



## Best Practices for Working Remotely

Offices provide people and protocols to tell you what to do and help you stay focused. But at home you might find it more challenging to stay on track and use your time wisely. Here are tips from around the Web that can help you be successful:

### **Carve out dedicated space.**

Try to find yourself a dedicated and comfortable spot to work that you can associate with your job and leave when you're off the clock—that means get off the couch and out of bed, if possible. If you have a desk, great. But a kitchen or dining table will do, too.

### **Clean up your home office space.**

Clutter can be distracting. Organize your desk or workspace by clearing away unnecessary objects. If you work in a small space, making your bed can go a long way. And if you'll be holding video calls with the office or clients, you'll want to make a good impression.

### **Communicate expectations with anyone who will be home with you.**

Make sure roommates, siblings, parents, spouses, and children respect your space during work hours. It can be hard to say no to the ones you love. Be clear about work time versus family/social time, and set the expectation that when you're working, you're not available—as if you've left and gone to work. To that end, take ownership for making it work in close quarters. When necessary, find somewhere you can drown out background noise or carve out your privacy.

### **Stick to a routine.**

You probably wouldn't dream of waltzing into the office an hour late or taking a two-hour lunch, so apply the same rules when you're working at home. Set regular business hours for your work-at-home days and stick to them. Even though you may not be seeing anyone, sticking to your normal morning routine—showering, getting dressed, putting on makeup—can help you to feel more motivated and professional.

### **Stay connected.**

When you first start working remotely, you might kick off your day with a brief "good morning" call to check in with your manager at the office. That way you have an opportunity to discuss any needed adjustments to your workload—and to reinforce that it's "time to get to work."

To help fill the socializing gap while working remotely, find a colleague you can hit up when you're feeling the need to chat with someone. You may also want to buddy up with a friend who works elsewhere and is going through the same experience.

### **Stay in your seat, concentrate, and complete a segment of your work.**

The trick to meeting deadlines and managing time effectively is to stay seated and hack away until you've completed a predetermined amount of work. For example, if your goal in an hour is two written pages, 10 telephone calls to vendors, or whatever it may be, then don't get up until it's completed. If you finish the task in less time than you've estimated, that's great—but don't take a break just yet. Instead, get started on your next assignment and work on it until you use up the time you'd allocated for the previous task.



**Plan when to quit.**

Just because you work from home doesn't mean you should always be working. It's not healthy, and it's not fair to the other people and responsibilities in your life. You're also far more likely to be productive when you know your time is limited. Set a time and stick to it.

**Tell someone about your day.**

You'll get more done if you know someone is going to ask what you did. Whether it's your boss at a daily check-in meeting or your partner at dinner, let someone know what you're working on and what you accomplished. It doesn't have to be an exhaustive list, but telling someone what you plan to do, and then whether or not you actually did it will help you be accountable.