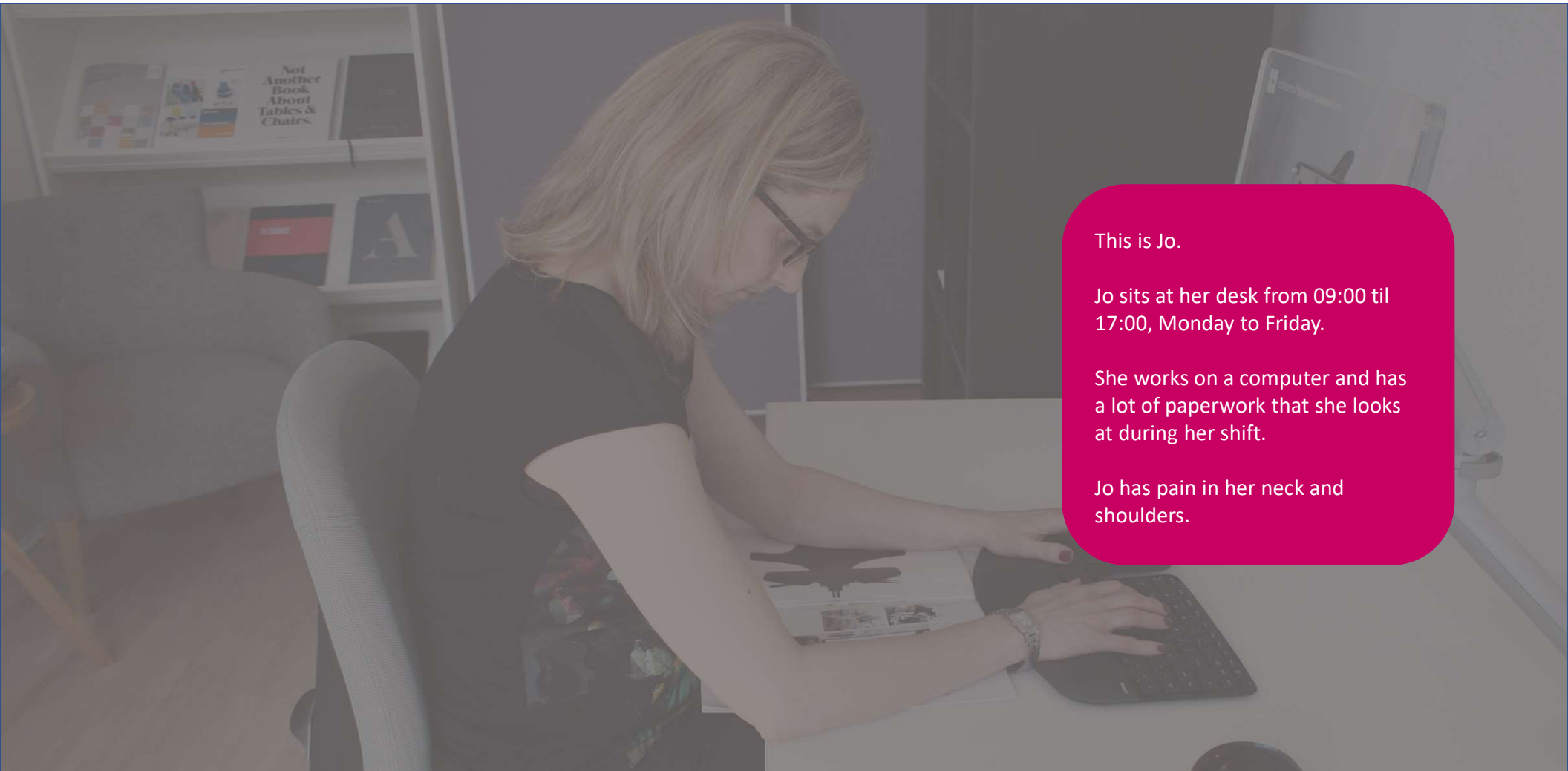




Workstation setup: Best practice

A step-by-step guide to setting up a desk and work equipment



This is Jo.

Jo sits at her desk from 09:00 til 17:00, Monday to Friday.

She works on a computer and has a lot of paperwork that she looks at during her shift.


Jo has pain in her neck and shoulders.



Now this will sound silly...

...but....

