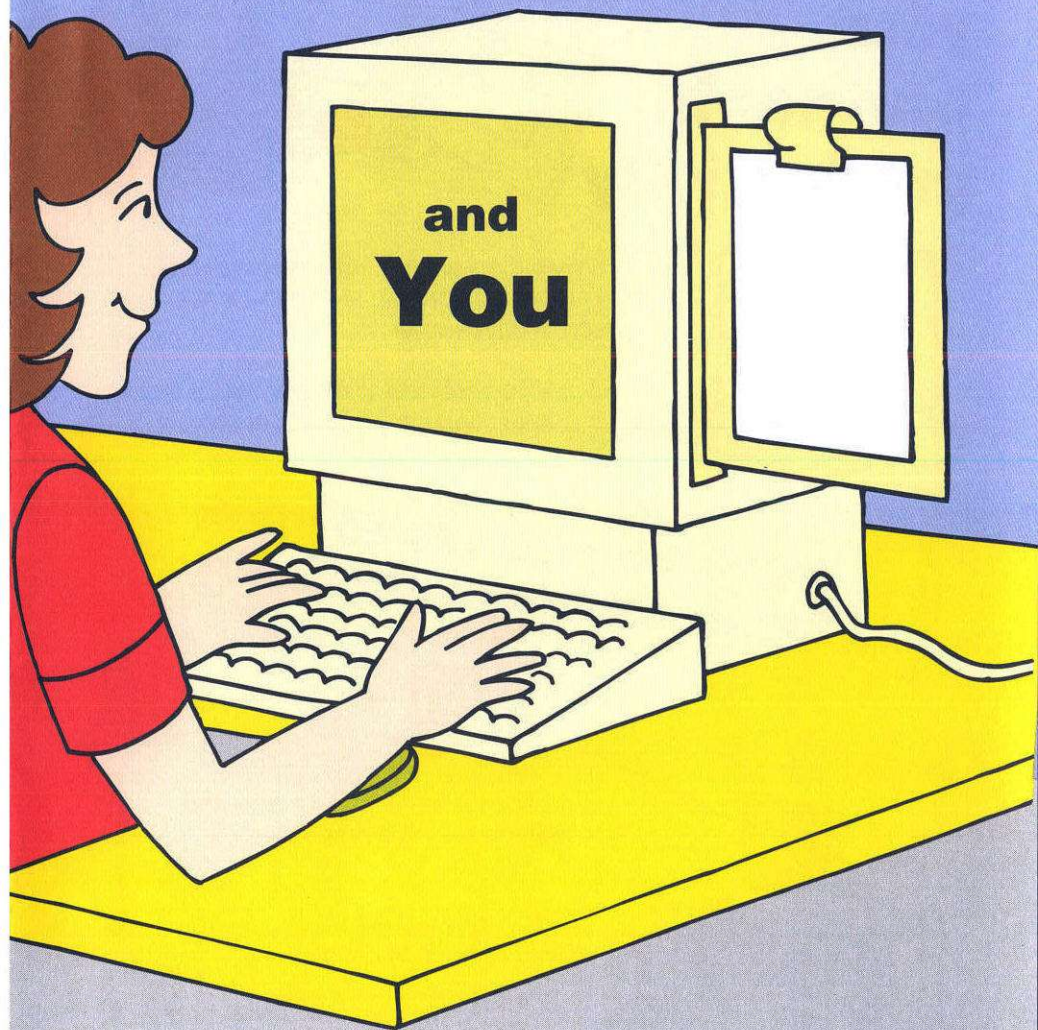


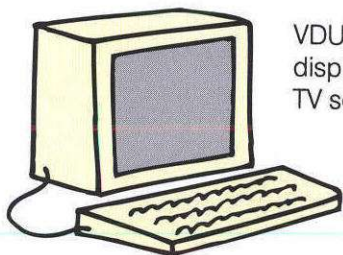
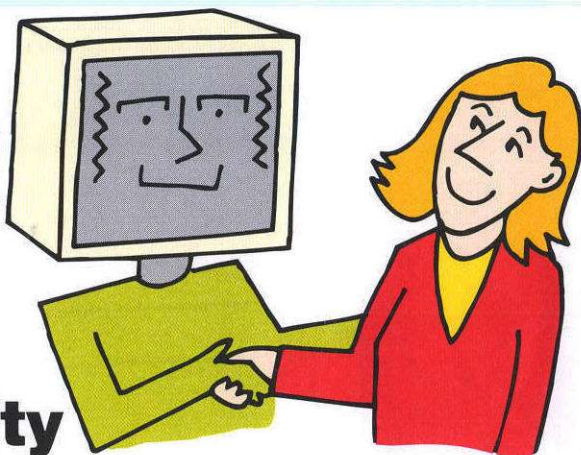
VDUs

