

Welcome to The Hard Hat Training Series!



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Welcome to Safety Provisions, part of the Hard Hat Training series! Today you will learn about office ergonomics. In this training, we will provide you with the knowledge needed to help you understand what ergonomics is, how it is beneficial, and how to apply it to your everyday life at home and at work.



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ERGONOMICS
OFFICE
AWARENESS TRAINING



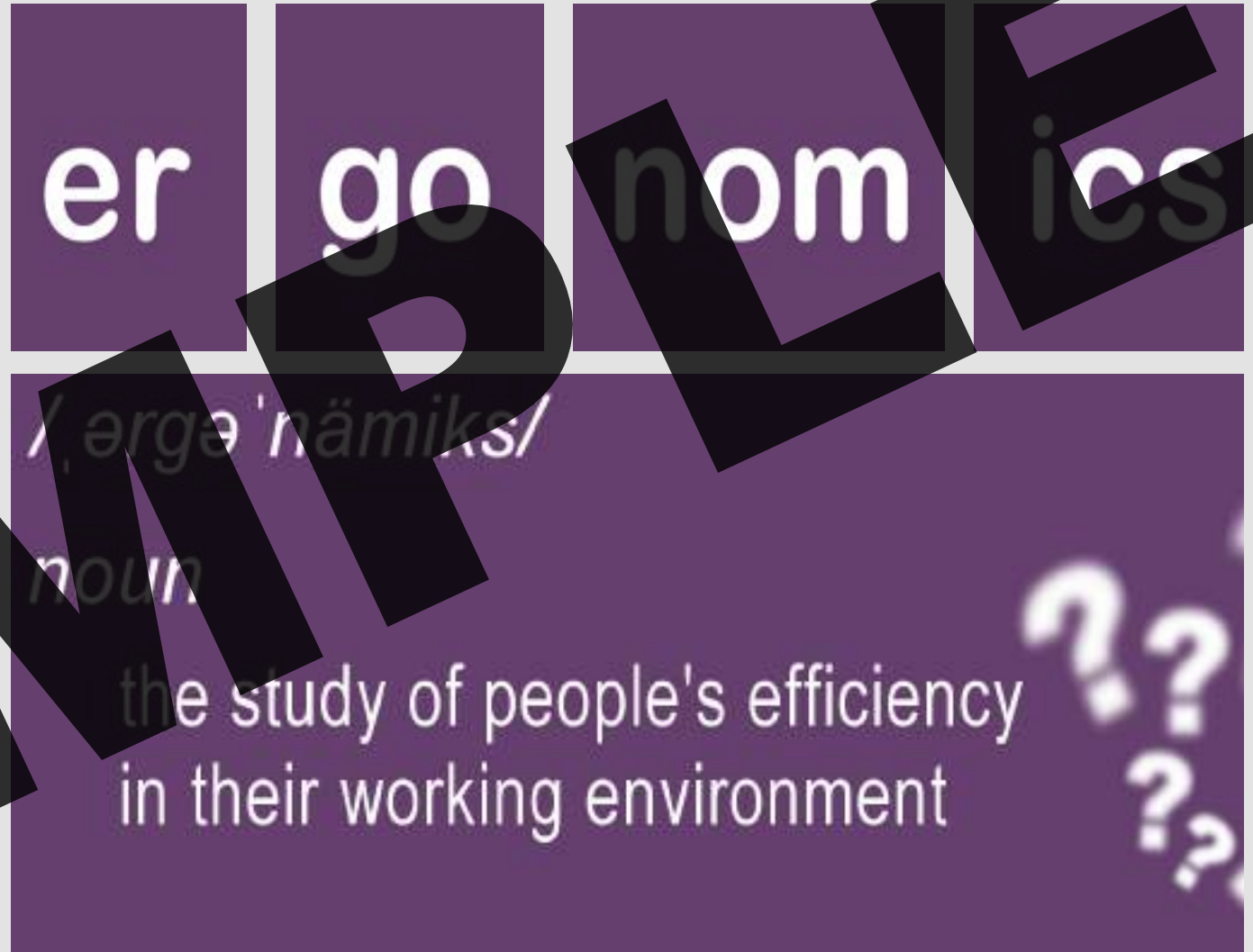
Definition

When most people hear the word “ergonomics” they think of lifting heavy objects, but ergonomics is much more than that. Generally, ergonomics is defined as the study of employees’ efficiency in their work environments, or as an applied science concerned with designing and arranging objects employees use so that they and the objects interact efficiently and safely.



