

Working from Home Guide

Introduction

Working from home can be productive – you save time spent sitting in traffic, at the very least.

There are numerous articles pointing out how to be effective and efficient at home. Here is another (updated) one.

Set up workspace

Set up a place to work - an office would be good! Alternatively, a space that you can partition off from the rest of the house.

Make sure that you have:

- A sturdy work platform that can support your hardware.
- Set up your platform and chair ergonomically to avoid pain and discomfort – get a registered professional in; make sure it works for you.
- Good temperature, ventilation and lighting.
- Up-to-date hardware and software, with good internet connection and security, so that you can share documents and keep in contact with others through video conferencing.

Identify hazards and risks

Having set up your workspace, identify the hazards around the home and office. Work out how to eliminate or minimise the associated risks.

Are there anything lying around that you could trip over? Tuck away those electrical cords. Make sure that your work platform is stable, and the monitor is secure. Is that chair okay – you will not want to go to a physio!

And then, think about keeping work and home life separate. Make sure you have a way of releasing stress and someone to talk too about work and its pressures.

Some of the risks that you may face and will have to control are:

- Illness – keep healthy, watch what you eat and get some exercise
- Stress and fatigue – talk to employer and colleagues
- Workload - keep to your office hours. Do not over work!
- Social isolation – use video conferencing and social media
- Ergonomics – is that chair set up correctly?
- Cognitive ergonomics – will you worry about tech workload?
- Environmental – make sure you have good light, ventilation, and space

Keep office hours

Make sure that you keep to office hours - your office hours! Find the hours that work for you and your business and then set up a routine with breaks that works and allows you to be productive.

Shut the "office" door when you are not working to keep the office separate from the house. Keep the office tidy and put away stuff that you do not need before you go on a break.

Work out a way to avoid distractions. Work when no one else is around.

Dress for work

Wear comfortable clothing to work – not your PJs but you probably don't need to wear a tie.

Prioritise work and workflow

Set out priorities for each day.

Then use Covey's 4 Quadrants to determine what is important, what you need to work on and when.

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	1. Do it now	2. Decide when to do it
Not important	3. Delegate it	4. Dump it

Use a diary and/or Outlook Calendar and Tasks, etc., to organise workflow.

Determine when to look at your emails and social media. Perhaps you can look at your emails at the start, middle and end of the day but turn Outlook off in between.

Be careful about what you can realistically accomplish. Work it so that feel that you have been productive at the end of the day, week, month.

And, reward yourself for doing great!

Be physically active

Keep up with your run, bike or gym workout, etc. Do those things that you enjoy and that keeps you moving. They will help with stress levels too.

Do some stretches while you are working too.

Talk to your employer

Talk to your employer about what work you need to do, when you will do it and how you will keep in contact. Agree on workflow and deadlines. Update internet and data security.

And, sort out the expenses you have incurred from working at home.