BLR
Safety
Books



VDU:

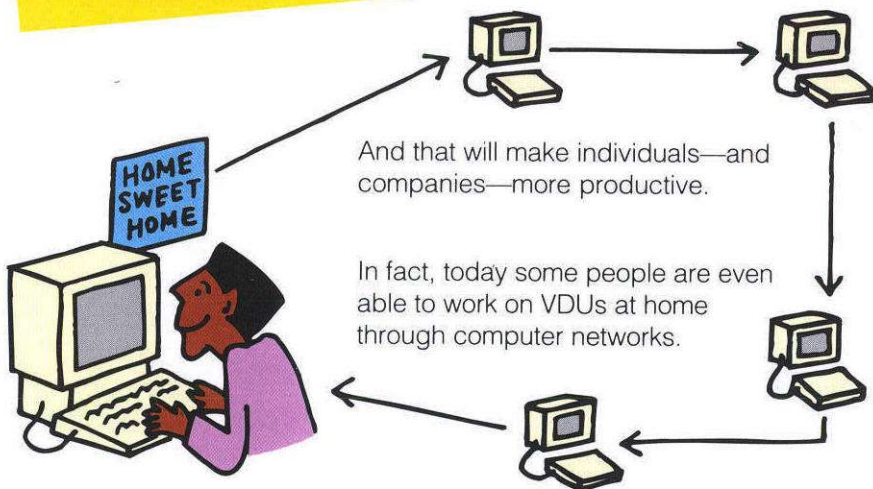
your partner in productivity



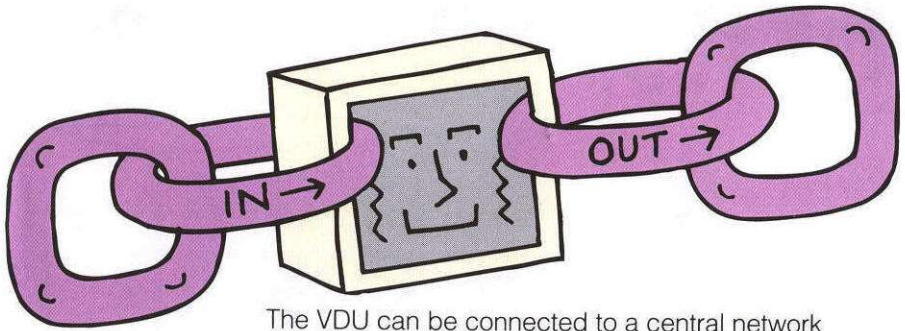
VDUs (visual display units, also known as DSE: display screen equipment) are like a combination TV screen and typewriter.

VDUs connect to a computer to make it fast and easy to enter, update, and obtain information.