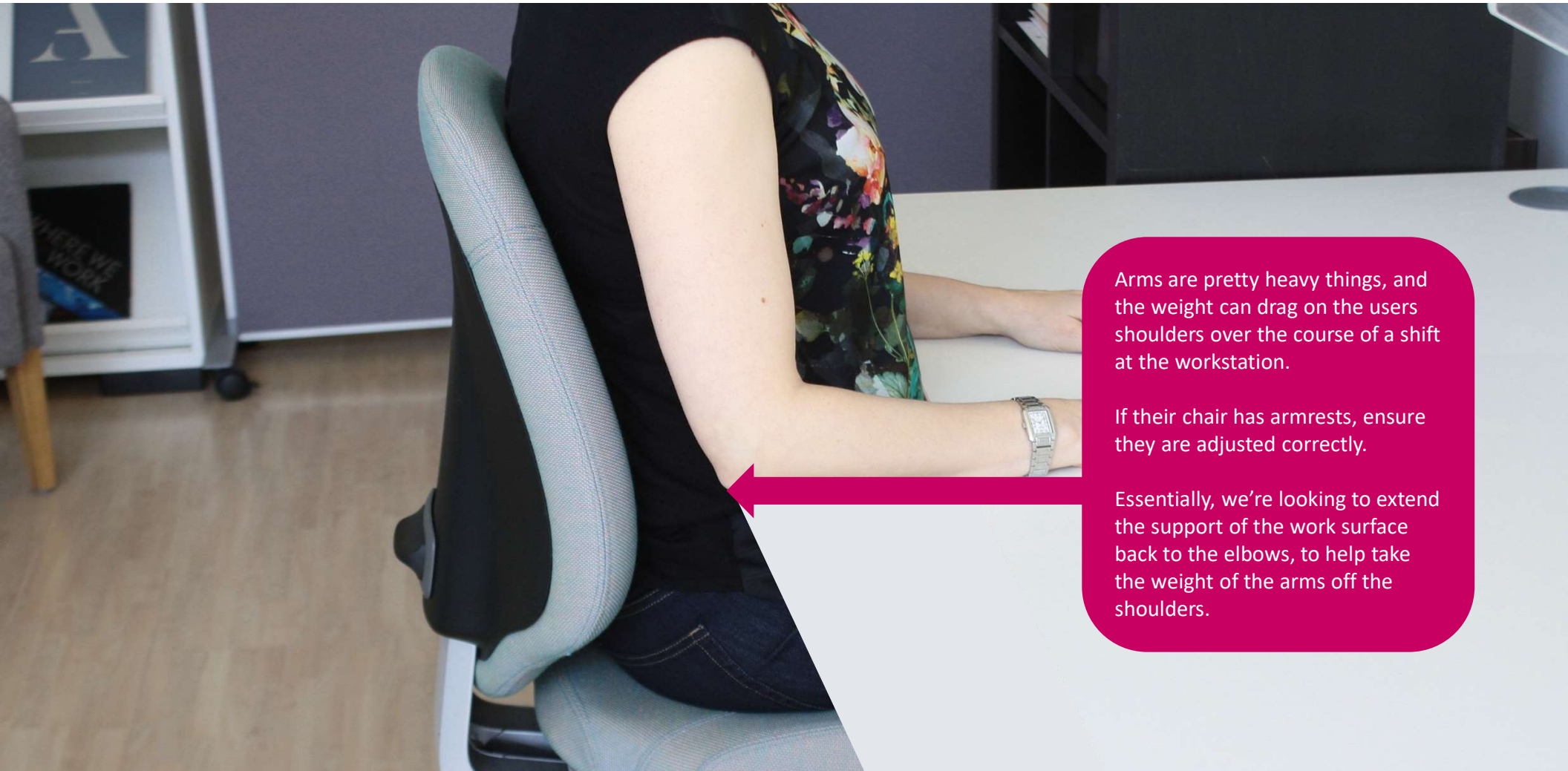
...when you sit on the chair, sit with your back-side right into the chair.



To judge the correct seat height, we're looking for the user's elbows and lower arms to fall in line with the desktop, keeping a ~90 degree angle at the elbows.

Too low, and the desk can dig into the arm; too high and you get an unnatural bend at the wrists.

Use the height adjustment control to set the seat height accordingly. While it's always tempting to pull the lever with someone sat on the chair, bear in mind that a sudden drop could aggravate a back injury!



Arms are pretty heavy things, and the weight can drag on the users shoulders over the course of a shift at the workstation.

If their chair has armrests, ensure they are adjusted correctly.

Essentially, we're looking to extend the support of the work surface back to the elbows, to help take the weight of the arms off the shoulders.



Check to see that the shaping of the backrest is in the right place and adjust the height as necessary.

Ideally, we're looking for the inward curve of the chair to match up with the user's own lumbar curve as much as possible.

