

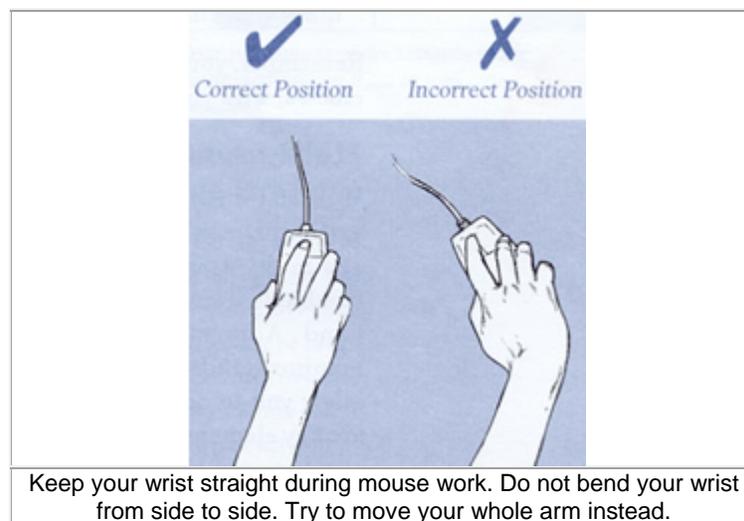
Ergonomics - Mouse

People either love or hate their computer mouse. A number of things can be done to make your mouse user friendly. Listed below are a number of suggestions you can try to improve performance and decrease discomfort.

Most computers at TRU now use Windows XP™ which can be used to customize the mouse to your own personal preferences. In the Control Panel is a Mouse icon. Double clicking on this allows you to make adjustments such as: pointer speed, double click speed, customize the mouse if you are left or right handed and change the pointer image. If you frequently drag your mouse you can help to reduce muscle soreness in fingers and hands by locking the drag switch. You then don't have to hold the mouse button down as you drag. Adjust the mouse speed to suit the task. If you adjust it too fast it is harder to control for tasks requiring accuracy. If it is too slow when doing general tasks you will have to lift it more often.

A major cause of problems with a mouse is the location of the mouse on the work surface. If the mouse is close to your body there is less strain placed on the shoulder and arm. If your arm is straight then strain is placed on the arm and hand. Ideally the mouse should be on the same level as the keyboard tray (and not on the desk above and to the side of the tray as is often seen). If your arm is stretched to use the mouse muscle fatigue is increased. If there is not enough room a rest or support could be attached to the tray. If there is enough room an extend keyboard tray which will accommodate both the keyboard and the mouse pad can be installed by [Facilities](#) or phone local 5388.

Your wrist should be straight when using the mouse, any movement should come from the shoulder and not the wrist.



If you are an intensive mouse user then try using both hands to use the mouse. This gives each arm a break.

Ensure that the mouse pad allows free and easy movement. A number of mouse pads have "built-in" wrist rests. Used properly the rest should support the wrist and the whole arm should guide the mouse. If you are resting on the wrist rest and pivoting the hand from the wrist you have the potential for future problems.

Remember that people are different. As a result there are a large number of different styles and sizes of mice to accommodate different people. Just because the one you are currently using doesn't fit your hand doesn't mean you have to keep using it. Head to an office store and try a few demos out until you have found one you like. The mouse should fit your hand, by having a smooth, tear-drop shape, without angles and hard edges and have sloping sides and front.

You are not a machine and unlike a machine your muscles need recovery time from repetitive tasks. You should not be "mousing" for 7 hours a day without a break. In addition to coffee and lunch breaks you should do different tasks or pause for a minute or two every hour to rest your muscles and to change your posture. One hand exercise that can be carried out at your desk is to spread your fingers and hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Make a fist (with your thumbs on the outside), hold for 10 seconds and relax. Spread your fingers and hold for 10 seconds. Relax and continue work.