



BGHS Virtual Health & Safety Week 22nd - 26th February 2021

7 simple tips to tackle working from home

Life has become more difficult for everyone, COVID-19 has changed how we live and work. There are some perks to working from home that some of us can enjoy but feeling stress, boredom, anxiety and uncertainty is also completely normal. We wanted to share some simple tips to help you while working at home, to feel more productive and take care of your mental health during these difficult times.

1. Set and stick to a routine

Without steady schedules, the lines between work and personal time can get blurred and be stressful to get right.

Follow your normal sleep and work patterns if you can, and stay consistent.

Most importantly, when your workday stops, stop working. Shut down, stop checking emails and focus on your home life. And at the end of the day, try to get to bed at your usual time.

2. Make a dedicated workspace

If you can, find a quiet space away from people and distractions

Get everything you need in one place, before you start work – chargers, pens, paper and anything else – and shut the door if you can. Even in a small or shared space, try to designate an area for work.

Lastly, get comfortable. If you do not have office furniture like an adjustable chair, try using things like cushions to support you in your chair, or a box as a footrest.



3. Give yourself a break Working at home can make us feel like we have to be available all the time. But just being “present” is no use to anyone if your mental health is suffering.

Making time for breaks is important to help manage feelings of stress – try to take lunch and regular screen breaks. Give yourself time to concentrate on something else so you feel more focused when you return. Even just 5 to 10 minutes of short breaks each hour can really help your productivity too.

If possible, set a time to go for a walk, run or bike ride for some fresh air. Working from home means you might be spending a lot more time without moving your body. If you're feeling stiff or tense, try doing some light stretching or exercise with a [10-minute home workout](#).

4. Stay connected

While working from home has its benefits, you may also feel more isolated. But there are lots of ways to stay in touch with those who matter – boosting their mental wellbeing as well as our own.

In and out of work, human interaction matters so schedule video calls and pick up the phone instead of emailing. If you're struggling with working at home, speak to your colleagues or manager about your concerns.

And remember, your colleagues probably feel the same as you. Ask how they're doing and whether there are ways you can support each other.

Make time to socialise virtually – schedule in a digital coffee break or Friday online get-together.

5. Set boundaries

Setting boundaries with other members of your household is key to mental wellbeing while working at home.

You can be more flexible when working from home, so enjoy it. But it can also be difficult if there are other distractions to deal with, like children at home, who may think you are on holiday and want to spend time with you.

Have a discussion about your needs, especially with family. Remind them that you still have work to do and need quiet time to do it, and share your schedule.

Similarly, set boundaries with work. It's easier to stay logged on when your home is your office, but try to switch off when the work day is over, and enjoy time with family at home.

6. Think longer term

You may be continuing to work from home for a while, so think about ways you could improve how you work while at home. If you have a room that's warmer or has a window that lets in a lot of light, could you work there instead?

Try to explore how you work with others. Are there different ways to talk online or new software you could use?

7. Be kind to yourself

Remember, this is an unusual situation and things will not feel normal.

Be kind to yourself and acknowledge that you might not be as productive as you usually would be. Be realistic about what you can achieve given the circumstances, and relax when your work is done.

Further Support & Advice

For more advice on how to look after your own mental health and supporting colleagues while working from home, visit [Mental Health at Work](https://www.baillygarnerhs.co.uk/mental-health-at-work).

