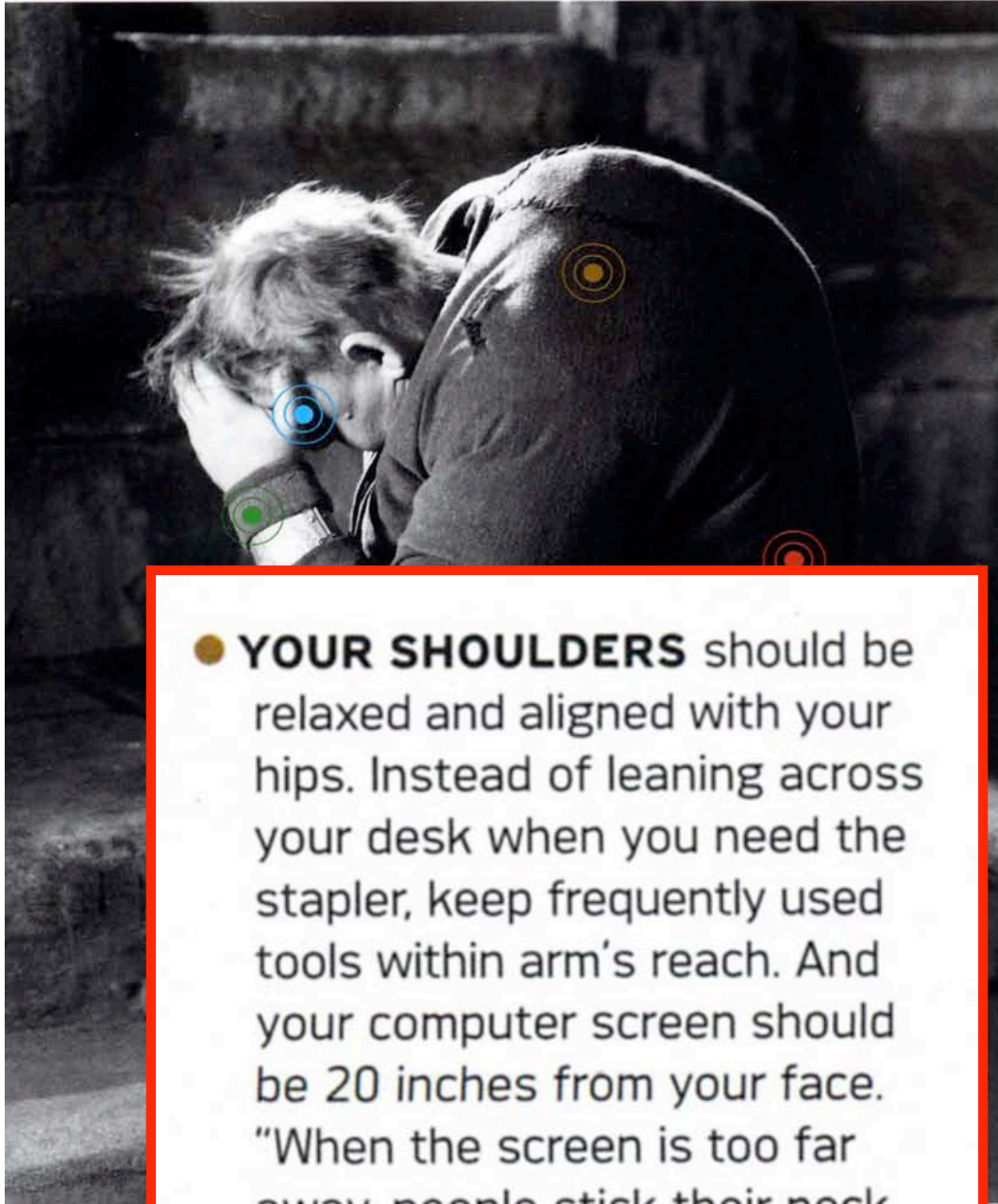




[THE GUIDE]

## Save Your Body From Office Strain

■ Sitting at your desk can screw up your body in many ways—and slouching in your chair sure doesn't help. Here's how to spare yourself some on-the-job stress. *Katie Hintz*



● **YOUR SHOULDERS** should be relaxed and aligned with your hips. Instead of leaning across your desk when you need the stapler, keep frequently used tools within arm's reach. And your computer screen should be 20 inches from your face. "When the screen is too far away, people stick their neck out and round their shoulders," says Alana Reed, a Manhattan Pilates instructor.

- **YOUR EYES** should take a break from the computer screen at least three times an hour in order to maintain moisture and rest their muscles.
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- **YOUR BACK** should be flat against your seat, but your spine should retain its natural curve, not be stiff and straight. If your chair doesn't support your lower back, use a small pillow to do the job.
- **YOUR WRISTS** should line up with your forearms and knuckles: They shouldn't dip when you're typing or using a mouse. If you need a cushioned keyboard or mouse pad to keep your form, get one.
- **YOUR KNEES** should be aligned with your hips so that your thighs are parallel to the floor. To ensure good blood flow to your lower legs and feet, make sure the chair isn't digging into the backs of your knees.
- **YOUR FEET** should be flat on the floor and directly below your knees. To give your muscles a break, get up and walk around the office at least once an hour, and feel free to admire your posture in the bathroom mirror.

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