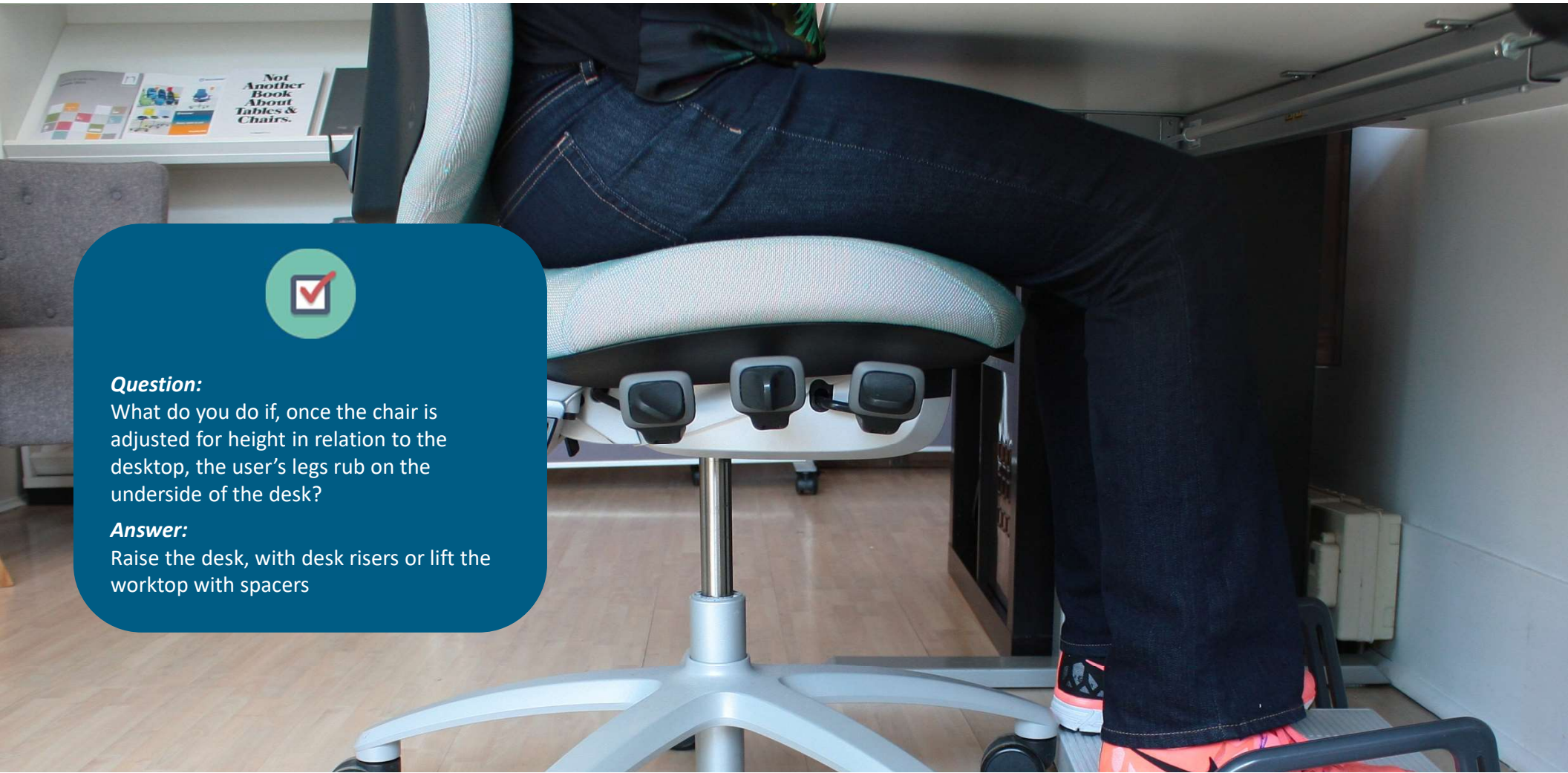
If the chair has a rake adjustable backrest, set this to a comfortable angle that supports the user without them feeling too reclined or that they're being pushed forward over the desk.

If the chair is fitted with a lumbar support, this is always a good point to demonstrate this to the user.



After setting the chair height, check that the user's hips are higher than their knees.

This is to ensure bloodflow isn't restricted to the lower limbs and the user doesn't get pins and needles in their feet.



Question:

What do you do if, once the chair is adjusted for height in relation to the desktop, the user's legs rub on the underside of the desk?

