

Review: Standing desk aims to get you on your feet and out of your chair

January 5 2016, by Jim Rossman, The Dallas Morning News

This job is introducing me to all kinds of new things. Like standing at my desk.

I saw our fitness writer Leslie Barker [standing](#) at her desk, and I have to admit I was curious.

Science has shown us that we are better off not sitting all day. Dr. James Levine of the Mayo Clinic, for instance, says we should spend much less time sitting (mayocl.in/1HRBRlm).

He suggests:

Stand while talking on the phone or eating lunch.

If you work at a desk for long periods of time, try a [standing desk](#) - or improvise with a high table or counter.

Walk laps with your colleagues rather than gathering in a conference room for meetings.

Position your work surface above a treadmill - with a computer screen and keyboard on a stand or a specialized treadmill-ready vertical desk - so that you can be in motion throughout the day.

So when I got the chance to try the Varidesk Pro Plus 36 (\$350, varidesk.com), I was intrigued.

DESKTOP DESK

The Varidesk is a height-adjustable desk that sits on top of your regular desk.

The 36 stands for its width in inches. There are Pro Plus models from 30 inches up to 48 inches wide.

The desk comes fully assembled: Just open the box and perhaps get a friend to help you put it up on your work surface.

The Pro Plus model has two levels - an upper platform for your monitor and a lower level for your keyboard and mouse. The two levels are well-proportioned (4 inches apart), which is good, since they are not adjustable in relationship to each other.

The entire two-level work surface raises and lowers to allow you to sit or stand as desired.

The biggest adjustment for me was clearing off a spot on my desk and then getting the monitor and computer set up. Because the surface raises and lowers, you have to make sure you have enough slack in the various cords and cables used by your computer.

I use a cordless keyboard and mouse, but corded versions would also work well.

When it's time to stand, you grab a lever on either side of the top level, and springs assist in the height adjustment. There are multiple height stops on the way up and down.

Even with the Pro Plus fully loaded, the movement up and down was smooth and easy.

The upper surface of the Pro Plus 36 can support up to 35 pounds, which is more than enough to hold multiple flat-screen monitors plus a few peripherals.

I'm 6-foot-2, and I found the highest setting just right for me.

LOTS OF SPACE

The Pro Plus 36 is a big piece of equipment. It takes up a lot of space on your desk. It is 29.75 inches deep.

It raises your monitor and keyboard up to 14 inches.

There are standing desks that don't take up as much space. If you have limited space, do some research for different models. There are a surprising number of different types of height-adjustable desks.

So how is it standing at a desk?

I liked it. For short periods.

I suppose I'll have to work my way to standing for longer periods. I'll also be thinking more about comfortable shoes and a standing mat.

Varidesk also sent along a 24-by-36-inch standing mat (\$60) that made a big difference, especially if your office doesn't have very thick carpeting.

Varidesk also has a free app for your smartphone to remind you when to sit or stand.

Ultimately, those of us who [work](#) at a desk should do more standing during our workdays.

I'm going to try.

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