**VDUs help you to do work
faster and more efficiently.**



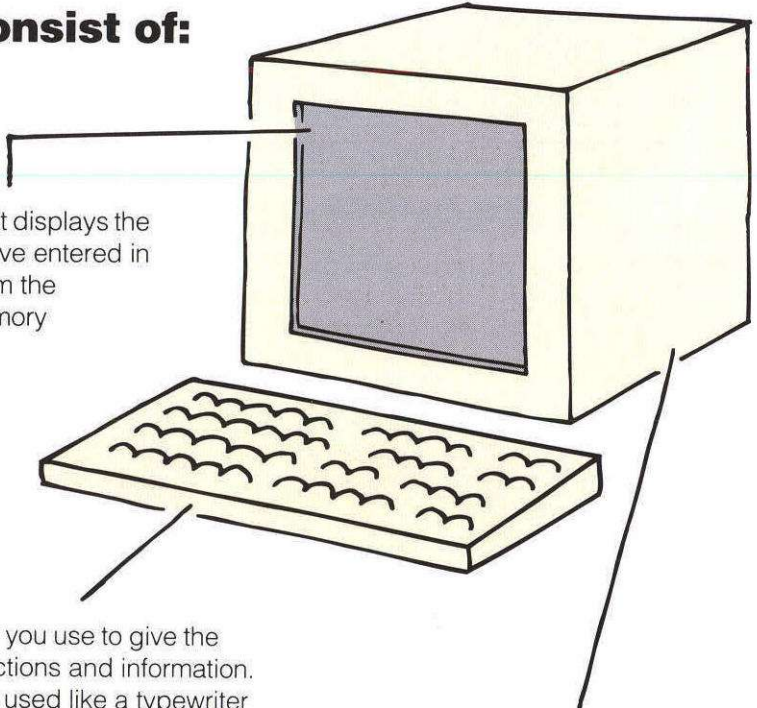
Meet your partner



The VDU can be connected to a central network computer or to its own internal computer. In either case, it's your link to inputting data and obtaining information.

VDUs consist of:

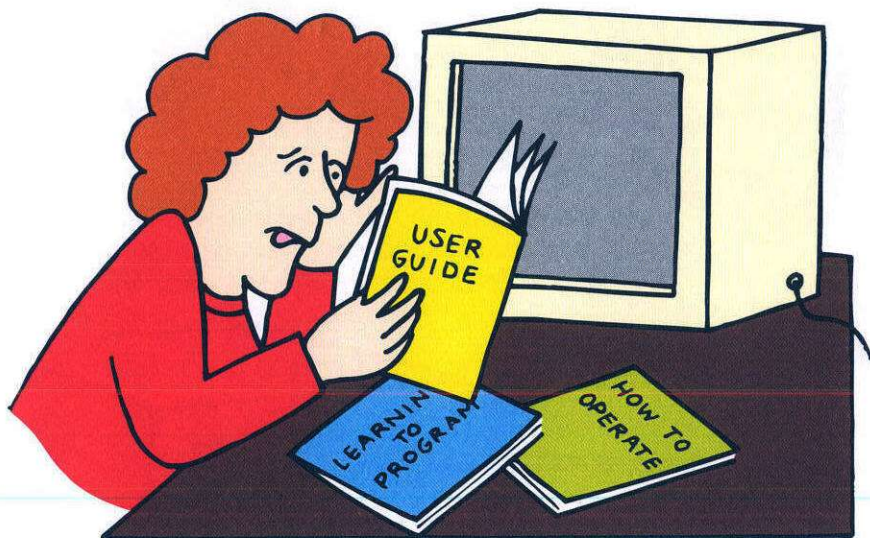
- **A screen** that displays the information you've entered in or called up from the computer's memory



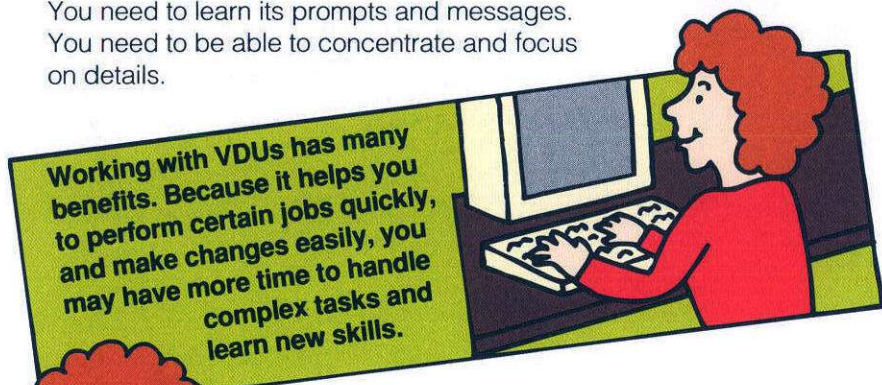
- **A keyboard** you use to give the computer instructions and information. The keyboard is used like a typewriter to create reports, letters, charts, etc.

- **A CRT** (cathode ray tube) inside the unit that creates the images you see on the screen.

