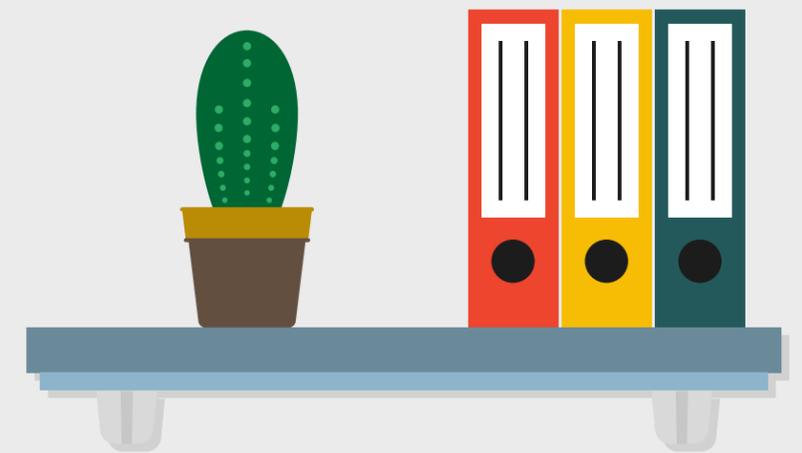


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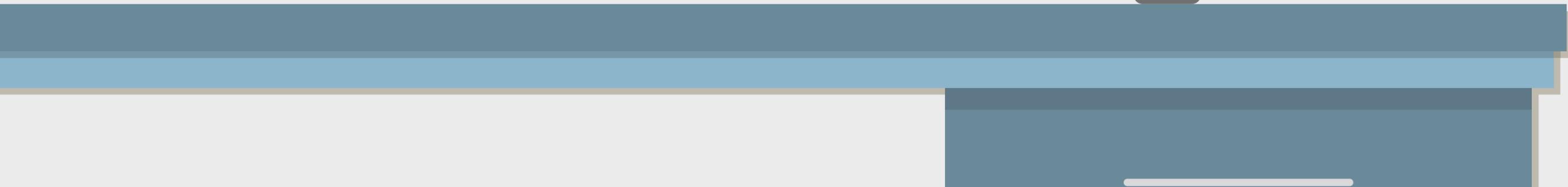
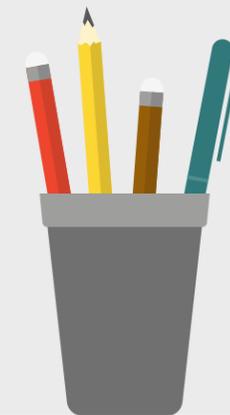
Best Practices for Remote Working





Today's technology has allowed many people the flexibility of working from home when it's needed. Navigating your first foray into the world of at-home work can be greeted with its opportunities, but also its challenges.

From office equipment and accountability to new ways to collaborate and build relationships with colleagues, working remotely means figuring out these issues and others. This guide provides some important tips to help make your work-at-home experience an easy, productive and positive one.



11 Tips to Get Started

1. Get going early

When working in an office, your morning commute can help you wake up and feel ready to work by the time you get to your desk. At home, however, the transition from your pillow to your computer can be much more jarring. Believe it or not, one way to work from home productively is to dive into your to-do list as soon as you wake up.

Simply getting a project started first thing in the morning can be the key to making progress on it throughout the day. Otherwise, you'll prolong breakfast and let the morning sluggishness wear away your motivation.

2. Pretend like you *are* going into the office

The mental association you make between work and an office can make you more productive, and there's no reason that feeling should be lost when working remotely.

When working from home, do all the things you'd do to prepare for an office role: Set your alarm, make coffee, and look the part – yep, even putting on some nice clothes can help your overall outlook and focus. Internet browsers like Google Chrome even allow you to set up multiple accounts with different toolbars on the top – for example, a toolbar for home and a separate toolbar for work.

3. Stick to a routine

When working from home, you're your own personal manager. Without meetings or lunch with coworkers to break up your day, you can quickly lose focus.

Segment what you'll do and when over the course of the day. If you have an online calendar, create personal events and reminders that tell you when to shift gears and start on new tasks. Try solidifying your schedule the day before, making it feel more official when you wake up the next day to get started on it.

