

New Ergonomics Standard Released: The ANSI/HFES 100 – 2007

Background

To achieve maximum comfort and fit, human factors professionals have long relied on ergonomic standards to ensure that workspaces will support worker comfort and productivity. To keep pace with advances in technology and research, a new standard has been released.

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is a non-profit organization that oversees voluntary standards for the United States and coordinates US standards with global standards so products will work in harmony worldwide. ANSI, along with the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES) developed the new standard called ANSI/HFES 100–2007 which replaces the original 1988 standard. Three new issues are addressed in the new standard, while the remaining guidelines have been updated as based on new research.

Key Changes in the New Standard

- + The number and types of computer input devices in common use (such as mouse, trackball, joystick, etc) have increased dramatically since the original standard was released. Thus the new standard incorporates specifications for these new devices.
- + It is commonly recognized that people at work need to frequently change their work postures during the day to maintain comfort and productivity. Reflecting this perspective, the new standard places increased emphasis on all four recommended work postures (see Figure 1) for computer workstation users.
- + Workspace design used to be thought of in terms of specifying individual components, and did not consider how the parts need to work together as a whole. This type of thinking has shifted to a holistic perspective in which individual workstation components are specified in terms of how well they work together. Thus, the

“Installed Systems” chapter gives specifications for setting up an “integrated computer workstation” so input devices, visual displays and furniture work together to create a successful ergonomic solution.

Other Considerations

- + This standard is focused on the design and configuration of workstations to support computer-intensive work. It is not intended for use in designing workspaces for transient work situations in which mobile workers use portable technologies.
- + Dimensions for furniture design are basically unchanged and are still derived to fit 90% of the US population.

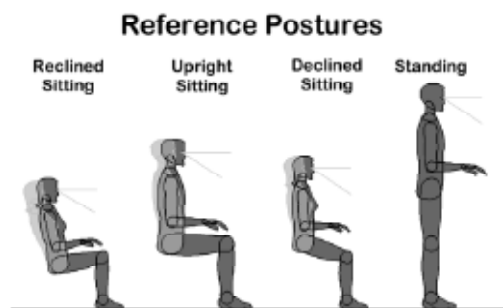


Figure 1, Illustration of Reference Postures. (From ANSI/HFES 100–2007 Human Factors Engineering of Computer Workstations © 2007)

Knoll research initiatives focus on links between workspace design and human behavior, health and performance, and the quality of the users' experience. We share and apply what we learn to inform product development and help our customers shape their work environments.

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