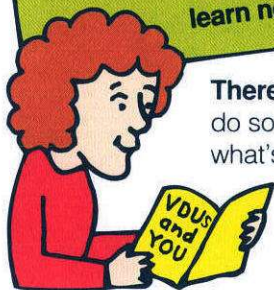
Working with VDUs requires skill and creates challenges



It takes skill to get the most from your VDU. You need to learn its prompts and messages. You need to be able to concentrate and focus on details.



Working with VDUs has many benefits. Because it helps you to perform certain jobs quickly, and make changes easily, you may have more time to handle complex tasks and learn new skills.



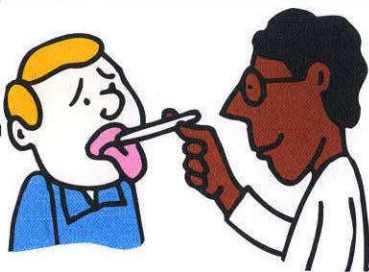
There are challenges to working with a VDU, too. It can do so much so fast that you have to be constantly alert to what's on the screen.

And there are often new things to learn, new ways your VDU can help make your job easier and more productive.

Avoid health problems

Constant work at a VDU can add to health problems for some users, such as:

- **Eyestrain**
- **Neck and back pain**
- **Hand, wrist and elbow pain**
- **Stress**
- **Tension headaches, dizziness, nausea, tension, and irritability.**



VDUs don't cause these problems directly, but how they're set up and used can lead to these symptoms.

It's hard to work at a VDU for long periods of time without proper rest. You're concentrating hard, and your eyes are moving back and forth from the screen to your paperwork. Your hands and wrists get constant, repetitive exercise.



But there are ways to ease the strain.

This booklet is one way your employer is helping you to stay healthy and productive when you work with VDUs.



Workstation design can help eliminate most problems

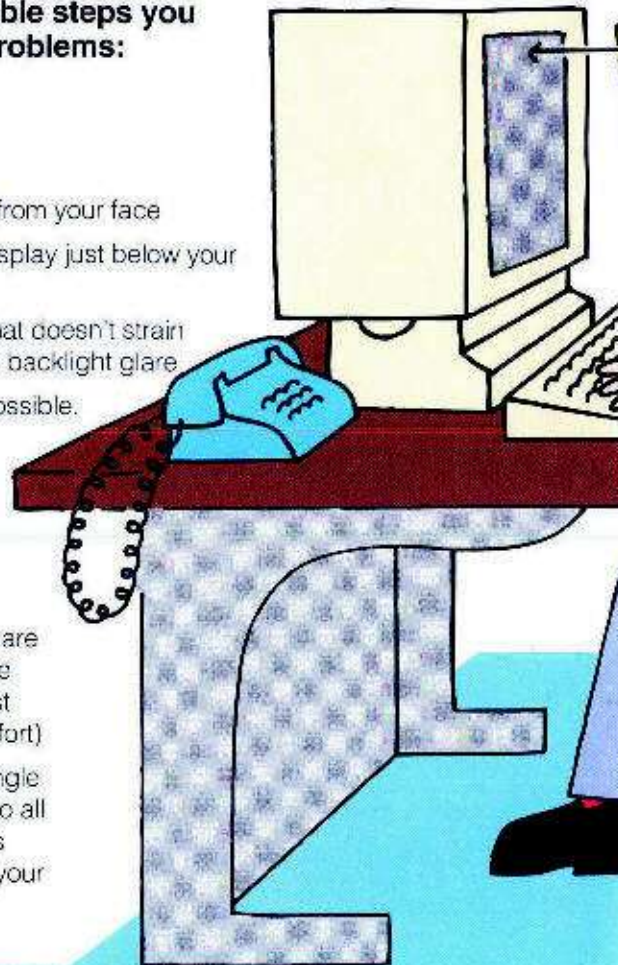
Here are some possible steps you can take to reduce problems:

Set up your VDU screen:

- About half a metre or so from your face
- With the top line of the display just below your eye level
- At a comfortable angle that doesn't strain your neck and eliminates backlight glare
- Close to a blank wall if possible.