4. Choose a dedicated work space

Give yourself space. Just because you're not working at an office doesn't mean you can't, well, have an office. Rather than cooping yourself up in your room or on the couch – spaces that are associated with leisure time – dedicate a specific room or surface in your home to work.

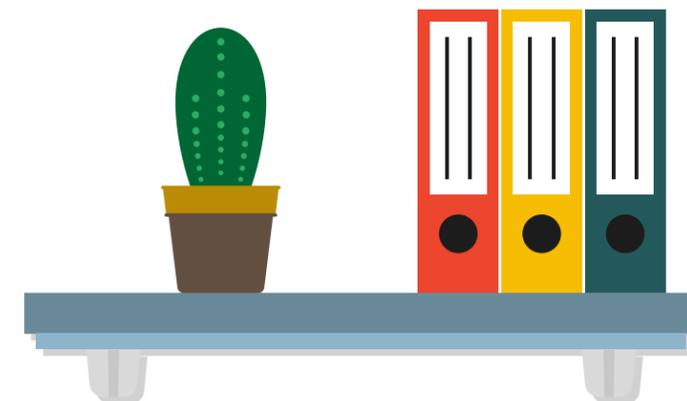
5. Make it harder for yourself to mess around on social media

Social media is designed to make it easy for you to open and browse quickly. At work, though, this convenience can be detrimental to your productivity.

To counteract your social networks' ease of use during work hours, remove them from your browser shortcuts and, according to Fast Company, log out of every account. You might consider working primarily in a private or "Incognito" browser window. This ensures you stay signed out of all your accounts, and each web search you conduct doesn't autocomplete the word you're typing. It's a guarantee that you won't be tempted into taking too many social breaks during the day.

6. Work smarter, not harder

When working from home it can be easier to get more done, simply because you're void of the normal office distractions and hallway conversations. Use this opportunity to find ways to work more efficiently during your working hours. You'll be much happier coming out of your day with a solid list of tasks filed under "complete."





7. Stay connected using technology

Working from home might help you focus on your work in the short term, but it can also make you feel cut off from the larger operation happening in the office. Instant messaging and videoconferencing tools can make it easy to check in with coworkers and remind you how your work is contributing to the big picture. Also, it's a great way to collaborate and continue to build relationships among team members. If you're questioning whether to email, text, call or video conference, always err on the more *human* side.

8. Communicate expectations with anyone who will be home with you

Of course, you might be working from home but still have "company." Make sure any roommates, children, spouses and dogs (well, maybe not dogs) respect your space during work hours. Kids especially thrive on structure. Create a schedule for your kids in different spaces within your home or outside – the more fun you make it, the more fun they'll have too. Remember, just because you're working from home doesn't mean you're available.

9. Take clear breaks

It can be so easy to get distracted by work as a remote employee that you avoid taking breaks altogether. While in the office you have a routine down. Just because you're not experiencing the usual water cooler talk to break up your day, it's important you carve out when you'll eat, work out or even take five minutes to stretch, especially if you're in a secluded area in your home. Rather than just opening up YouTube to watch some comfort clips, use your breaks to get away from your desk.

10. Pick a definitive finishing time

You might be under the impression that working from home establishes more work-life balance, but be careful with that assumption. Working from home can also feel like being at a casino – you can get so caught up in your activity that you lose complete track of time.

In lieu of coworkers, whose packing up and leaving the office reminds you to do the same, set an alarm at the end of the day to indicate your normal workday is coming to an end. You don't have to stop at exactly that time, but knowing the workday is technically over can help you start the process of saving your work and calling it quits for the evening.

11. Take a step back and appreciate your accomplishments

Change can be difficult. This may be a different environment than you're used to, but pat yourself on the back for a good day's work. You are going to be a lot more self-managed than you were in the past. As a good manager, applaud your own accomplishments and boost yourself up for the days ahead.

You've got this.



