



## How to use, choose, and place a computer mouse to prevent injury

Some users of the computer mouse report sore fingers, wrists, arms, and shoulders after periods of prolonged use. Although there isn't much research on mouse use, the best available information indicates that the design of the mouse, where you place it on your workstation, and how you use it can help prevent stress and fatigue in muscles and tendons.

### How to choose a mouse

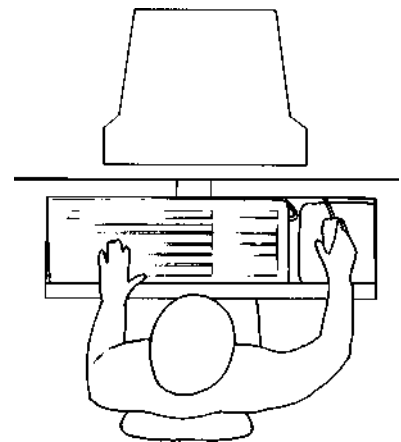
Many different mouse designs are available. Ideally, workers should try several models and choose one that suits their needs. For example, some mice are available in right- and left-handed units.

Experts recommend using a mouse that:

- Fits your hand. It should have a smooth, tear-drop shape, without angles and hard edges. It should also have a sloping side and front.
- Allows you to lock the drag switch so that you don't have to keep it depressed while dragging the mouse. If you often drag your mouse, this lock feature helps prevent sore muscles in your fingers and hand because you don't have to continually hold them in the same position.

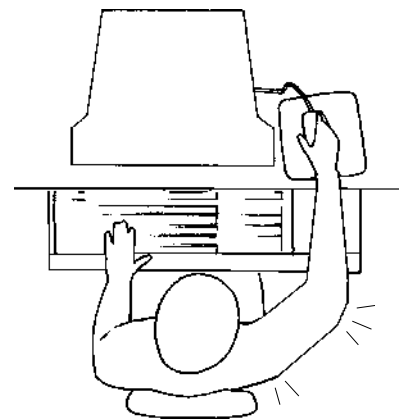
### Where to place the mouse

Many computer users keep their mice on the tops of their desks or work surfaces *above* the keyboard tray. This forces users to stretch their arms and shoulders, increasing muscle activity and fatigue. To avoid this, place your mouse close to and on the same work surface as the keyboard. If there's not enough room, you should attach a rest or support for the mouse to the keyboard tray.



Right way

*Place your mouse close to and on the same work surface as your keyboard. If you are right-handed, place the mouse on the right-hand side of the keyboard. Place the mouse on the left-hand side if you are left-handed.*



Wrong way

*Avoid stretching your arm and shoulder to reach the mouse.*

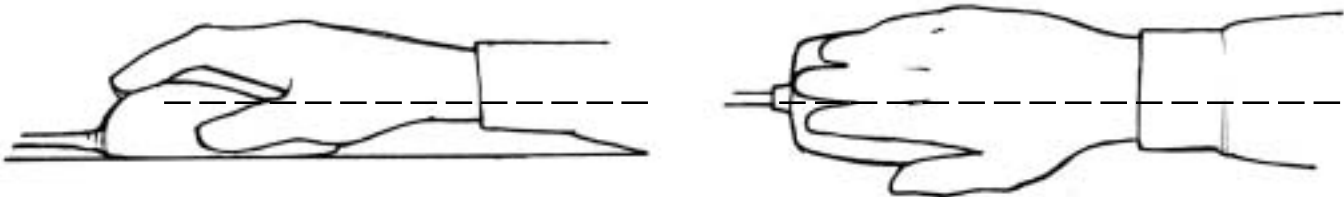
## How to use a mouse

To avoid muscle stress and fatigue:

- Rest your hand comfortably over the mouse, keeping your wrist straight, in line with your forearm. If your wrist feels tired – or you tend to drop it as shown in the drawing below – place a support or some padding under your wrist.
- Don't press your hand into a hard edge such as the edge of your desk or keyboard.
- Don't use more force than necessary to click and drag the mouse.
- Adjust the mouse speed setting to suit the task. The mouse is *harder to control* if you use a fast setting with fine tasks. You will have to *lift the mouse more often* if you use a slow setting for general mouse work.

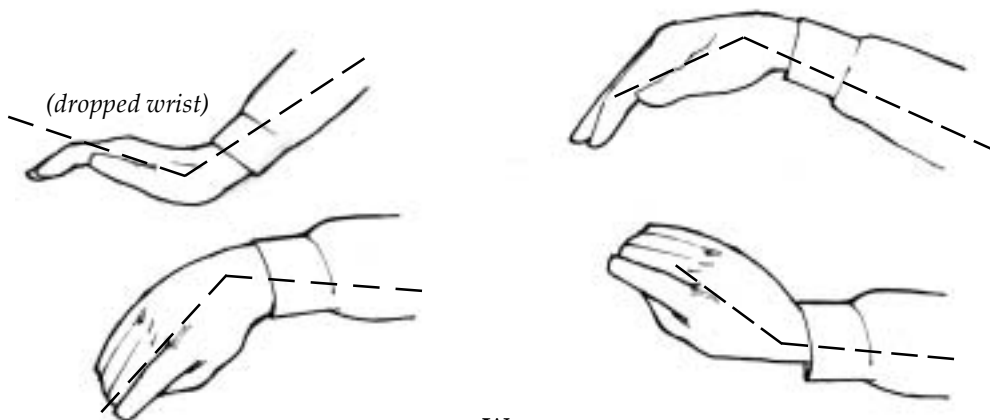
Regular breaks from mouse work can also help prevent sore muscles. Take frequent micro pauses to lift your hand off the mouse and relax the muscles. Try to do a different task, or pause for a minute or two, at least every hour to vary your posture and rest your tired muscles.

## DOs and DON'Ts of mouse use



**Right way**

*Keep your hands straight and in line with your forearm to reduce the stress and strain on muscles and tendons.*



**Wrong way**