Set up your keyboard:

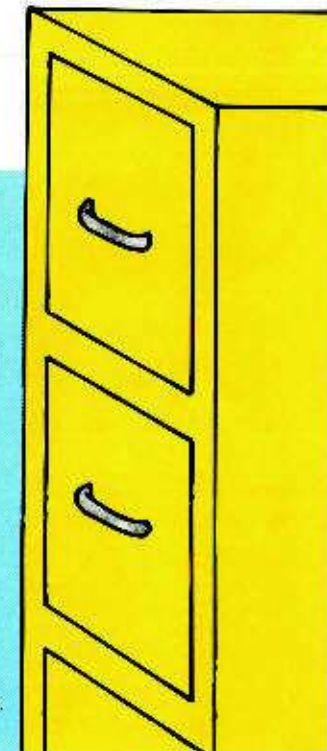
- So your hands and arms are straight and parallel to the floor. (A padded wrist rest can provide greater comfort)
- Tilted at a comfortable angle that allows easy access to all keys. Keep your wrists as straight as possible and your elbows at a 90° angle.



Set up your **document holder** at the same height as the screen.

Try to organize your work surface:

- By placing your books, files, and phone so that you have plenty of room to work
- With enough room to move your legs underneath.

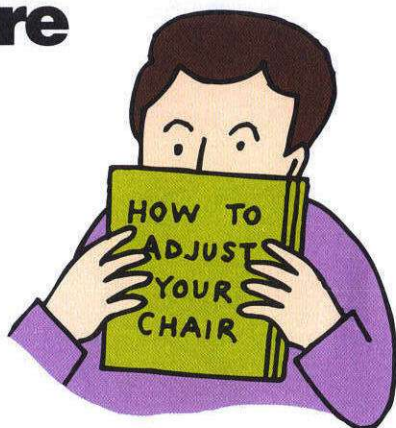


Proper posture and position

prevent neck and back strains

Use the science of ergonomics—

Set up your workstation to fit *your* body and needs. Allow enough room to make it easy to shift positions periodically.



Learn how to adjust your chair and other furniture for the greatest comfort and support.



Adjust your chair so that:

- You can sit with your back straight and head level.
- Your feet can rest flat on the floor or a footrest. The backs of your knees should be at a 90° angle, slightly higher than the chair seat.
- Your lower back is supported to allow for the natural inward curve.
- You have some place to rest your arms.



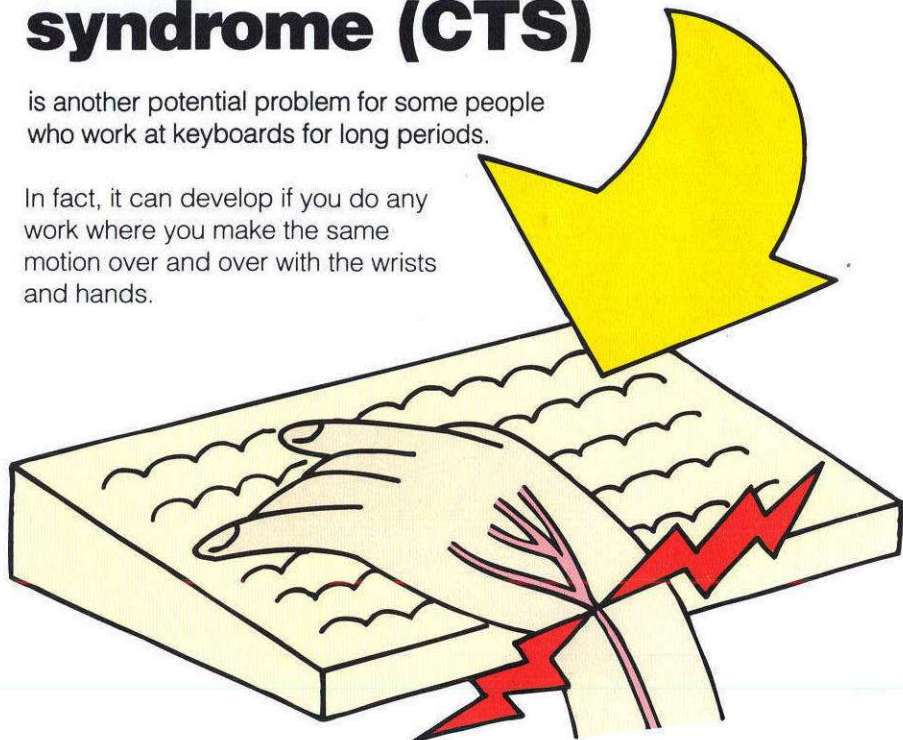
Different tasks require different postures.