Answer:

Raise the desk, with desk risers or lift the worktop with spacers



Check the depth of the seat pad and adjust this accordingly to ensure adequate support for the users thighs.

We're looking for 2-3-finger-widths between the leading edge of the seat and the back of the lower leg.



Feet dangling off the chair?

No problem! Use a foot rest to support the users feet.

Proper support for your back and neck starts at ground level.

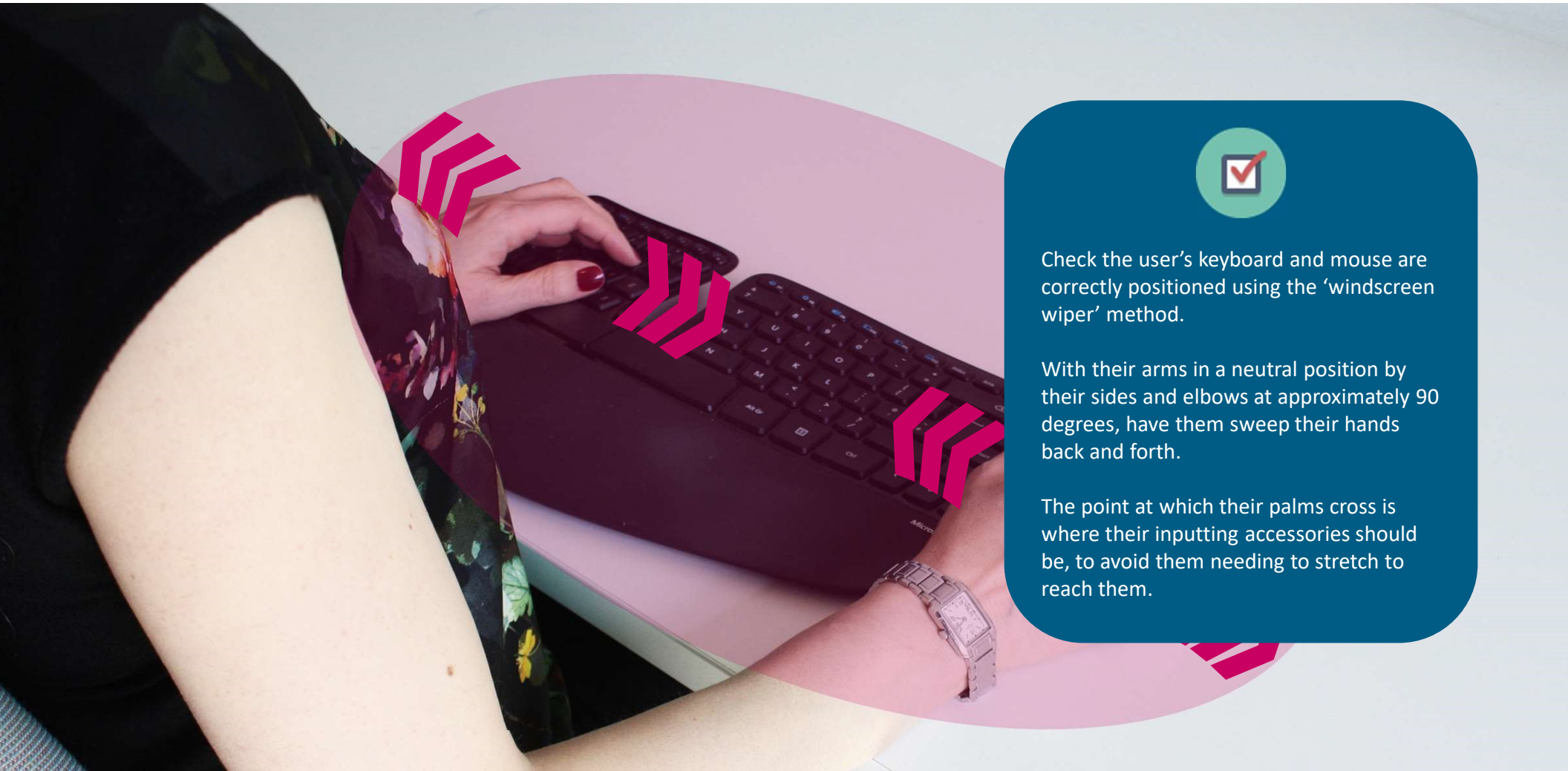
No footrest? Use a block of printer paper instead!



