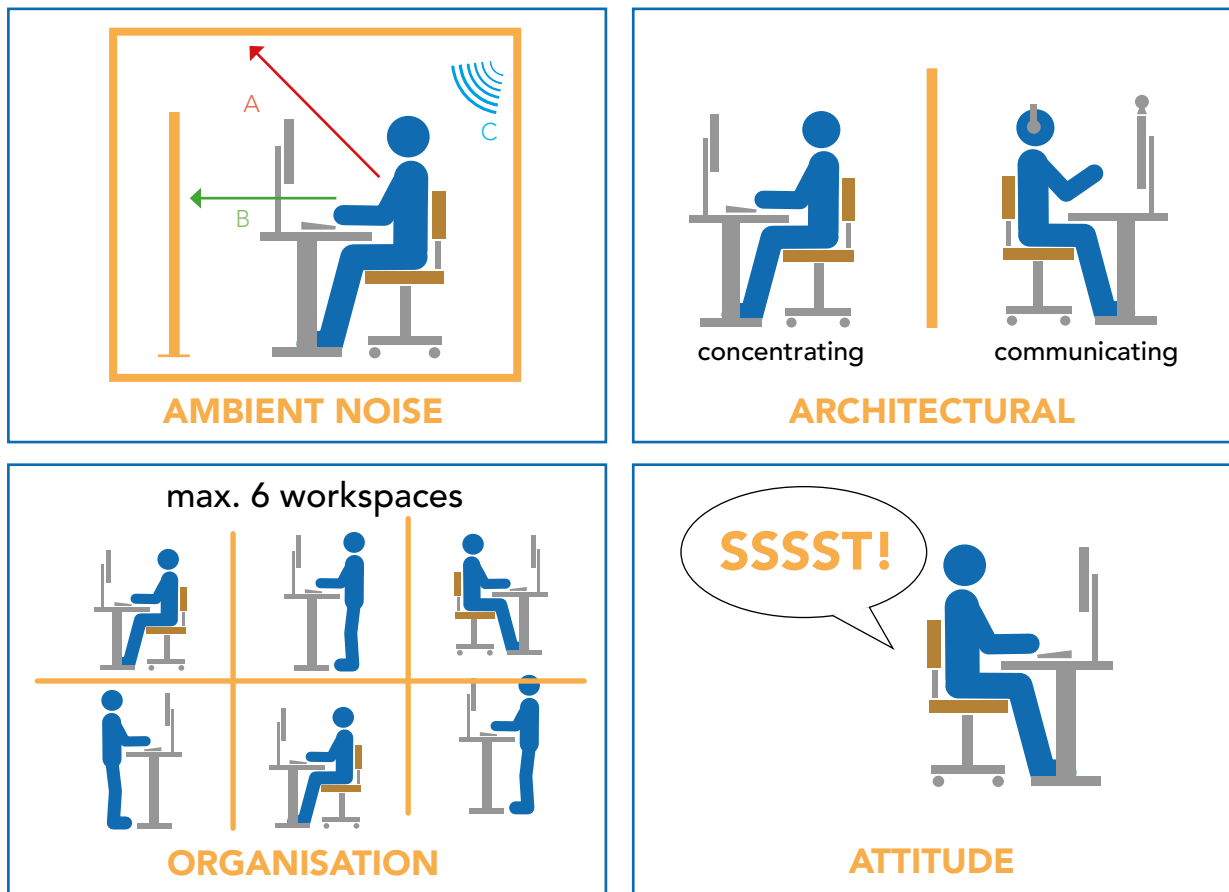
INFO www.ergonomiesite.be/computerwerkplek/

Fundamental proposition 3:

Focused working requires a quiet and distraction-free workspace.

In short

The benefits of an office are the ability to work together and meet with people. Still, every screen worker needs a place for focused work. A separate workstation at home can help achieve this. In the office, it's possible to create a quiet environment without distractions by limiting the number of basic workspaces in a room to six. Acoustic requirements focus on high discretion between adjacent workstations. Separate rooms should be used for communicating, collaborating and disconnecting to have as few distractions as possible. In this way, focusing and other tasks remain separate. Finally, acoustic etiquette agreements must be put in place.