When entering data, you need to lean slightly forward so you can read the copy easier. When you review information on the screen, you can lean back slightly more. Remember to eliminate neck and eye-strain—keep your head straight and eyes parallel to the screen.

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS)

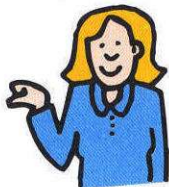
is another potential problem for some people who work at keyboards for long periods.

In fact, it can develop if you do any work where you make the same motion over and over with the wrists and hands.



What happens is this: The "tunnel" your nerves pass through going from the forearm to the hands gets compressed. That can cause your hands and wrists to ache or tingle, or to become numb and even lose their function. Help prevent this problem by taking breaks to give your hands a rest.

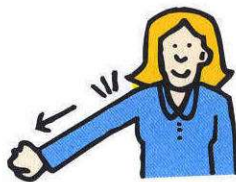
Doing stretching exercises for your hands before you start working is also a good way to prevent problems. Particularly effective is the forearm stretch. Follow these steps:



1. Place your hand level with your shoulder, (palm out, elbow bent), make a fist, then bend wrist forward.

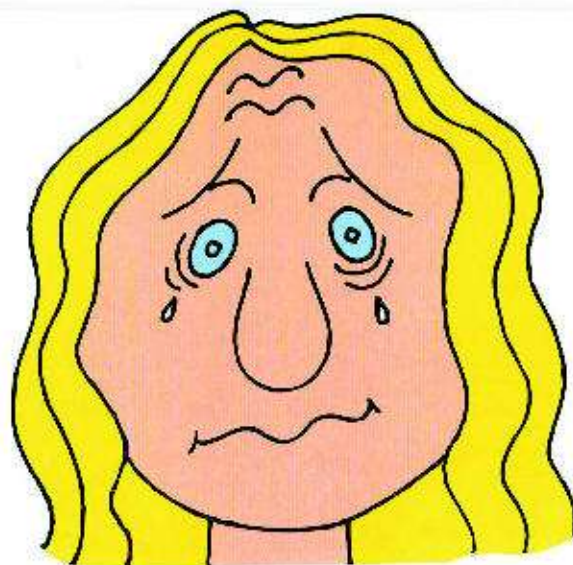


2. In a corkscrew motion, turn your hand and arm inward (thumb pointing down) and straighten arm.



3. You should feel a stretch on the top of your forearm. Hold for 15 seconds. Repeat three to five times.

But if your hands *do* begin to swell or if any of the symptoms mentioned above occur, tell your supervisor immediately.



Avoid eyestrain with proper lighting

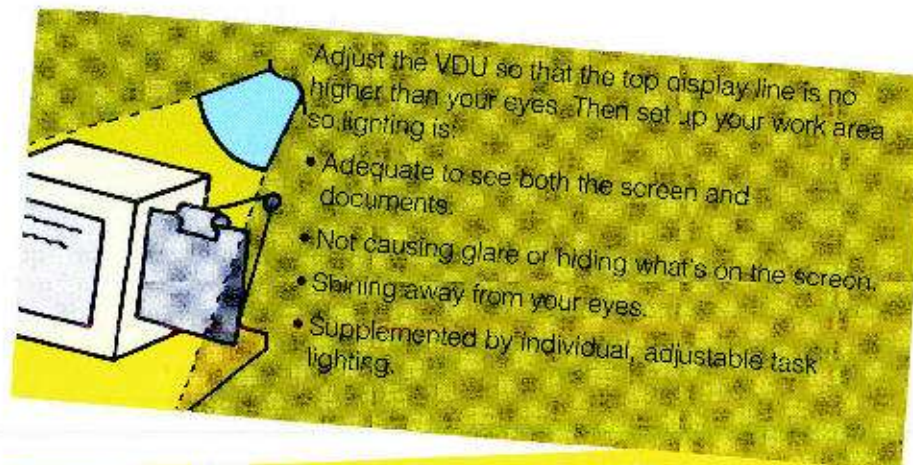
Eye irritation, blurred vision, head aches, and dizziness can be greatly reduced with proper lighting.



