



CENTER FOR
VISION &
LEARNING

Visual Hygiene

Good stuff for your eyes, brain, and body

1. To improve your ability to work longer and improve concentration, while reading a book or working at the computer, sit on a firm supportive surface. Feel your lower back on the chair back; feel your feet flat on the ground with knees slightly higher than hips.
2. To improve efficiency and comfort, remind yourself to breathe and then do so.
3. To ward off eyestrain and improve neck muscle stamina, place reading material (iPad, book, etc.) on a slant board or surface which is angled up ~20 degrees.
4. While working on a computer, keep the monitor at eye level and as far away as you can comfortably read.
5. To improve eye and neck muscle stamina, utilize the "Harmon distance" rule. This means for book and iPad activities, keep reading material fist-to-elbow distance away from your chin.
6. To improve eye stamina and decrease muscle tension, if you wear glasses, wear the appropriate lens prescription for the activity at hand: reading glasses for books, computer glasses for computer work, and bifocals for both.
7. To help eye and neck muscle endurance when reading and doing computer work, be aware of what's going on in your peripheral vision. This is the area beyond and around what you're viewing directly.
8. To improve your eye and neck muscles' ability to comfortably work long hours, set a timer to go off every 30 minutes and take a 3-4 minute rejuvenation break. Look outside, into the distance, during this time. If you can't get to a window or open space, visualize far away scenery in your mind's eye.
9. Reduce muscle tension and improve blood flow to tired muscles during prolonged reading or computer work by taking a minute to shake out your arms, rotate, side bend and flex your head and neck and roll your shoulders every 30 minutes.
10. To help enable you to read and work long hours on the computer, re-boot your body every 30 minutes. Stand, then squat down and breathe 4-5 breaths while in the down position. Repeat 4 times every 30 minutes.