Mouse position will require the user to stretch to operate it



Paperwork between the keyboard and the user means they will need to reach over it



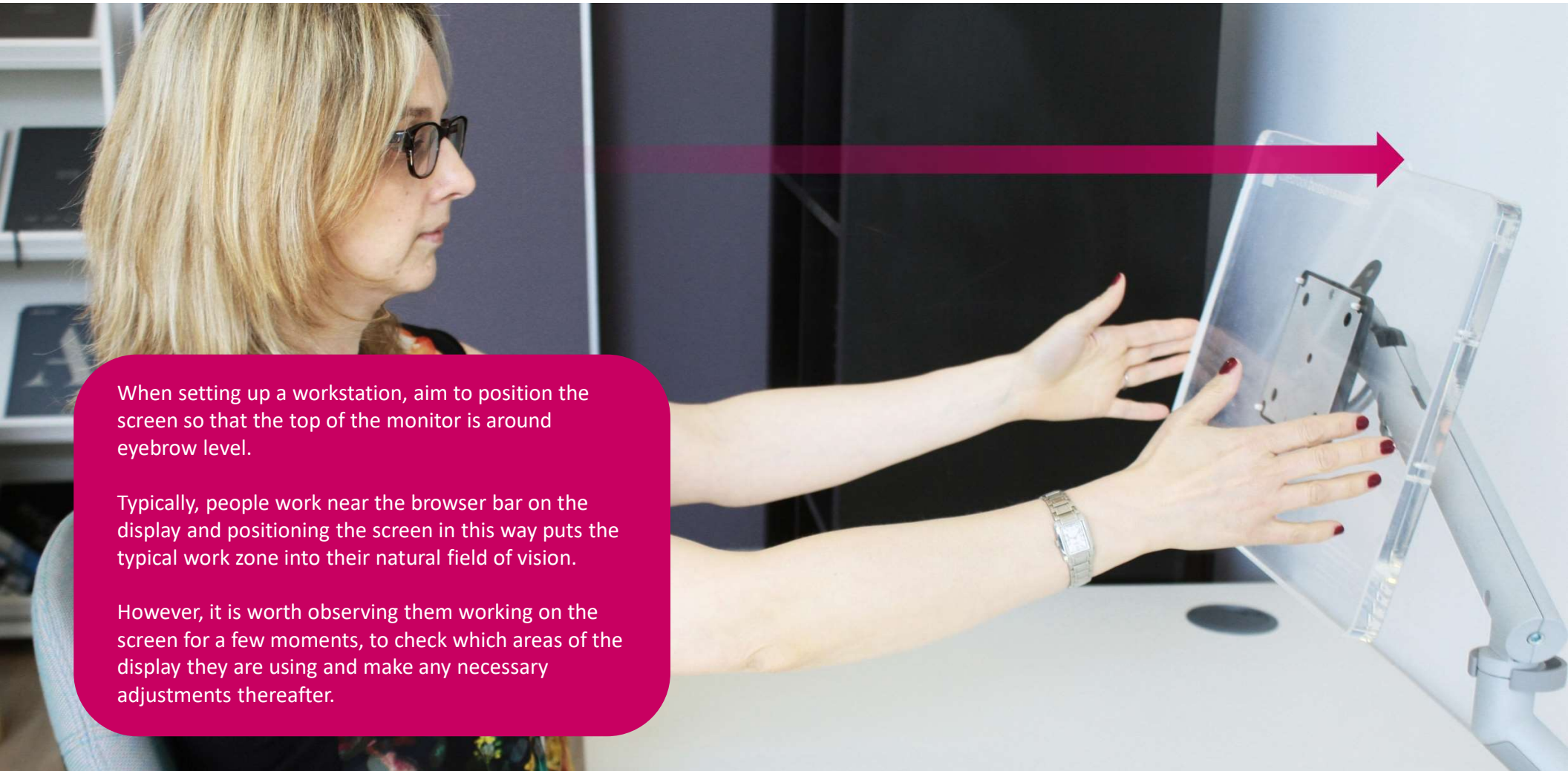
Check the user's keyboard and mouse are correctly positioned using the 'windscreen wiper' method.

With their arms in a neutral position by their sides and elbows at approximately 90 degrees, have them sweep their hands back and forth.

The point at which their palms cross is where their inputting accessories should be, to avoid them needing to stretch to reach them.



Bring the keyboard and mouse closer to the user, to ensure they are not stretching!



When setting up a workstation, aim to position the screen so that the top of the monitor is around eyebrow level.

