

DIGITAL WELLNESS AND ERGONOMICS

Digital Wellness

Eye strain associated with increased screen time is quite common. Below are some recommendations that may help, including the “How to use a blue light filter on your PC or Mac”.

Screen time: Try to decrease the amount of time spent in front of these screens and/or take frequent breaks to give your eyes a rest. Break every 20 minutes or so to stare at an object about 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This helps to give your eyes a break from focusing on a bright screen that is close to you.

Filters: Screen filters are available for smart phones, tablets, and computer screens. They decrease the amount of blue light given off from these devices that could reach the retina in our eyes.

Computer glasses: Computer glasses with yellow-tinted lenses that block blue light can help ease computer digital eye strain by increasing contrast.

Blue Light Filters

Windows 10

Microsoft added a blue light limiting feature to Windows 10 in the Creators Update released in April 2017. Called “Night light,” this feature shifts the Windows 10 display to show warmer colors that reduce the amount of emitted blue light. Turning the Night light feature on is a simple process.

Step 1: Click the Start button followed by the “gear” icon located on the Start Menu. Alternatively, you can press the *Windows key* and *X* and then click *Settings*.

Step 2: Choose *System* in the pop-up window.

Step 3: The *Display* category opens by default. Scroll down on the right and toggle on the *Night light* setting

Apple

Apple brought Night Shift to Macs in 2017. As with Windows 10, the feature is easy enough to turn on and configure to your tastes.

Step 1: Click the Apple logo in the top left corner and select *System Preferences* on the drop-down menu.

Step 2: Select *Displays* in the pop-up window.

Step 3: Click the *Night Shift* tab in the following pop-up window.

Here you can configure when Night Shift automatically runs, turn it on until the next sunrise, and set your preferred color temperature. For scheduling, you can let MacOS turn it on and off at sunset and sunrise based on your location, or you can set a custom schedule.

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Ergonomic Tips

- If you have a laptop and wish to **stand**, using it at a counter or high table is advised.
- **Keep your head/neck relaxed and level**, rather than hunching over with the top half of your body.
- **Keep your forearms, wrists, hands as level as possible**, parallel to the floor.
- Using an **external monitor/keyboard/mouse** with a laptop is strongly advised -- better for your posture, whether you are sitting or standing.
- **Height of your screen is important:** When looking at the screen, your head/neck should be level and relaxed -- no craning your head/neck upwards; you should look down only if you need to look at the keyboard.
- **Distance of your screen is important:** Be sure your eyes are comfortable. You should be able to read the font easily -- no squinting. Be sure your screen is not too close to your eyes/face. Screens are bigger these days -- an approximate advised distance equals about one fully outstretched arm/hand from where you are seated or standing.
- Regarding your chair, the first consideration is **thigh support**. You should have no more than 2-3 finger-widths of space between the front edge of the seat pan and the back of your knees/legs. In other words, having almost complete thigh support is best. Your feet should be **flat on the floor**, not dangling. It is best to have your hips slightly higher than your knees, to promote good circulation. Another common practice is to have your thighs perfectly parallel to the floor – ultimately you should use the position that is most comfortable for you.
- Sit all the way back into your chair so your **back is supported**. Hunching over, especially for long periods, is not advised. Use a back cushion if your chair does not provide enough back support - if you don't have a cushion, use towels or a blanket.
- Whether seated or standing, **take a short walk** every half-hour or so -- break up your routine. Get in a little walk and stretch, get some water!

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