■ No more than six workspaces in one room.

Focused working is a basic right but can be challenging in the office. After all, it largely determines an employee's satisfaction or work experience. When multiple people are in a room, distractions such as noise and visual interruptions can cause irritation and a lack of privacy.

Having a personal office improves productivity and reduces stress. The more employees there are in a room, the more bothersome the conversations of others, intelligible but irrelevant, become. These disturbances negatively affect work performance, mental well-being and general well-being. It is therefore best to limit the number of workstations in a room to six people. The room in question should be acoustically isolated.

INFO www.ergonomiesite.be/kantoorinrichting-en-mentaal-welzijn/

■ A focused workspace has to meet acoustic requirements.

The ISO22955 standard describes the acoustical requirements for different types of office spaces. A space designed for focused work is intended for individual tasks with limited room for consultations. This type of space demands high levels of concentration, and each employee may have a different task to complete. Consultations typically require separate rooms and are not held in this space.

These spaces have relatively low ambient noise levels. Individual workstations need good speech intelligibility and high discretion is required between adjacent workstations. The three main methods of achieving good acoustics are absorbing, blocking and covering (ABC). Acoustic absorbent materials on the ceiling reduce sound reflections, which lead to lower reverberation times. Blocking refers to stopping noise from passing through walls, panels or (desk) partitions. Covering means reducing the impact of sounds by adding noise, similar to sound masking.

INFO www.ergonomiesite.be/iso-22955-akoestiek-in-open-kantoorruimtes/

■ Communicating and focusing take place in separate rooms.

To stay focused, it is best to separate activities requiring concentration from those needing communication. A typical example of communication that prevents focused working is intelligible but irrelevant neighbouring conversations.

These two basic activities are easier to achieve by using quiet basic workspaces with small nearby rooms. If someone wants to communicate (phone, video call or consultation), they can move to these rooms while the basic workspace remains quiet. Moving to separate rooms is recommended for collaborative tasks such as meetings and project work.

Proper sound insulation is needed to ensure good speech privacy between neighbouring rooms. The rule of thumb for typical office activities is to reduce noise levels by at least 40 dB. Speech privacy between neighbouring rooms is also achievable by combining acoustic insulating walls with sound masking technology.

■ Acoustic etiquette in the office.

A well-designed office layout only comes into its own when screen workers use it properly. For this, offices need rules on proper room usage and noise control, known as acoustic etiquette.

One important rule is that the basic workspace should remain quiet, with no telephones or consultations allowed. It's preferable to use the small rooms nearby for these purposes. Telephone calls are placed in a separate room or area with more background

noise. Informal consultation and catching up take place in the disconnection areas. Using bright colours and open spaces could make meeting there more convenient.

Fundamental proposition 4:

Ambient conditions positively impact well-being and performance.

In short

Having greenery in the office leads to less stress and more productivity. A green ratio of 75% means that three-quarters of all employees can see plants or greenery from their workspace. An outside view provides a connection with the environment and daylight. Good lighting provides adequate brightness, even light distribution, avoids reflections and has natural colours.

Indoor climate is expressed by temperature perception. An indoor climate analyzer can be used to measure and calculate global thermal comfort. Local thermal comfort depends on draughts, temperature differences and cold or warm surfaces (floor, ceiling, wall). A regulated fresh air supply can keep the CO₂ concentration below 900 ppm at all times. Finally, each activity type in a room has specific acoustic requirements.

■ 75% of all employees have a view of plants or water.

Including green or natural elements in the office increases general well-being, air quality, acoustics and productivity. An office space has a green ratio when 75% of employees have a view of plants or water. When plants, water or natural elements are within 10 metres of each employee, the green ratio rises to 100%. In this case, there are plants in all rooms used for work, consultation and relaxation.

