
How to be productive working from home

Working from home can be challenging as there can be many distractions. Here's how you can be more productive when working at home.

Lots of people are working from home these days. As employers offer more flexibility some employees stay home to avoid their daily commute. Many self-employed people work at home to keep their business costs down.

Home working can be really productive. Without the distractions of the regular office environment people have a chance to think and get things done.

But working from home can be challenging too. Distractions like household chores, clutter, family and access to TV, can get in the way. Home workers sometimes lose focus. This can cause frustration and stress.

Here are five tips to help avoid the pitfalls and stay productive:

Create a dedicated work space

A dedicated work space helps you switch into business mode. You may have an entire room available to convert to a home office. If not you can still create a good work space in a section of a room.

Here are the key requirements:

- Remove household clutter
- Have a good desk and chair
- Have access to plugs and Wi-Fi
- Have storage for your documents to keep things organised

Have a routine

One of the benefits of working at home is that there is no routine. But this can have a negative effect on focus and productivity. So create your own routine.

Set a work start time and have target break and lunch times too. This prevents you taking breaks whenever you feel like it. Before you start it can be really useful to get any non-work jobs done around the house so they don't distract you later.

Make a plan and use a timer

It is important to have a clear plan. This helps you check in as the day progresses and stay on track.

The lack of noise at home encourages creativity and deep thinking. But without the natural interruptions of the office place, like questions from colleagues, meetings or lunch breaks, we can get too engrossed in one piece of work.

To avoid this use a timer to set an end time for tasks. Once the time is up, check your plan and decide whether to continue the current task or move on. The [Focus To Do](#) app is excellent for this.

Manage others

If you only work from home occasionally, there can be a novelty factor. If you are not careful office interruptions can be replaced by interruptions from well-intended friends or family. Try to control this while not upsetting anyone. I know a businesswoman who parks her car around the corner so that neighbours don't know she's at home.

Be assertive and let people know that you have deadlines. A useful approach is to say "when" instead of "now" if someone wants to see you. Divert a catch-up to your planned lunch or coffee break so you can keep your routine on track.

Change your scene

Sometimes working at home can be too quiet and even claustrophobic. When this happens, change the scene by taking your laptop to another location such as a local coffee shop or spacious hotel lobby. Studies have shown that public background noise is not distracting. In fact, it can help you achieve a deep level of focus.

So in summary, create a good work space and a routine that suits your energy levels. If you would like more information on how to stay focused and get more done, contact [BeProductive](#) for information on productivity seminars, training or coaching.

By Moira Dunne

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