Did You Know?

“Ergon” is Greek for work and “nomoi” means natural laws, while “ics” means in characteristic of. Put it all together and what do you get? “In characteristic of work and natural laws.”



Impact

Surprisingly, ergonomics-related injuries are among the most frequently reported causes of lost or restricted work time, with about 357,000 injuries reported each year. This is about 31% of all worker injuries and illness cases. To the right are more statistics. As you can see, ergonomics has a huge impact on businesses and individuals alike.

BY THE NUMBERS

Musculoskeletal disorders cost the U.S. about \$850 billion per year

62% of people with MSDs report some degree of limitation of activity compared with 14% in the general population

Workers with MSD claims lost a median of 10 work days.



MSDs account for 14% of physician visits and 19% of hospital stays



MSDs are chronic, painful, and affect workers' quality of life

Musculoskeletal disorders are among the most prevalent medical problems in the United States, affecting seven percent of the population.



Musculoskeletal disorders happen in every job. Although they can happen anywhere, there are certain occupations where MSDs occur most frequently. Refer to this graphic for some examples.

TOP TEN OCCUPATIONS WITH THE MOST MSDs

1. Nurse Aides and Attendants
2. Truck Drivers
3. Laborers (not involved in construction)
4. Assemblers
5. Janitors and Cleaners
6. Registered Nurses
7. Stock Handlers and Baggers
8. Construction Laborers
9. Cashiers
10. Carpenters

Benefits of Ergonomics

That being said, the positive impact of ergonomics cannot be ignored. Studies have shown that the benefits of ergonomics can affect the time, value, and quality of your work. Because of this, ergonomics should be implemented to limit negative effects.



When proper ergonomics are in place, medical fees and extra time off are unnecessary. This benefits the company by keeping extra costs down, and helps the employees avoid injuries that would inevitably diminish their wages.



Consider this ergonomic success story for proof. As the calendar year ended, Marissa, the assistant VP of administrative services in her company, noticed that worker's compensation claims were costing the company a considerable sum. That year alone, eight employees lost 345 workdays in total due to carpal tunnel syndrome. Marissa decided it was time to make a change.





She involved each department in her company with the new ergonomic program. In just two years, they replaced the office furniture with ergonomically-sound options. They purchased footrests, elbow cushions, and other ergonomic supplies. They also moved around and adjusted office equipment such as desks, computers, keyboards, and so on to better fit employee needs.



Additionally, Marissa set up studies of the equipment used in the office and organized discussions with her employees to review ergonomic concerns and practices. At the end of those two years, ergonomics was at the forefront of everyone's mind. Not to mention that lost workdays declined 75 percent, from 345 to 89.



Standards

OSHA used to have a specific standard for ergonomics, but it was repealed in 2001. This is because there are so many different scenarios in a workplace that it is hard to cover them all. In this training, we will do our best to cover as many as possible so you can apply what you learn to your specific field of work.



Why Training?

No matter the situation, it is common to hear workers and even employers ask, “Where does it state we need to be trained?” Can’t a worker also be deemed “qualified” based on experience? The answer is “no.” Experience helps, yes, but regulations are very clear that employees must be trained (no matter how long they’ve been on the job) and that it is the employer who is responsible for overseeing that safety training, ensuring employees have the understanding, knowledge, and skills needed to work safely.





Initial training and refresher training, as well as any written and practical evaluations, must be documented and filed. At the very least, in the case of an investigation, OSHA will want to see proof of proper and consistent training (in the way of training outlines, class lists, training goals, tests, certificates, and so on.) These documents should include the name of the person who taught the class or conducted the evaluation.



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WORKERS MUST RECEIVE REFRESHER TRAINING WHEN...

1. There are changes in their assigned duties.

2. There are changes regarding potential exposure to hazards, for which the employee has not received training.

3. If any deficiency has been noted in an employee's work performance that is related to the safety and health of themselves or other workers.

4. If an accident has occurred, or anytime an employee is injured or nearly injured during operations.

Note: In some areas, refresher training is required at least every three years (if not sooner).

Training is not just a one-and-done occurrence; it is on-going. In fact, similar to the guidelines set down for when initial training is required, OSHA is also specific when it comes to "refresher training." More specifically, OSHA acknowledges the need for "refresher" or "follow up" training whenever there is a demonstrated need for it. Listed here are some common instances when retraining is required. Can you think of any others?