An office with plants will have better acoustics because of the occupied space. Moreover, plants create a visual barrier, making employees less likely to engage in conversation and more likely to move about. Additionally, an active outdoor destination with greenery, trees or plants, for example, can encourage staff to take a walking meeting or an active break.



www.ergonomiesite.be/kantoorinrichting-en-mentaal-welzijn/

■ VDU workspaces have to meet lighting requirements (EN12464).

Any VDU workspace with an outside view ensures a connection with the environment and reduces visual and mental fatigue. Natural daylight is essential for VDU workspaces where people work for more than two hours a day. Light affects our biorhythms and moods.

The minimum average illuminance at a VDU workspace is 500 Lux. For high precision requirements or when used by older workers, the European standard, EN12464, even recommends 750 lux. The light should be evenly distributed. The ratio between the

minimum and average illuminance in the office should be more than 0.6. Glare and reflection can be avoided by shielding bright light sources. This also means blocking bright light shining through windows. The colour rendering of office lamps should exceed 80%, making it easier to recognise natural colour.



www.ergonomiesite.be/en12464/

www.ergonomiesite.be/en17037-daglicht-in-gebouwen/

■ An office space has to meet indoor climate requirements (ISO 7730).

The term indoor climate refers to the temperature, humidity, air velocity and ventilation. The NBN-EN-ISO 7730 standard describes the ergonomics of the thermal environment. It defines the limited values within which people can work comfortably. Thermal comfort depends on both global and local thermal comfort.

Temperature perception is the determining factor for global thermal comfort. The goal is for less than 10% of employees to be dissatisfied. An indoor climate analyzer can measure air temperature, radiant temperature, air velocity and relative humidity. Temperature perception can then be calculated based on a person's activity and clothing. For screen work, a temperature of 21°C in winter, with an air speed of 0.1m/s and a relative humidity of 60% suits almost 95% of people. In summer wearing light trousers and a T-shirt, the temperature may be 23°C for the same comfort level.

Draughts, vertical temperature differences between head and ankles, hot and cold floors, and differences in radiant temperatures determine a person's local thermal comfort. Excessive airflow on the employee is an area of concern in screen work. Heated floors can prevent cold feet.

An office space should be adequately supplied with fresh air. For 95% of the operating time, the concentration of CO₂ should be below 900 ppm, or the minimum ventilation flow rate should be 40 m³/h per person present. Fresh air can be supplied naturally or by a ventilation system blowing fresh air into the room.



www.ergonomiesite.be/iso7730/

www.ergonomiesite.be/codex-arbeidsplaatsen/

■ Room acoustics have to be adapted to the activity (ISO 22955).

The acoustic properties of an office space vary according to the activity employees perform there. As such, the ISO22995 standard describes acoustic requirements for different types of rooms.

In a room where people collaborate often, workspaces don't have to be heavily attenuated for team members to still hear each other well. However, discretion with regard to adjacent rooms should be high. This means always holding meetings in a closed room with the door closed.

Focused working, however, requires high speech intelligibility at the workspace itself. In this case, dampening materials can ensure a high level of discretion between individual workspaces. The same applies when there is a lot of communication with the outside, such as in sales or at a call centre. Ambient noise needs to be kept low. Doing so avoids the Lombard effect, where everyone starts speaking louder and louder in the presence of noise.

Finally, it's important to hear people well when meeting them locally. In this case, a high level of discretion with regard to the surrounding area is required to ensure no one can listen in.



www.ergonomiesite.be/iso-22955-akoestiek-in-open-kantoorruimtes/

Fundamental proposition 5:

All screen workers must be able to take a break from sitting and move around while working.

In short

Addressing sedentary behaviour focuses on three strategies: sitting less, standing up more often and moving around more. To achieve this, half of the workspaces must be dynamic. The basic idea is that everyone needs to be able to alternate sitting and standing. However, to successfully implement a sit-stand table, different strategies are necessary. In addition, a healthy work environment should also invite movement. This can be on, around, outside and to/from the workspace.

