

Working from home

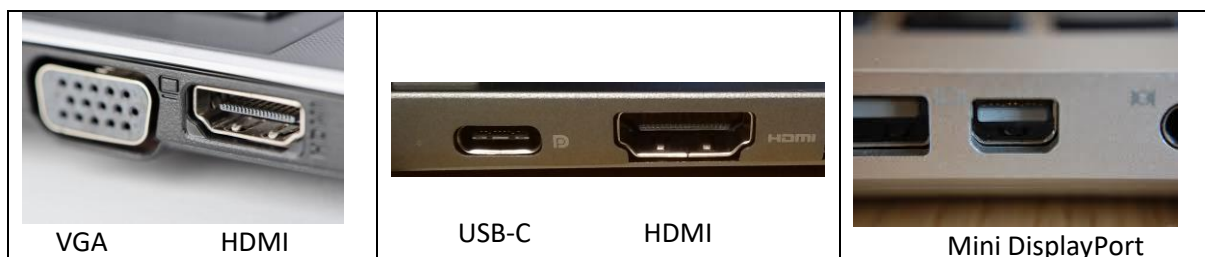
Setting up your laptop tips and tricks

Using your laptop to support working from home can be helped by the addition of an external display, allowing you to use both the external monitor and the laptops screen to give you a dual screen experience without needing to have 2 external screens.

Connecting a monitor to your laptop depends on the connections available on the monitor. Have a look at the back of the monitor and use the following to identify your connection options



It's best to connect your laptop using the connectors in the following order of preference; HDMI, Display Port, DVI and VGA. To see how you can connect your monitor to your laptop check what display ports you have on your machine using the following to help



Again the suggested preference is HDMI, USB-C., Mini DisplayPort then VGA.

The easiest connection is using HDMI to HDMI as these cables are readily available online and in local shops and supermarkets. USB-C can be used but you will need to purchase a 'dongle' with the relevant port to match your monitor, for example 'USB-C to DVI' which can be found on Amazon.

Apple Mac's will generally have either USB-C ports or Mini DisplayPort (a few have HDMI) again adaptors for these can be found to go to HDMI, DisplayPort or DVI.

As a last resort you can use the old style VGA leads with a suitable adaptor, but the image quality will not be as good as the other methods, something you'll notice if you're spending a long time in front of the display.

If you're looking to use a second television as an external display these will generally support HDMI connections. You will probably need to change the brightness and contrast settings as TV's are often set too bright with high colours which is likely to increase eye strain if used for a long time as an external display.

Keyboard and mouse

Although laptop keyboards are reasonable to type on and modern trackpads are much improved, you may want to use a full size keyboard and mouse with your laptop. Simply plug these into the relevant USB port on your device or, if you're running short of ports, grab a small USB hub (most supermarkets stock these, otherwise they can be found on-line), you don't need to have a powered hub for a keyboard & mouse but if you want to plug additional devices such as external hard disks, then a powered hub will be best.

Laptop risers

It can help to have your laptop raised up so it is nearer your external display, especially if you're using the on-board screen as a second monitor. If you're using an external keyboard and mouse this is especially effective. Again various options available online, or for a DIY approach, a couple of good text books, ring binder or even a shelf from old bits of wood works wonders. See <https://lifehacker.com/top-10-diy-laptop-stands-369689> for more ideas.

Take breaks

Remember to take regular breaks from your home setup just as you would in the office. Try to ensure you change your eye's focus by looking away from the screen to the distance, maybe out of your window, and make sure you get up and walk around.

You can even adapt old tables to make a 'standing desk' arrangement to change your working position during the day. Laptop trays can be used for this or even old Ikea furniture! The classic LACK coffee table strikes again! <https://www.ikeahackers.net/2014/03/lack-coffee-table-standing-desk.html>

What the department can help with

If you don't have a screen at home you are able to collect one monitor from your desk at work to use while you are at home, along with your office keyboard and mouse. Please contact Lucy Curtin lucy.curtin@phc.ox.ac.uk to arrange this.

In general the department will provide you with cables to power your screen and laptop, along with connecting you laptop to your display, any other requirements will need to be self-funded. If you're unsure as to what to get please ask the PHC IT team for advice by emailing ithelp@medsci.ox.ac.uk