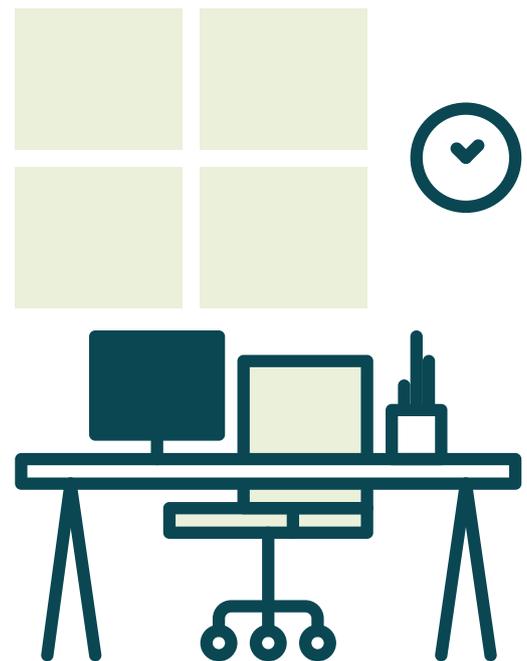


17 tips to...

Work from home successfully

Around the world, millions of people have also been told to stay at home in a bid to slow the spread of COVID-19. But turning your home into your office is tricky, even in the best of times, as trying to separate work and life when they're both happening in the same space is hard. **Fortunately, there are now a huge variety of tips and tools to help you to make the change from office to home successfully.**



Get the right equipment

To get your job done productively you need the right equipment, including a PC or laptop, monitor, keyboard, mouse, chair, printer, software, and so on. Now might be the time to give yourself that IT upgrade you've been putting off to ensure you have the latest operating systems and processing power you might need for extended home working.

Keep a dedicated workspace

To help make the work-life divide a little clearer pick a space in your home that you can keep as a dedicated workspace.





Stick to a work schedule

Clearly define what hours you will be working and stick to it...most of the time. This doesn't mean you have to stick to the 9 to 5; as long as you are online for meetings and to answer emails when needed you can work when you're most productive.

Create a morning routine

Wake up in plenty of time to prepare for the day, both mentally and physically before your workday starts. Whilst you don't need to factor in any commuting time, it's highly likely you'll want to eat breakfast, have a coffee or maybe even exercise.



Make an effort with your appearance

No one is suggesting that you need to always be in full business attire, but changing out of your pyjamas or loungewear will help get you in the right headspace for work and also allow you to take video calls on the fly.

Set ground rules with the people in your space

Communicate to people you live with that you're working and what that means for them in terms of noise levels and interruptions.



Separate work and personal communications

If possible have a separate work number and email. When that's not possible sign out and turn off notifications for work-related emails and let calls go to your voicemail when your work day is over.



Create the perfect environment

One of the upsides of working from home is that you're in charge of your environment. If you find it hard to focus when it's too quiet then listen to music or put the TV on quietly.



Schedule breaks

Take frequent breaks so that your concentration and productivity doesn't dip. Try to replicate an office environment where you'd regularly break to chat to colleagues, grab a coffee or go to a meeting. And have lunch breaks where you don't look at anything work-related.

'Show up' to meetings and be heard

You'll no doubt take part in video conferences and conference calls, so be sure to speak up during the meeting so everyone knows you're on the call and engaged. It's good etiquette to mute yourself (unless you're speaking) to minimise the amount of sounds that interrupt the conversation.



Don't do household chores

Tasks that need doing around the house can be distracting, but don't do them randomly throughout the day: instead, schedule a specific time for them.

Be in regular contact with your team

To ensure you stay connected as a team you should set up a chat channel (slack.com is a great tool) where you can bounce ideas off each other and discuss tasks and projects. To recreate the office banter and coffee machine gossips, set up a separate chat channel just for non-work related chats.





Go outside!

Your body needs to move and natural light will do you good. So have a walk around your outside space, weed the garden, wash your car, read the paper outdoors – anything that gets you fresh air at least once a day.

Over communicate

Share your tasks and priorities and let your team know when you finish a project or important task. A tool like asana is great for collaborative teamwork and facilitates feedback and reallocation of tasks.



Be positive

Digital communication is often misinterpreted, as without facial expressions and tone of voice to read, succinct or to-the-point messages can come across as angry or rude. So check your tone of voice is positive, embrace the exclamation point and find your favourite emoji 😊. You're going to need them!

Don't be too hard on yourself

The most successful remote employees have a reputation for being extremely disciplined. But everyone lets their attention drift sometimes (even in an office environment). So if you find yourself working one minute and checking Facebook the next, don't reprimand yourself harshly, just bring your focus back to work. If social media is a common distraction for you then consider logging out of it during your working day.



Finally, end your day with a routine

Choose a routine that signals the end of your workday; logging out, shutting down your computer, setting your 'out of office' and going for a walk are perfect ways to mark the end of the day.



Whilst these tips are a starting point to get you thinking about how to work successfully in your home, it's most important to figure out what works best for you. Sometimes the answer is apparent, but other times you might need some inspiration from other people who are in the same boat, so be sure to ask your colleagues for their tips too.

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