■ Half of all workspaces must be dynamic.

A dynamic workstation refers to a sit-stand table, standing conference room, dynamic stool, etc. The dynamics ratio expresses the percentage of dynamic workspaces. A dynamics ratio of at least 50 per cent means half of all desks are sit-stand tables.

Standing meetings are possible in half of all meeting rooms. For short meetings, dynamic alternatives can be provided (sitting ball, saddle chair, dynamic stool, meeting pods, etc.) as described in the table under proposition 1.

Dynamic workspaces aim to allow everyone to alternate between sitting and standing. By using a sit-stand table, people will spend fewer hours sitting and will stand up more regularly. This is an essential part of a broad approach that also involves more movement.

■ The implementation of a sit-stand table requires a multidimensional intervention.

A multidimensional intervention is needed to successfully implement a sit-stand table in a way that employees will use it effectively. It addresses the management, the individual and the physical environment (sit-stand table). A dynamics ratio of 50% creates a physical environment that allows postural alternation.

Individual employees can be made aware of how much they sit, why it is healthy and efficient to interrupt sitting, and how they can do so with a sit-stand table. Still, support from management is essential to ensure this new behaviour is encouraged and maintained. This can be achieved by organising workshops, providing instructions, nudging, personal guidance, etc.



www.ergonomiesite.be/stand-up-australia/

■ **The working environment should encourage movement.**

The WELL Building Standard describes 11 criteria that healthy buildings must meet. One of them is movement. The guidelines discuss movement on, around, outside and to/from the workplace. The same principle applies to the home office.

Sit-stand tables and dynamic alternatives can increase postural alternation **at the workplace**. Limit prolonged sitting to 30 minutes.



Decorated stairwells and attractive corridors can stimulate movement **around the workplace**. These passageways should also be easily accessible. Place printers, bins and coffee corners within walking distance in a central area.



Walking paths and active outdoor destinations for active meetings or breaks can encourage more movement **outside the workplace**. These places could include benches, greenery, a fountain, trees/plants, art, etc. An outdoor fitness, walking or cycling route also promotes an active break outside hours.






Choosing a location close to utilities (shop, bank, hospital, etc.) and easily accessible by foot or bike can make moving when **coming to work** more appealing. Provide active employees with facilities like a covered bicycle shed, shower and lockers



INFO

www.wellcertified.com/
www.ergonomiesite.be/gezonde-gebouwen-doen-bewegen/

-  - physical environment
-  - management
-  - individual

Fundamental proposition 6:

Working from home calls for a structural telework policy.

In short

Those who work from home regularly need an ergonomic home workspace. A telework policy that pays attention to ergonomics establishes concrete agreements on paper about ergonomic equipment and ways to inform homeworkers about the ergonomics of their home workspace. A telework risk assessment asks specific questions about the home situation. Finally, employees can request a video consultation with an ergonomist when they have questions or physical complaints.

