

Display Screen Equipment: *Work Safely with Screens*

DSE Regulations 1992 — workstation assessments, eye test entitlements, posture, break requirements and employer duties for all screen-based workers.



Last reviewed: August 2026



HSE · DSE Regs 1992



England, Scotland and Wales

ukworkrights.co.uk

In Northern Ireland, similar duties come from Northern Ireland's own health and safety law. Contact HSENI (Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland), not the HSE.

Does DSE apply to you?

- DSE regulations cover **habitual users** of display screen equipment — typically those who use a screen for an hour or more continuously, or for significant periods through the day
- This includes **computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones** used for work
- Applies whether you work in an **office, from home, or hot-desking**
- Your employer must carry out a **workstation assessment** — you can request one at any time
- DSE-related conditions include: **back pain, neck pain, eyestrain, headaches, upper limb disorders**
- Around **480,000 workers** report upper limb and neck disorders attributed to DSE work annually (HSE)

HOME WORKERS TOO

If you work from home, your employer must assess your home workstation. They must provide equipment to make it suitable if needed.

Your workstation — key adjustments

- **Chair:** fully adjustable — lumbar support, seat height so feet flat on floor (or footrest), thighs roughly horizontal
- **Screen:** top of screen at or just below eye level, arm's length away, no glare or reflections
- **Keyboard and mouse:** close enough to avoid stretching, wrists in neutral position
- **Desk:** enough space for all equipment without overcrowding — tidy to allow movement
- **Lighting:** no glare on screen — adjust blinds and screen tilt
- **Documents:** use a document holder at the same height and distance as the screen

✓ FREE EYE TEST

If you are a DSE user, your employer must pay for a basic eye test on request — and spectacles if the test shows they are specifically required for DSE work.

▲ TAKE BREAKS

Regular breaks from screen work are essential. The guidance is short, frequent breaks — e.g. 5–10 minutes every hour — rather than long breaks after prolonged use.

Frequently asked questions

Q Am I entitled to a free eye test?

Yes — if you are a habitual DSE user, your employer must pay for a basic eye test when you request one. If the test shows you specifically need glasses for DSE work, they must contribute to the cost of basic frames and lenses. This does not cover your general prescription or designer frames.

Q What should a workstation assessment include?

Chair, desk, screen position, keyboard and mouse, lighting, the work environment (noise, temperature), software usability, and the daily work pattern including breaks. The assessment should be reviewed if your job changes, if you move workstation, or if you report discomfort.

Q I work on a laptop all day — does DSE apply?

Yes. Laptops are covered. However, a laptop's built-in screen and keyboard are not ideal for prolonged use. Your employer should provide a separate keyboard, mouse and screen riser or docking station for regular laptop users to achieve a correct workstation setup.

Q What if I develop RSI or back pain from my workstation?

Report it to your employer promptly. Request a new workstation assessment. Your employer must take action — this may include ergonomic equipment, adjusted working practices or occupational health referral. If your employer fails to act, you may have a personal injury claim.

Delivery notes & attendance record

Before you start

Best delivered at people's actual desks rather than in a meeting room, so you can point at real setups. Cover laptop and home-working setups, not just office desks.

Questions to ask the team

1. When did you last have a DSE assessment, and has your setup changed since?
2. Who here works mainly from a laptop without a separate screen or keyboard?
3. How often do you genuinely take a screen break?
4. Does anyone have headaches, sore eyes or wrist pain they have not reported?

The law behind this talk

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended); Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 reg. 10

Employers must give workers comprehensible information, instruction and training on the risks they face — Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 s.2(2)(c) and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 reg. 10. Keep the record below as evidence that you did.

Attendance record

Topic

Display Screen Equipment: Work Safely with Screens

Date

Site / location

Delivered by

Actions agreed

Next talk due

Attendees

Name	Signature

Use the Print handout button to print this record. General guidance only, not legal advice. This toolbox talk is generic material and is not a substitute for a suitable and sufficient risk assessment by a competent person. Employers remain responsible for their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

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DSE Guidance

free guidance

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HSE ADVISORY TEAM

0300 003 1747

hse.gov.uk

ACAS

0300 123 1100

acas.org.uk

CITIZENS ADVICE

0800 144 8848

citizensadvice.org.uk

UK WORK RIGHTS

DSE Guidance

ukworkrights.co.uk/toolbox-dse.html

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