Use room lighting that's dimmer than you'd use for other tasks.

You also need lighting that won't create glare and reflections on the screen or surrounding surfaces.

Tell your supervisor if you can't clear up blurry screen images on your machine. It may need professional maintenance.

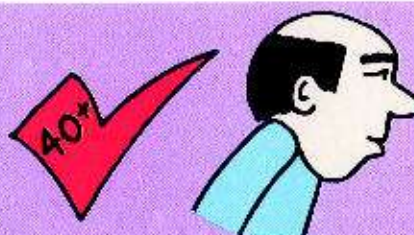


Reducing glare can also help.

- Place the VDU at right angles to the window.
- Adjust window blinds or shades as needed.
- Use a nonreflective VDU screen or add a screen cover.
- Shield lighting to prevent glare.
- Adjust the VDU screen brightness to low and set the contrast control to high.

Also ...

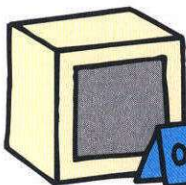
Have your eyes examined before you start sustained work on a VDU, and when you next visit, tell your doctor that you work with a VDU. Have an eyesight test if necessary, with a routine checkup every two years or so, and more often if you're over 40.



STRESS

TENSION

IRRITABILITY



are another concern for some VDU users. Organizing your workstation to minimize glare, eyestrain, bad posture, and discomfort should reduce stress.

Here are some other ways to help reduce stress:

- **Change positions occasionally.** Experiment to find how you're most comfortable.
- **Give your eyes a break** by refocusing on something at a distance.
- **Try at-your-desk exercises** like shrugging your shoulders slowly, stretching your head from side to side, or reaching your arms up straight over your head to reduce tension and loosen muscles.



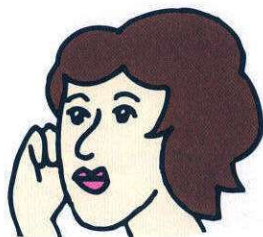
Also, totally relax the upper body and collapse your head down between your knees, letting your hands dangle to the sides of your legs for a few seconds.

You also may want to talk with your supervisor about changing your work flow to give you a break from VDU work every couple of hours. Use this time for tasks such as filing or phoning, or, if possible, even taking a short walk.



What about radiation?

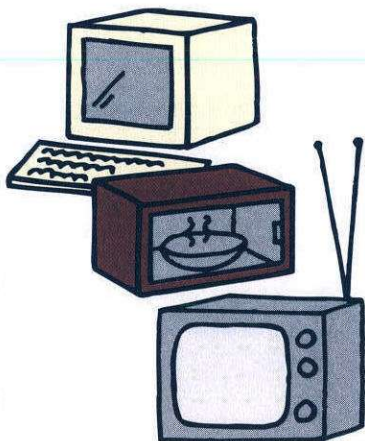
There's been concern about VDUs exposing operators to dangerous radiation that could cause miscarriages, birth defects, or other health problems. There is **no creditable evidence** that **VDU radiation causes such problems.**



However, prolonged stress, bad posture, and other "ergonomic" factors have been linked to problems during pregnancy. If you are worried, talk to your supervisor.

The levels of radiation emitted by VDUs are **extremely low**—similar to televisions or microwave ovens. And today's equipment is being designed to prevent exposure.

Precautions are appropriate, so if you're pregnant or planning a family in the near future, and you are concerned about VDU use, ask your supervisor if your company has any policies on this subject. Some companies agree to honor requests by pregnant women to transfer to non-VDU duties.



TIP:

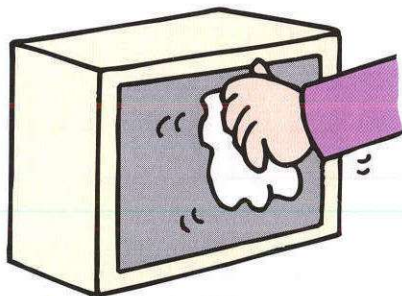
To reduce the risk of exposure even more, stay away from the back and sides of VDUs. Set up workstations so no one works directly behind another VDU.

