

# Posture and Body Stance

Were you one of the poor, unfortunate kids that continually got that annoying phrase from your parents, "Sit up straight!" about a hundred times a day? Well, as annoying as that may have sounded, they were right. Posture is very important. Especially when it comes to giving an oral presentation.

Many people, when they get up to give a presentation, tend to feel as though they are up in front of a firing squad. They tend to shrink back, trying to get as far away from the audience as possible, closing up like a turtle backing into its shell, bracing for the attack. This reaction causes them to have very poor posture and body stance, and that can negatively affect their performance.

## Correct Posture and Body Stance:

1. shoulders relaxed
2. straight back
3. hands comfortably at sides
4. feet spaced shoulder-width apart
5. one foot slightly in front of the other



## Why? What good is all this?

1. Your shoulders are where all the tension begins. Loose shoulders can help keep you feel less nervous.
2. A straight back helps keep your shoulders down (relaxed). Just try tensing up your shoulders with your back straight. It's hard, not to mention uncomfortable. Remember, the whole point is to *relax*.
3. Your hands crossed in front of you, behind you, or shoved in pockets look very unprofessional - not what you want for a presentation. It also keeps you from breathing properly.
4. Feet spaced a shoulder-width apart establishes a good foundation for your body. This helps keep you from tensing up and losing your balance. (Trust me - it can happen.)
5. One foot slightly in front of the other can keep you from locking your knees, which impairs circulation and can cause you to pass out. It also helps you keep your balance and not sway back and forth as you speak, which is very distracting.