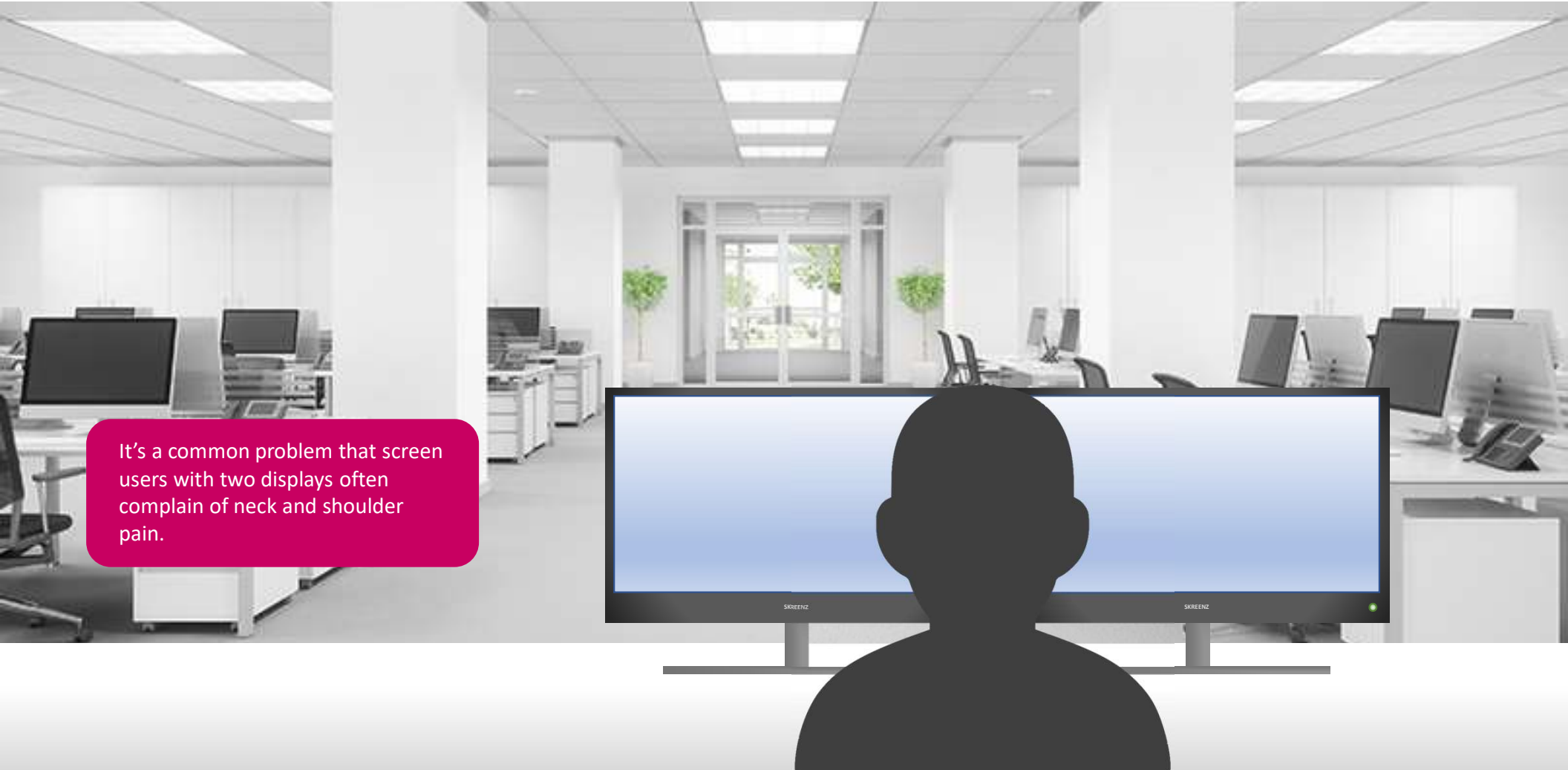
Typically, people work near the browser bar on the display and positioning the screen in this way puts the typical work zone into their natural field of vision.

However, it is worth observing them working on the screen for a few moments, to check which areas of the display they are using and make any necessary adjustments thereafter.



