



TOP TIPS FOR WORKING FROM HOME



1. SET YOUR ROUTINE

Key to making it work is to have a routine. Start the day at a set time, take breaks and lunch at set times and finish work at a set time. Plan and write these times down. Stick to them. Time will fly and you will get lots done.

Walk to work – it can help to leave home and have a short walk as if you were going to work, before arriving back to start your day.

Check in with your Line Manager first thing and at the end of the day too. Even better if you let them know – and other colleagues, if appropriate – when you are off on your lunch break. This kind of communication is critical for your mental wellbeing.

2. SET UP A DEDICATED WORKSPACE

Having somewhere comfortable without distractions is another top tip. It is essential that you have a comfortable chair and work surface that allow you to sit correctly, with good lighting. Looking out into the garden may not be the best idea.

Make sure you have all the stationery and computer equipment, laptop charger etc. ready for your working day. It is too easy to think you are busy by wandering around looking for things that you should have found and prepared, before sitting down to work.



3. SET TIMES FOR BREAKS

It is amazing how often we get up and talk to other people in an office environment, there are distractions and conversations all the time. One of the advantages of home working can be the quiet and time to focus without these distractions. However, sitting in one position for too long can be too much, you must take some time out every now and again to stretch and stand up otherwise you may get very tired.



4. MAKE LISTS

A great way to plan your work at home is to make a list. This can include the time for various breaks. If you have one big project that you are working through, break it down into smaller elements that can be ticked off a list.

It is very satisfying to be able to get to the end of the day and see a long list of what you have achieved. If you are in a business that keeps time sheets it is also very handy to use the list to see what you have done over the day.

5. GO OUTSIDE AT LEAST ONCE A DAY

It is important to have fresh air and exercise every day, even if this is at the end of the day. Take a short walk, it helps clear and refresh the mind. Make it part of your routine.

If you have taken a short round trip to walk to work, think about getting up and doing the same to mark the finish of the day.



6. STAY IN TOUCH WITH COLLEAGUES

Many of us really enjoy the communication with colleagues and the buzz of a busy office. This can be missing at home. With email and video conferencing we can still stay in touch and be part of something. A great way to still feel connected to your team is to check in with them at both the start and the end of the day as a minimum. Hearing a familiar voice or even seeing a friendly face (see point 7!) can be a real boost and stop you from feeling isolated.

Make sure you take the time to stay in touch. It is important to keep the social interaction alive.



7. USE VIDEO WHENEVER POSSIBLE

We strongly recommend using video calling wherever possible. It really does feel like you have seen someone in person. It also means that everyone concentrates on the call and they do not get distracted by email etc.

8. SPEAK DURING ONLINE MEETINGS

If you are involved in a team meeting online make sure you contribute and that others know you are on the call. If you called the meeting, make sure you introduce everyone and ask them to speak.



9. STAY CONNECTED (WIFI/VPN/TEAMS)

Having a good internet connection is really important. Many houses will have multiple devices connected to the WiFi and so it may help to connect your computer directly to the router with an ethernet cable if you can.

For those with families, you may want to ask everyone to come off the WiFi if you have an important customer video conference call to make. This will increase the capacity/speed for your call.



10. LOG YOUR TIME

It is important to keep a track of your time and what you have been working on. If you have made a list, it is easy to jot down how long you have spent on each task on the same line. All obvious stuff but you do have to do it.

11. KEEP PETS IN ANOTHER ROOM

Many of us have pets. Obviously, a dog can help make sure you get out of the house each day and take important exercise.

They will also let you know that you are important to them and love the fact you are home.

However, cats often see an open laptop as an invitation to show you how work should be undertaken. This usually involves sitting on the keyboard or tapping the keys. Some will like the fact you are home and can feed them when they want, others will see it as an intrusion.

Whatever your pet, it may be better to keep them away from the room in which you are working.



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