Look after your VDU



Like any machine, a VDU needs regular care and maintenance.

- **Keep the screen clean.** Dust, fingerprints, and dirt can blur the images and strain your eyes. Some manufacturers can provide special cloths for cleaning VDU screens.

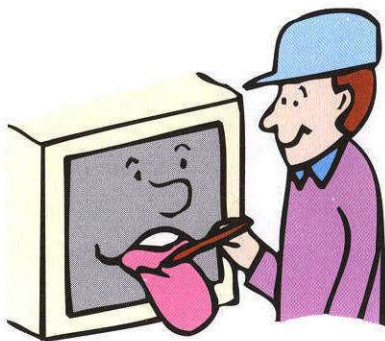


- **Keep food and beverages off and away from your VDU.**

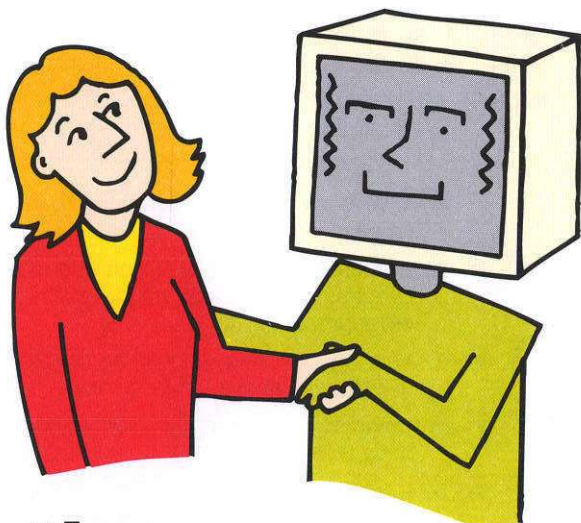
Spilling drinks or getting crumbs in the keyboard is bad for the equipment.



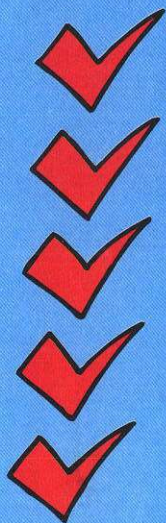
- **Your equipment may need other maintenance, too.** That's probably not your responsibility, but make sure your VDU is checked regularly by professionals.



Keep your productive partnership working



with a minimum of
stress and strain.



Ask for an eye examination.

Arrange your work area to provide good lighting and minimize glare.

Set up your chair, screen, keyboard, document holder, and work surface to minimize strain on your eyes, neck, and back.

Take breaks from VDU tasks.

Talk to your supervisor if you have problems, or if you are pregnant and have questions or concerns.

Test Your VDU Knowledge

QUIZ

Directions: Circle **T** if the statement is true
or **F** if the statement is false.



- T F** 1. A VDU consists of a screen, a keyboard, and a cathode ray tube.
- T F** 2. Constant work at a VDU can add to health problems, such as eyestrain, neck, back, hand, wrist, or elbow pain, stress, and other problems.
- T F** 3. Your VDU screen should be placed with the top line of the display well above your eye level.
- T F** 4. Using ergonomics means setting up your workstation to fit your body and needs.
- T F** 5. Carpal tunnel syndrome can develop if you do any work where you make the same motion over and over with the wrists and hands.
- T F** 6. To avoid eyestrain when using a VDU, you should use room lighting that is much brighter than you'd use for other tasks.
- T F** 7. To reduce glare, you should place your VDU screen at right angles to a window.
- T F** 8. To help reduce stress, you should keep your eyes focused on the VDU screen for as long as possible.
- T F** 9. There is no credible evidence that VDU radiation causes miscarriages, birth defects, or other health problems.
- T F** 10. To help maintain your VDU, you should keep the screen clean, keep food and beverages away, and have your VDU checked regularly.

Employee's Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For the correct answers, turn this page upside down.

1. T 2. T 3. F—the top line of the display should be just below eye level. 4. T 5. T 6. F—you should use lighting that is dimmer than you would use for other tasks. 7. T 8. F—you should try to give your eyes a break by refocusing on something at distance. 9. T 10. T