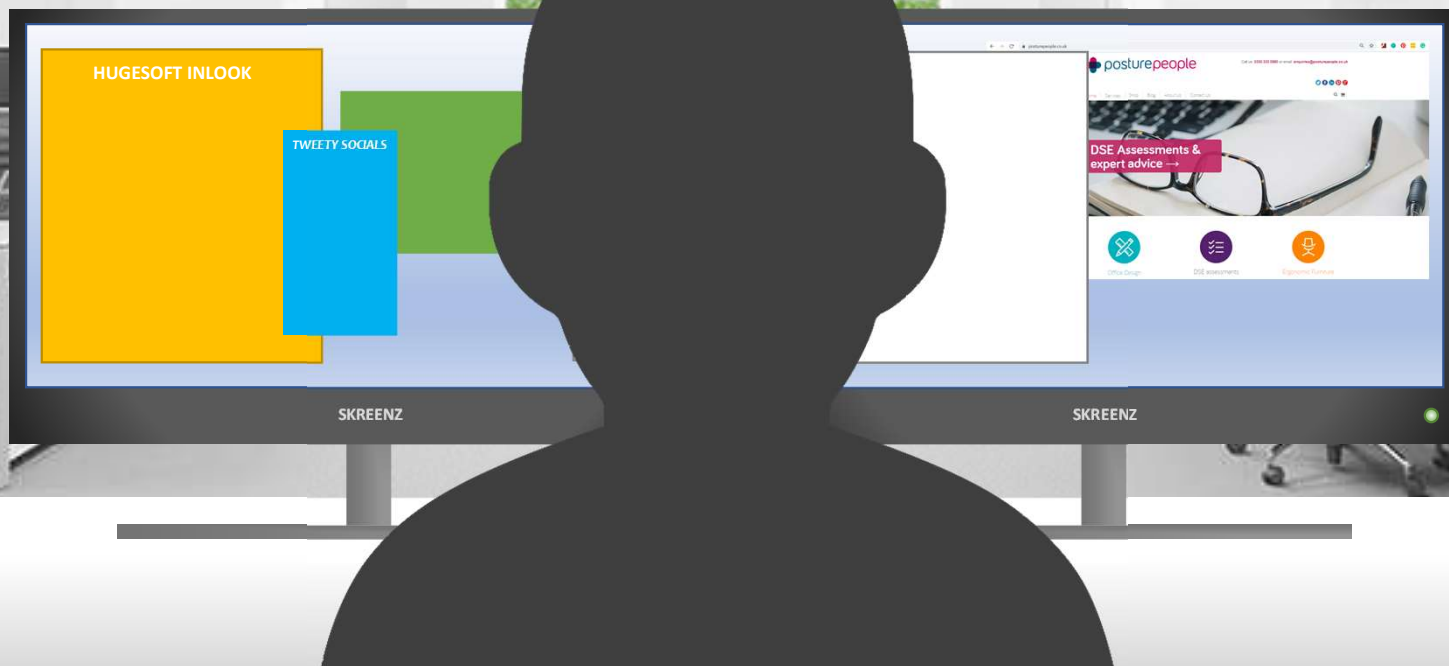
To gauge the correct distance, the monitor should be around arms-reach distance from the user.

If you struggle to see the characters, try adjusting the magnification of the screen in the settings menu.

