

Successful Work From Home Tips

1. Get started early.

Use the normal commuting time gained to be more productive and energetic at work. 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 gradually 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. Act like you are working in an 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 telecommuting.

When working from home, do all the things you'd do to prepare for an office role: Set your alarm, make (or go get) coffee, and wear nice clothes. Go through a regular morning routine. Be available and answer your phone and messages promptly.

3. Check in with Co-Workers and Supervisor Often.

Working at home can make you feel cut off from your co-workers. It is important to stay connected through your computer and telephone. Stay available and do not ignore your co-workers when they message or email you, this goes both ways.

4. Create a daily work schedule.

When working from home, you're your own personal manager. Without things like an in-person meeting schedule to break up your day, you can be quick to lose focus or burn out. To stay on schedule, 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.

5. Choose a dedicated workspace.

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.



6. 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 the detriment of your productivity. To counteract your social networks' ease of use during work hours, remove them from your browser shortcuts and log out of every account. It's a guarantee that you won't be tempted into taking too many social breaks during the day.

7. Commit to doing more.

Projects always take longer than you initially think they will. For that reason, you'll frequently get done less than you set out to do. So, just as you're encouraged to overestimate how much time you'll spent doing one thing, you should also overestimate how many things you'll do during the day. Even if you come up short of your goal, you'll still come out of that day with a solid list of tasks filed under 'complete.'

8. Plan out what you'll be working on ahead of time.

Spending time figuring out what you'll do today can take away from actually doing those things. And, you'll have planned your task list so recently that you can be tempted to change your schedule on the fly. It's important to let your agenda change if you need it to, but it's equally as important to commit to an agenda that outlines every assignment before you begin. Try solidifying your schedule the day before, making it feel more official when you wake up the next day to get started on it.

9. Use technology to stay connected.

Working from home might help you focus on your work in the short term, but it can also make you feel cut off 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.

10. 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, siblings, parents, spouses, and dogs (well, maybe not dogs) respect your space during work hours. Just because you're working from home doesn't mean you're home.