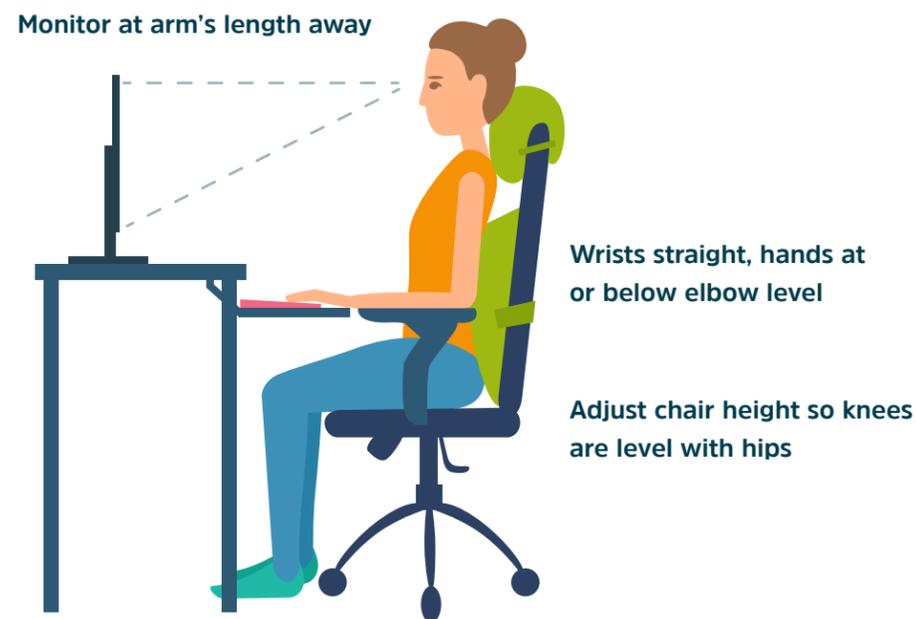
Office Ergonomics: Your How-to Guide

By Mayo Clinic Staff

A comfortable work space can help you feel your best. Give your sitting work area a makeover with this visual guide to office ergonomics.

If you sit behind a desk for hours at a time, you're not doomed to a career of neck and back pain or sore wrists and fingers. Proper office ergonomics — including correct chair height, adequate equipment spacing and good desk posture — can help you and your joints stay comfortable at work.

Ready to give your work space a makeover? Get started making your sitting workstation comfortable with this visual guide to sitting workstation ergonomics.



Chair

Choose a chair that supports your spinal curves. Adjust the height of your chair so that your feet rest flat on the floor or on a footrest and your thighs are parallel to the floor. Adjust armrests so your arms gently rest on them with your shoulders relaxed.

Key Objects

Keep key objects — such as your telephone, stapler or printed materials — close to your body to minimize reaching. Stand up to reach anything that can't be comfortably reached while sitting.

Keyboard and Mouse

Place your mouse within easy reach and on the same surface as your keyboard. While typing or using your mouse, keep your wrists straight, your upper arms close to your body, and your hands at or slightly below the level of your elbows. Use keyboard shortcuts to reduce extended mouse use. If possible, adjust the sensitivity of the mouse so you can use a light touch to operate it. Alternate the hand you use to operate the mouse by moving the mouse to the other side of your keyboard.

Telephone

If you frequently talk on the phone and type or write at the same time, place your phone on speaker or use a headset rather than cradling the phone between your head and neck.

Footrest

If your chair is too high for you to rest your feet flat on the floor — or the height of your desk requires you to raise the height of your chair — use a footrest. If a footrest is not available, try using a small stool or a stack of sturdy books instead.

Desk

Under the desk, make sure there's clearance for your knees, thighs and feet. If the desk is too low and can't be adjusted, place sturdy boards or blocks under the desk legs. If the desk is too high and can't be adjusted, raise your chair. Use a footrest to support your feet as needed. If your desk has a hard edge, pad the edge or use a wrist rest. Don't store items under your desk.

Monitor

Place the monitor directly in front of you, about an arm's length away. The top of the screen should be at or slightly below eye level. The monitor should be directly behind your keyboard. If you wear bifocals, lower the monitor an additional 1 to 2 inches for more comfortable viewing. Place your monitor so that the brightest light source is to the side.

Get the Internet Speed You Need

If you have kids, their FaceTiming and Xbox habits may slow your connection and download speeds. Moving as close as you can to your Wi-Fi router can help (devices that are distant tend to draw on bandwidth).





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