Some Tips for Working From Home

Set up a permanent workspace

Find a space where you can set up a desk to work from everyday. Set up things as similarly as you can to your office environment and try to keep your space tidy and uncluttered. Make sure it's in a quiet space away from others if possible. The dining table in the middle of a busy household is probably not the best option!

Check your tech!

Make sure you have the technology required to effectively do your job, including any remote working software, access to documents and teleconferencing apps if required. Consider whether data limits on your home internet connection or mobile phone need to be increased. Communicate your needs to your workplace as they should provide what you need when expecting you to work from home.

Set work hours

Set working hours in negotiation with your manager and stick to them. Avoid the temptation to work outside of these hours if possible. When your work and home environments are the same it's tempting to let "work creep" occur. You need your down time too!

Review your to do list each day

Make a list of what tasks need to be completed for the day and stick to it as best you can. With less regular contact with supervisors sometimes it can be easy to be distracted.

Don't work in your pyjamas!

Yes, we know, this is one of the benefits of working from home! But it could be killing your productivity. Dressing for work will get you in the right mindset for getting the job done and you'll be ready to handle any kind of video chat, meeting or check-in with a manager or teammate.

And maybe don't work in the living room...

Avoid the TV and other digital distractions so you can focus on your work and getting things done. Having Netflix running while you work is tempting to us all but will distract you and make you less productive. If you're tempted to have the tv on for background noise, consider streaming some music that complements your workstyle instead.

Set yourself a morning routine

Let's face it, another perk of working from home is *not* having to get up, rush out of the house, and commute to work. However, a good morning routine will help you get in the right mindset for the day. Get up early, shower, make your coffee and breakfast and since you could be cooped up inside all day, take a walk around the block for some fresh air. (If you can do so with appropriate social distancing of course.)

Stretch regularly

Exercise boost endorphins which increases happiness, enjoyment, and interest levels, all of which are important for productivity. Regularly stretching helps you maintain good posture. Take short breaks to get away from your desk and stretch throughout the day and consider using your lunch break for a walk or other exercise.

Eat healthy meals and snacks

Another work from home reality is that we have full access to the kitchen. So, when it's time for lunch or a snack break, we have more to choose from. Commit to having healthy lunches and if you're an avid snacker make sure your kitchen is stocked with more healthy options and less of the chips, chocolate and biscuits!

Stay off social media

I think we can agree that we are *all* guilty of this one from time to time. Social media can be a giant time-suck if you aren't careful. Minimising mindless use of social media helps avoid distractions, so you can focus on getting more done. If you love using social media, then make it a habit to shut off social media notifications during the day. Consider muting your notifications on your phone.


Use video chat

Working from home can get pretty lonely, especially if you are in the house alone. Make it a point to chat with colleagues each day. It matters, connection with other people is important, especially in the community sector. Humanity need not be lost in working remotely! There are many video chat applications available today, such as Skype, WhatsApp, Facetime and Google Hangouts. Video chat is a great way to stay connected with your team. Meet regularly, and don't forget to relax and have a little fun too.

Be mindful of confidentiality

Every organisation will have their own protocols for managing client information, intellectual property and other electronic data. Make sure you are abiding by these rules when working from home. Ensure you have remote access to your work email and the documents you need, personal email addresses should not be used for the transmission of work files.

Avoid family, friends and pets

Of course, in these times, this could be tricky, especially if partners or kids are at home too. But as far as you are able, set some clear boundaries with your family while you work. Setting boundaries will help you to be present for them outside of work hours too. If you can, set and stick to specific work hours and communicate those hours clearly with your family and friends.
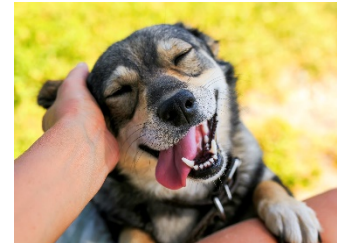
Practice self-care

Working from home can feel isolating, especially in these uncertain times. Do what you need to do to protect and care for your mental health while working from home. The below list is some suggestions but find what works best for you and make sure you can regularly check in with colleagues.

- Morning yoga or meditation
- Include some comfortable touches in your workspace (indoor plants, scented candles, photos, fresh flowers etc)
- Turn off the news while you work, especially if it's making you feel anxious or distressed
- Listen to uplifting music while you work
- Make sure you're getting enough sleep
- Take some breaks for fresh air, throw the ball for the dog a few times, water the plants or have a quick dance in your lounge room!
- Turn off social media and notifications on your phone
- Leave yourself some motivational post it notes in your office (and change them regularly)
- Keep up a regular exercise routine and eat healthy food
- Before you finish work for the day, take a moment to congratulate yourself for what you have achieved that day
- Unless you are required to be on call, switch off your work emails and phone after hours