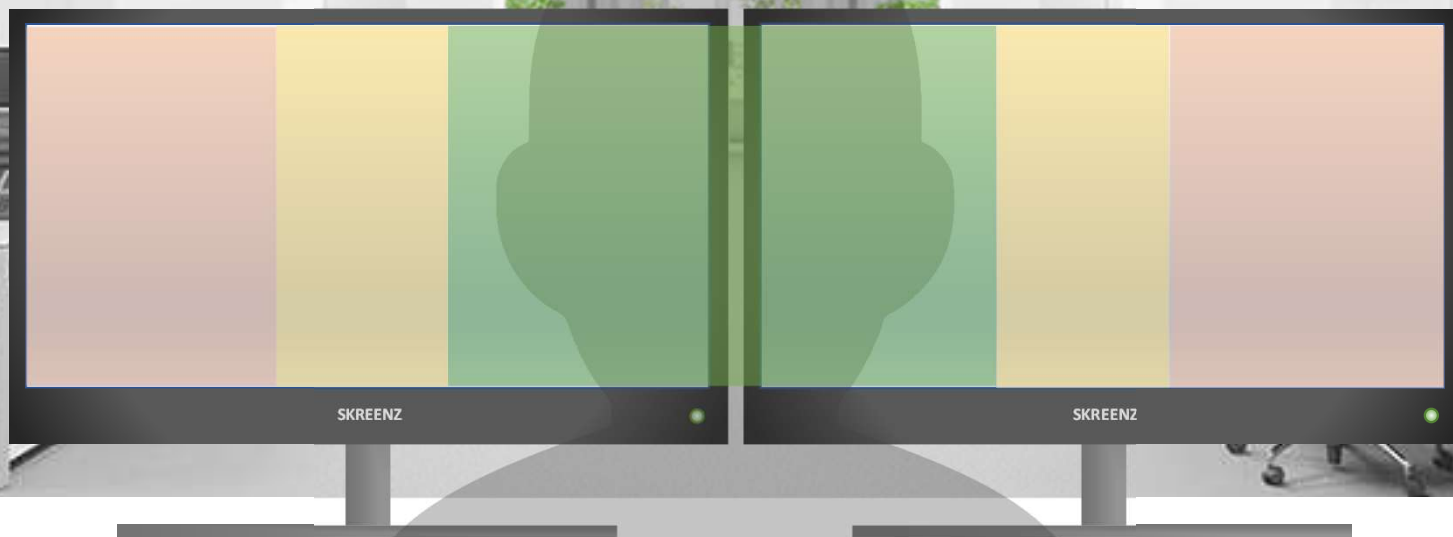


It's a common problem that screen users with two displays often complain of neck and shoulder pain.

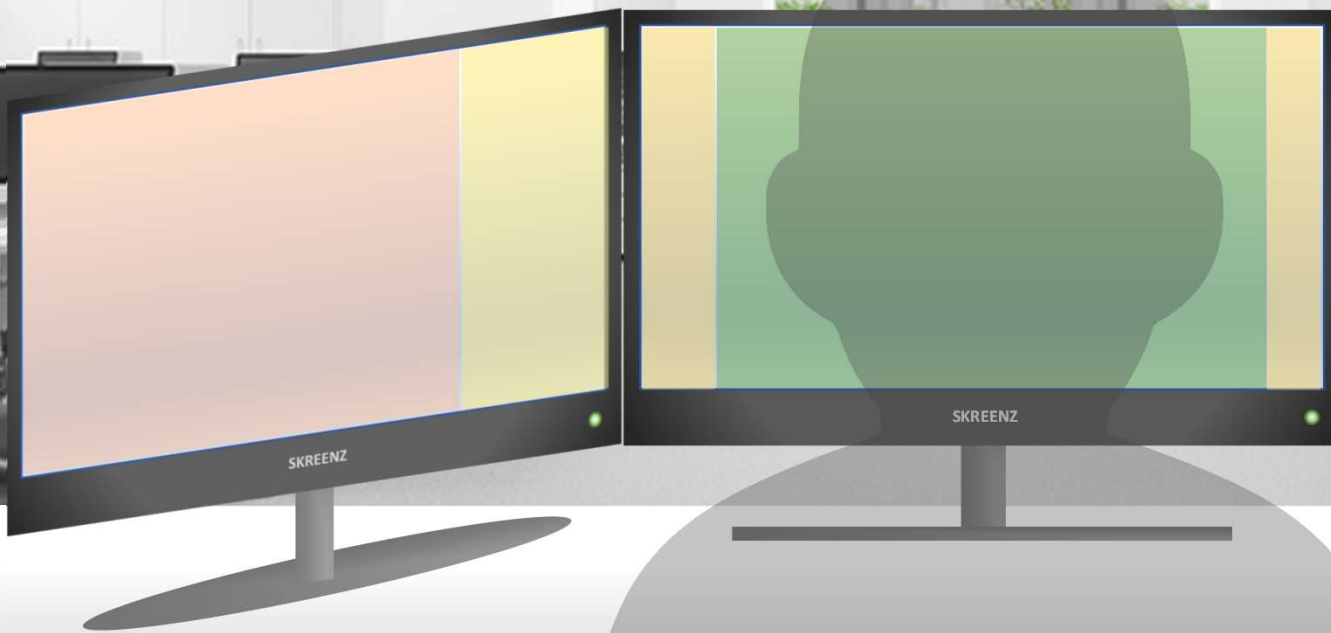
A large number of open applications spread over two widescreen displays can lead to the DSE user repeatedly twisting at the neck from left-to-right-to-left and so on over the course of their shift, eight hours a day, five days a week.



One technique of handling this kind of setup is by changing the position of the on-screen applications. Place the most commonly used programmes centrally to the formation, between the widths of the shoulders; less commonly used apps can then be placed further towards the outside...



The other technique is to position one screen directly in front of the user as their primary screen, with the other offset to one side as the secondary screen. It's preferable to use these in a ratio of at least 80:20, in order to reduce the amount of twisting in the neck being performed.





Workstation setup? Use the SHIELD

Seat Height Inline Elbows Layout Display = SHIELD

Seat Height – bringing the user to correct height

Inline Elbows – ensure the users elbows are inline with the desk

Layout – check and adjust the position of users other work equipment

Display – adjust the height of the screen(s) according to the users eye level