

explainity explains: Working from home

For many people, working from home is an opportunity to reconcile family and their career. For others, it saves long commutes.

But to work from home in a focused and productive way, it helps to be prepared. So, here are some key rules for setting up your home office.

First of all: Off with the sweatpants and into your work clothes. This helps you get into a work mindset.

Also consider your workspace. A set location makes it easier to work efficiently. The sofa or your kitchen table aren't really suitable. As well as a desk, you'll need: an ergonomic chair – a good computer with all necessary programs – if needed, a large monitor with a webcam for video calls – a phone that you can also redirect your company number to – ideally a headset – and a reliable internet connection. More important things to remember are the right lighting – fresh air – and anything that makes you feel more comfortable at work.

Don't forget, your employer is required to provide you with everything you need to work from home.

Remove any distractions as much as you can so you can focus on your work.

You should also inform the people you live with about your work hours, so they know when not to disturb you.

Structure is everything: Create yourself a set routine; besides the start and end of work, this should include breaks, which you can use to get away from your desk and get some fresh air, to promote a healthy work-life balance for yourself.

Note down your tasks and when you'd like to have them finished. Work through these tasks step by step. When you get something done, make sure you enjoy each little success!

Communicate regularly with coworkers by phone or video call.

Everyone should keep each other up to date about current projects and the progress you are making on them. Transparency is key.

Also let them know when you're starting work, taking a break and finishing for the day.

Communication also facilitates creativity – and you'll stay in the loop with your colleagues and avoid cabin fever.

Another important point is data security. If you save top-secret documents or send confidential emails, they also need to be secure in your home office. Data should only be exchanged via a secure private network.

So if you have a job that could be carried out at home, make sure to first talk with your manager about your options for working from home. Don't forget ask for everything to be confirmed in writing. After all, working from home is by no means a given.

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And to switch off after a productive day working from your home office, shut down your computer, disable call forwarding – and head outdoors to get some fresh air or slip into your sweatpants and unwind on the sofa.

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