

The Importance of Neutral Wrist

Imagine you are about to reach for a glass of water. Your thumb is in line with your forearm, your wrist is slightly bent back, and your fingers are curved and relaxed. In short, your hand holds no tension and is comfortable. This position is called **neutral wrist**.



Picture from “The True Neutral Position of the Hand (In Ergonomics)”, 2016.

In neutral wrist, your hand has the best **biomechanical advantage** for efficient function. This is because this position produces the least amount of tension on all the muscles and tendons of the hand, thus optimizing your muscles for proper leverage. Simply put, **neutral wrist** refers to a position where all major forearm muscles are engaged to maintain this balanced posture.

Think of your wrist as a BRIDGE and not as a hinge. When you pick up objects, keep your wrist slightly bent back and place the object into the palm of your hand instead of just using your fingertips. If you bend your wrist forward to pick up objects, your grip is weakened because you cannot use your muscles as efficiently, losing the biomechanical advantage.

You can use neutral wrist for typing (float hands above the keys rather than anchoring the wrists), driving (minimize over gripping the steering wheel), or at even at rest. In exercising, avoid excessively bending your wrist too far in either direction repetitively.

References

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