



# How to Work from Home & Still Be Productive

## *Six tips to help you focus*

Things are moving and changing quickly with the news of coronavirus (COVID-19). In an effort to help employees combat the illness, many companies have asked their teams to work from home when possible. Teleworking presents a unique set of challenges, especially for those who have never done it before or who do not know how long it will last. It can be daunting to realize it is up to you to continue to produce quality work while working remotely. Physical therapist Mary Morrison, PT, DScPT gives strategies on how to keep your healthy habits and productivity in check.

### **Stick with a routine.**

It might be tempting to roll directly out of bed and onto the couch to start checking email, but you will need to establish a schedule when it comes to working from home. Set an alarm clock, eat breakfast, take a shower and get dressed as if you were actually going into work. You do not have to put on a suit or tie, but you will need to treat the day like any other day at the office, minus the office. Determine regular working hours and factor in breaks and meal times.

### **Have a dedicated workspace and set up.**

It can be tempting to work from your bed, but it is important to set boundaries when it comes to remote work. For some people, boundaries mean no TV or making sure the kids or pets are in a separate room. Working from home also means you will have to fight off distractions of other things you will be tempted to do around the house. Set up a desk area where you will aim to spend the majority of your day and stock this area with everything you would find back in the office. Position your desk and chair so that your spine is aligned and make sure your chin is pointed straight ahead. If you prefer, ditch the chair altogether and opt for a standing desk – whatever set up will make you feel more productive and ready to work.

### **Set goals.**

Write out a daily and weekly to-do list involving your work and everything that needs to get done. You will feel better prepared knowing what is ahead and having some sort of game plan for tackling it.

### **Get up and move.**

It can be tempting to work for hours at a time without taking a break, especially if you are comfortable with where you are. However, it is important to establish regular breaks throughout the day (and also to schedule your workouts). Mary suggests setting a timer every hour to remind you to get up and move or stretch. It is important to focus on active stretching for your lower and upper back since you will likely be working on a laptop with a smaller screen. If you are feeling particularly stir crazy, opt for a quick walk around the block. In addition, try your best to not eat at your desk. Use the opportunity to work from home to develop good habits.

### **Check-in often.**

Working from home can sometimes be isolating. (Plus we know it is important for our mental health to make connections and have friendships.) Check-in with colleagues and people throughout the day (but be careful not to get too distracted with your phone). When possible, schedule video calls. Virtual connections will never replace the importance of face-to-face interaction, but it can help make you feel like you are more than just out there in the void. Also, make sure you are touching base with your boss or employees. Telecommuting thrives when there is an emphasis on trust and communication. In addition, regular check-ins with your team can help identify priorities and potential obstacles and keep people accountable.

### **Know when to log off.**

Shut down and stop working when you would normally leave the office. Just as you established your regular working from home hours and routine, determine when you will stop working for the day. And although it can be challenging in

our 24/7, always connected world – you’ll need a good work-life balance even more since your work is now home with you all day

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