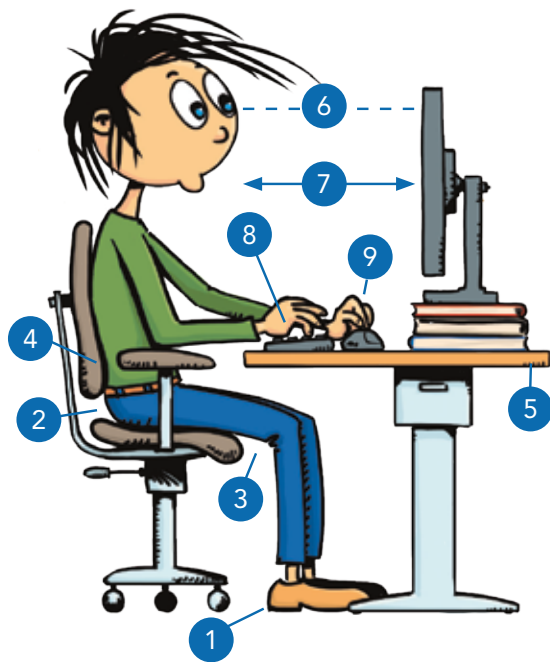
Types of telework

Teleworking means using information technology to work away from the company premises. When done at home, it is known as working from home. Occasional teleworking is sporadic, due to unforeseen circumstances (strike, weather, etc.) or for personal reasons (doctor's visit, etc.). Teleworking at least one day a week is considered structural telework and is set out in a written agreement. The legislation on screen work also covers the home workspace. This legislation describes the minimum ergonomic requirements for working safely and healthily. When systematically working from home, ergonomics matters.

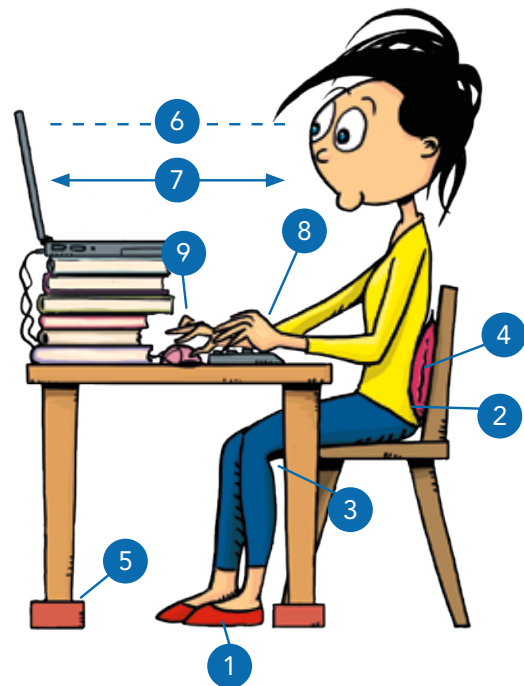
■ What are the requirements for a teleworker to work ergonomically at home?

- An adjustable office chair (possibly via a group purchase)
- An adjustable table (preferably sit-stand)
- A large monitor (min 20")
- An external keyboard
- An external mouse

■ How should a teleworker set up their workspace?



**Recommended situation
for teleworkers**



**Solutions for
unexpected telework**

1. Feet flat on the floor
2. Seat height: pelvis higher than the knees
3. Seat depth: room for a clenched fist behind the knee
4. Lower back support: round back support above the belt
5. Table at elbow height
6. Top edge of the screen at eye level
7. Viewing distance at arm's length
8. Keyboard: relaxed posture with hand and wrist supports
9. Sufficient room for the mouse
10. Take regular breaks from sitting

■ Telework policy

Employers who organise structural teleworking do well to implement a telework policy that pays attention to ergonomics.

1. Written agreement

It describes the concrete arrangements around home working days, accessibility, location, necessary equipment, expense allowance and workspace visits.

2. Expense allowance

The employer is responsible for the necessary equipment (CLA 85). They can either provide the equipment themselves or offer an expense allowance. The latter happens more frequently. The employee then has to purchase the furniture and equipment himself.

3. Necessary equipment

The employer encourages and facilitates the purchase of ergonomic furniture and IT equipment. Some good practices here are:

- The employee can purchase a chair and IT material within the framework agreement, through a discount platform, using a webshop with a discount code, through flexible remuneration, etc.
- The employer offers a chair for teleworking.
- The employer offers the depreciated furniture

4. Informing employees

The employer informs employees about the ergonomic design of their home workspace and encourages them to move more in, around and at the workspace. There are various ways to accomplish this, including through the use of intranet, brochures, e-learning, websites, and online training. The VerV brochure "Teleworking healthily and comfortably" compiles the most essential tips for home workers.

5. Telework risk assessment

The VDU risk assessment is expanded to include questions about the home office. This way, the telework policy can be further adjusted.

6. Video consultation

In case of questions or physical complaints, employees can request a workspace visit in the form of a video consultation with an ergonomist.



Brochure "Teleworking in a healthy and comfortable way"