The extent of training will be determined by the employer, but at the very least it should include classroom instruction followed by a written and practical examination that prove continued competency.

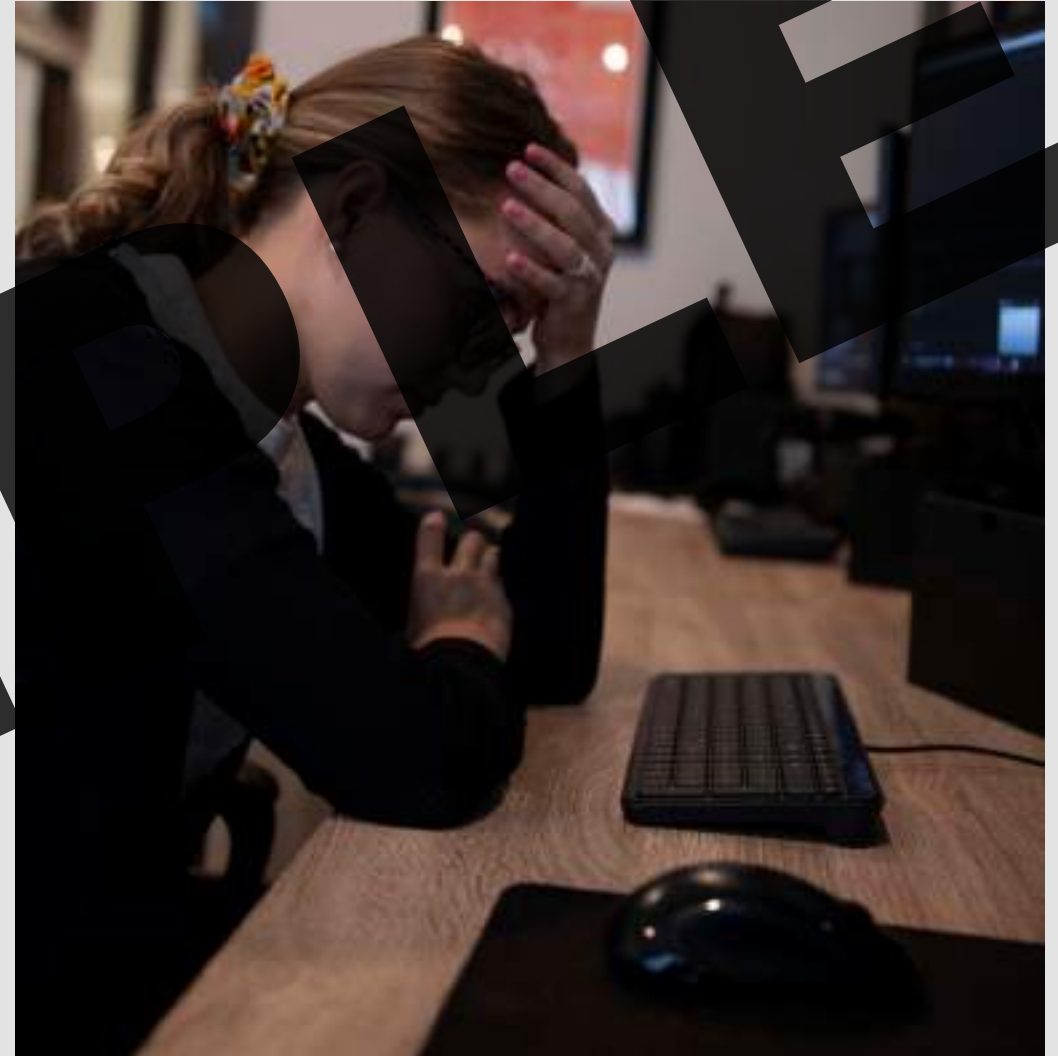




This training will help you work much more comfortably and efficiently and ensure that you understand how to design your job to fit your ergonomic needs. Also, because different jobs have unique hazards, we will go over the common risk factors that play into them. Doing this will help you identify such hazards and prevent the long-term effects that poor ergonomics create.



We will also go over parts of your anatomy that are affected by poor ergonomics, the types of musculoskeletal diseases (MSDs) that are associated with each body part, and how to prevent these MSDs from becoming serious and life-altering health issues.



General



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