

## 10 tips for creating a healthy home based office space

1. Take your office chair, computer screen/monitor, external mouse and keyboard, docking station home with you... this will allow you to create the best work environment possible at home, combined with a few of the following secret tips – its bound to allow you to continue to work pain free and maintain optimal productivity.
2. Set up your office in a specific place, such as a spare bedroom, to create a work environment and zone... and a place with a door, so that you can have privacy from family members who may also be working from home or in isolation with you. It also means you can close the door at the end of the day and step into your home life zone
3. Choose a desk or table that allows you to have your elbows at 90° as well as your hip, knees and ankles... this may mean moving furniture around your house until you find one that is suitable (although a hassle initially, your body will thank you for it long term!). Avoid sitting at the kitchen table, on the couch or at the kitchen bench. This is only OK (ish) for short periods only.

4. Try and mirror your office desk set up just like your workplace office set up

So make sure the top of your screen is at eye level, unless you wear progressive glasses, in which case it needs to be lower and at a height where you do not need to raise your head to read it. If possible position your screen at 90° to a window to prevent glare, otherwise consider using your blind/curtains just like you might at work.

Set your chair up so that the height allows for hip, knees and ankles to be at 90°.

This [short video shows how to set your workstation up correctly](#)

5. Being based at home can make you feel like you never get away from work, so, dressing in 'work' clothes can help some people, and if you are lucky enough to have your workspace in an outside office/shed you can actually leave the house and step out to go to work! This small point of separation can make a big difference in giving you that separation between your work and home life. Otherwise, as long as you are not in self isolation, then maybe consider lapping the block before and after work to allow you to get into work mode (often our commute to work does this) or unwind after work.

6. Keep your normal work routines – get up at the same time, eat the same food, take your same breaks, start and finish work at the same time, go to bed at the same time and so on... and just as importantly keep your ‘out of work’ routines as well (as much as possible). Routine is very important for us as we are creatures of habit... this will also allow us to create a sense of normality and reduce anxiety and stress as you are functioning within your normal patterns and routines... sometimes it’s the uncertainty of a situation that scares or panics us.
7. Keep connected with your work colleagues, friends and family – ring and teleconference peers... don’t just email, connect face to face via zoom/skype/facetime... keep scheduled meetings, just do them via teleconferencing or online – set up lunch dates with peers, have Friday drinks, play a quick game of bingo – just keep communicating and keep connected – but keep business running as well. Sharing with others how you feel is a very good tip for managing stress and anxiety, and offer to listen to others as well.
8. Ensure security of IT infrastructure is tight and compliant with company policy... this also includes paper documents as well and reassure clients what measures you are taking to address this issue. Work with your IT provider/Telco companies, have locked filing cabinets/brief cases... or where possible, be paper-based as much as you can.
9. Look after your mental wellbeing – keeping connected and keeping normal routines is a good start to looking after your mental wellbeing. Work with your employer to communicate what your unique needs are. Recognise that we all have different ways of dealing with situations like this.

Avoid watching social media or the news too much, it’s unhealthy to do so. Use the Healthline number (0800 611 116) or text 1737 if you need to speak to a counsellor – this is a free, 24 hour service, 7 days a week. Use your company ‘employee assist programs’ if available as well.

Spend some time in places that feel safe and comfortable for you... as much as possible. Give yourself praise and reassurance – tell yourself that how you feel is normal and it will pass

10. Keep active and keep occupied – going to work, doing usual leisure activities and keeping engaged in the activities you enjoy doing... or even maybe pick up new hobbies, keep fit, get outside into the garden and connect with nature – whatever it is just keep doing it as this will help distract your mind from feeling potential distress, anxiety or panic.