

STANDING DESKS: FAQ

1. Q: WHAT IS A STANDING DESK?

A: A standing desk is just what it sounds like – a desk that can be used for classroom work, but instead of sitting at the desk, the desk is raised so that the student can stand. They come in various shapes and sizes, so be mindful of the type of desktop that will work in your room.

2. Q: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF USING A STANDING DESK?

A: There are benefits to standing desks/workspaces. Physiologically, there is an increase in alertness (state of arousal) when we stand vs. sit. This can result in better student ability to pay attention and learn. For students who often seek movement (fidget, ask to leave the classroom frequently, have a hard time sitting in their chair and focusing), trialing a standing desk *may* help meet their physiological need for movement so that they are better able to pay attention and learn. Standing desks can also be beneficial to students who need to increase their state of alertness (students who appear tired, sluggish etc.) It is not a one-size fits all solution. See page 2 for links to some popular media articles, as well as some recent research studies.

There is conflicting research regarding the health benefits from standing vs. sitting. See page 2 for links to some articles that discuss both sides.

3. Q: WHAT POSITION CONSIDERATIONS ARE THERE?

A: As with typical desks, consider the height of the desk in relation to your student(s). With shoulders relaxed (not hiked up) and elbow at 90 degrees, the hand should rest comfortably on the desktop. Consult your school OT if you are unsure.

4. Q: WHERE CAN I PURCHASE ONE?

A: Standing desks are widely available; School Specialities is one website that has a number of different price point options, from \$160 and up. Ikea also offers a few variations from \$69 (fits laptop only), \$299 for sit-to-stand desk, and up. Be sure to consider the size of the desktop needed as well as the maximum height when purchasing.

You can also use creative options, like raising a typical desk (particularly for early elementary students) until it is at a suitable height, utilize drafting tables that are no longer in use, or place sturdy boxes on top of a desk to raise the height of the work surface.

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ARTICLES AND RESEARCH

Attention/Cognitive Benefits: See these links for some popular media articles, as well as some recent research studies:

- Media articles, easy reads:
 - <http://www.cnn.com/2015/12/10/health/standing-desks-impact-health-education/>
 - <https://vitalrecord.tamhsc.edu/want-kids-to-pay-attention-in-class-give-them-standing-desks/>
- Research article, neurocognitive benefits of standing desks:
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26703700>
- Research article, behavioral benefits of standing:
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22836531>

Health Benefits: There is conflicting research regarding the health benefits from standing vs. sitting. Here are some articles that discuss both sides:

- Media article: <https://vitalrecord.tamhsc.edu/standing-desks-effective-in-the-fight-against-childhood-obesity/>
- Research article: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3134494/>
- Research article: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14635240.2015.1029641>
- Media article: <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/03/17/470713717/stand-to-work-if-you-like-but-dont-brag-about-its-benefits>
- Media article: <http://www.cochrane.org/news/health-effects-sit-stand-desks-and-interventions-aimed-reduce-sitting-work-are-still-unproven>