

# Body in Harmony

**HOW TO CHECK YOUR ALIGNMENT:** Look in the mirror or get someone to help you.

These points are to give you an idea of your own alignment/misalignment. The suggestions of habits you might change are suggestions only and are made to encourage your awareness of your own body and the positions you adopt.

*This is not a substitution for medical advice and any specific problems should be referred to a medical practitioner*

1. Is your head facing forwards or is it slightly at an angle? (Should be facing forwards)
2. Is your head tilted towards one ear? (Should be an equal height between ears and shoulders on both sides)
3. Are your shoulders equal height? (Should be the same each side)
4. Is your torso facing the same direction as your pelvis? (Should be but often there is a twist at the waist or hips)
5. Are your feet both facing the same direction or is one more angled out than the other? (Should be at the same angle)
6. When your arms hang down, are your hands at the same angle? (Should be equally angled)

**If you have a problem, check the following areas of your life and consider the suggested possible changes in order to improve your alignment:**

1. Bag carrying – do you:
  - a. Carry a handbag on one shoulder? Change to an across-the-body bag or mini-rucksack
  - b. Carry a heavy briefcase? Change to a briefcase on wheels
  - c. Pull a wheeled briefcase or suitcase behind you by letting your body twist back? Make sure you bring your arm to your side as much as possible when pulling your case. If it's heavy, try pushing it in front of you.
  - d. Carry heavy shopping home? Make sure you distribute the weight equally between left and right sides.
2. Sitting at desk/computer – do you:
  - a. Sit at an angle at your desk? Change to sitting straight on
  - b. Raise your shoulders when you type? Change height of desk or keyboard so that you can drop your hands onto the keyboard, taking the strain out of your shoulders
  - c. Have the screen at an angle? Change so that the screen is straight ahead.

3. At home – do you:
  - a. Slouch on the sofa, leg on armrest, watching the TV at an angle? Change to sitting straight on to the TV
  - b. Make phone calls while cooking, ironing, etc. with the phone under one ear to leave your hands free? Change to an earpiece or speakerphone
  - c. Sit cross-legged, either one leg over the other, or sit with both legs tucked under you? These positions twist the pelvis - change to sitting straight, legs uncrossed
  - d. When standing up lean or ‘sit’ into your hip? Change to standing up straight.
  
4. In the car – do you:
  - a. Get out of the car right leg first then twist back to the passenger seat to pick up handbag/shopping? Change to putting both legs out at once, standing up then turning to reach back into the car with your body straight
  - b. Drive with one arm resting up when the window’s open? Change to resting your arm in your lap so that your shoulder isn’t strained.

**You may feel as if you have a lot of things to change. Even changing one thing at a time will help as you slowly reduce the uneven strain on your body. Learn to listen to your body and make small changes – you could be on the way to better posture and health.**

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