

1 STRUCTURE YOUR DAY

Maintaining your usual working routine in a home environment isn't easy, the first step is to have a clear start and end time otherwise you could feel like you are working 24/7 and this could lead to increased stress.

Other tips to maintain structure:

- Keep to your existing routine - get up on time, get dressed, eat breakfast, anything you would usually do.
- Keep boundaries between your work and home life separate to help keep track of time. Don't, for example, do chores such as washing and cooking during the workday.
- Schedule in these chores outside of your working hours or in the time you would normally spend commuting.
- Choose a specific room or environment as your workspace and stick to it - moving around your home whilst working can cause a distraction and further blur your work/home life balance.
- Remember to schedule a time for breaks.
- **Most importantly - keep the balance and know how to stop.**

2 SETTING UP YOUR WORK AREA

- **Create a private area** - Work in a specific room with the door shut to avoid distraction, keep concentration and help maintain confidentiality.
- **Be comfortable** - Choose a well-lit, spacious area that's at the right temperature for you. Position your screen at eye level or just below and about an arm's length away. Ideal position will vary for each person.
- **Keep moving** - Try and change your working position regularly (every 30 minutes) to help reduce fatigue. Walking around whilst on the phone is a great way to keep active and to take a break from your workstation. **The best posture is your next posture!**
- **Take a break** - Step away from your workstation every 1-2 hours for at least 2 minutes and ensure you take a lunchbreak that's away from your work environment.
- **Self-assess** - Fill in a suitable "Homeworking self-assessment" questionnaire to evaluate your current working from home environment. If you have any concerns or need further advice, please speak to a suitable person within your organisation.

3 STAY SOCIAL!

Regular homeworkers can face social isolation and miss out on the benefits of interacting with their colleagues as a defence to combat everyday stresses. A homeworker's remote location often means these personal moments with colleagues are lost. To counter this:

- Communicate regularly via instant messaging platforms, phone calls, emails, and video conferencing tools.
- Have at least one person you can regularly communicate with - and not just for work reasons.
- Take a virtual "tea break" via Microsoft Teams, Skype or FaceTime to see a friendly face.
- Use social interactions and social media to catch up on other things you enjoy.

Home working and your wellbeing - 5 top tips

4 WINDING DOWN

At the end of a day in an office, most people have a moment to decompress on their commute home - either by reading a book on the train, listening to music in the car, walking/cycling home, or meeting up with a friend. These moments are instrumental in stress relief. A homeworker can often move straight from their working world to tasks and challenges in their home life. Time to decompress should be incorporated into your day:

- Try and find at least 30 minutes a day to exercise, whether it's going for a swim, walking, taking the dog out, playing sport or going to the gym.
- Reading, meditating and calling a friend will help your stress levels too.
- Sleep is hugely beneficial for your wellbeing. Try to get 7-8 hours every night. If you can't always achieve this try and take a 15-30-minute nap at a convenient time within your working day or straight after.

5 EXERCISING AT HOME

If you don't have time to, or are unable to leave the house, exercising at home is another option:

- Use resources online, such as the NHS fitness studio: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-fitness-studio/>. Body weight resistance exercises have both strength and cardiovascular benefits.
- Look at cheap, simple home gym equipment (such as weights and bands) to increase the variety of your workout, making it more fun!
- Use your garden, if you have one, to work out in a different environment and enable you to get some fresh air.



Note: the guidance in this document is to support homeworkers and is not specific to those self-isolating or suffering in relation to COVID-19. For further guidance on self-isolation see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

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