[How to set up a home office for remote working](https://remote.com/blog/remote-work/how-to-set-up-home-office-for-remote-working)

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Working remotely is not a new concept. However, the pandemic-driven increase in companies adopting a hybrid or fully remote work arrangement has allowed many more people to begin working from anywhere.

For most, that means working from home, which provides a unique opportunity to customize your home office setup or give yourself a home office upgrade. When doing so, there are multiple factors to consider, including comfort, privacy, noise level, lighting, and much more.

Here is everything you need to know to set up an ideal work-from-home office, including several important tips to keep in mind that will help you [maximize productivity in your home workspace.](https://remote.com/blog/maximum-productivity-home-office)

**Tips for setting up a productive home office**

Setting up an efficient workspace in your home environment — as well as the very act of working from home — can be challenging.

Your home office setup can even affect your mental health, though the right [office setup can foster mental health.](https://remote.com/blog/home-office-mental-health)

With the right location, equipment, and ambiance, you can create a productive, appealing home office where you can perform at your best.

**Find the best location for your office setup (natural light preferred)**

The first step is to carve out a dedicated remote workspace for yourself somewhere within your home. If possible, you should set up your workspace in a room dedicated solely to work. If an entire room is not available to take over, choose a quiet, out-of-the-way area within your living space.

Quality of ambient lighting is important in any room, but it is arguably most important in your home workspace. [Studies show that lighting](https://onlinemba.unc.edu/news/how-lighting-affects-productivity/) can have a significant effect on your productivity.

Ideally, set up your workspace in an area where you will be exposed to natural lighting. Research has shown that natural light, either in the morning or in the evening, can lessen depression and improve energy, alertness, mood, and productivity.

Ensure your workspace has enough indirect light to illuminate the area adequately. Overhead light is ideal, but you may need to place lamps for additional lighting. To avoid glare, do not place a lamp directly next to a computer monitor.

**Don't forget how important height of your monitor and desk are**

It is essential that your work desk for home office use is the proper height. If you've ever left your office for the day wracked with aches, pains, and stiffness, you know from experience that the height of your work surface affects your health and your posture.

Incorrect desk height leads to extension or flexion of the wrists and arm abduction, which over time can cause you to develop musculoskeletal disorders, such as carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis.

The standard desk height is 28 inches, although this may or may not work for you depending on your height. Ideally, your arms, wrists, and hands should remain in a neutral position while you work. Your arms should be at your side with your elbows bent at a 90-degree angle. Therefore, your desk should be at elbow height to allow your hands to rest on the keyboard.

Many office workers prefer to stand throughout the day, citing better alertness and improved productivity as compared to sitting all day. There are multiple [health benefits to standing](https://hbr.org/2010/08/the-many-benefits-of-standing.html) while working, including:

* Less back strain than sitting
* Strengthens the leg muscles
* Improves balance
* Improves circulation and helps prevent blood clots in the legs
* Burns more calories than sitting

Making a choice between a  **sitting or standing desk** depends on your preference and comfort. An adjustable desk that serves both may be the most viable option, because you can move and adjust it as needed throughout the day depending on the task at hand.

An  **electric standing desk** allows you to avoid the potential back strain of raising your work surface along with the weight of your equipment and office supplies. Switching between sitting and standing is optimal, providing the health benefits of standing while also allowing your legs to rest intermittently.

Just as important as the height of your desk itself is the [height of your monitor](https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/ergonomics/office/monitor_positioning.html) . If your computer monitor is improperly positioned, this can cause discomfort, eye strain, and pain in the neck, shoulders, and back.

Keep in mind viewing angle and viewing distance when placing your monitor. The eyes naturally rest at a straightforward and slightly downward angle, so position your monitor accordingly. Placing your monitor too close to you can strain your eyes, so ensure your monitor is far enough back on your workspace. Your monitor should usually sit about an arm's length away from you.

Many people use  **dual monitors** for convenience. Even laptop users can connect an external monitor, allowing them to glance back and forth between the two. If you use both monitors equally often, place both monitors in front of you at a slight angle with their inner edges touching, forming a rudimentary semi-circle.

If you use one monitor more often than the other, that monitor should be directly in front of you. Position the secondary monitor directly next to that one at a slight angle, forming a semi-circle.

If you use an ultrawide monitor, you should have a deeper desk, and the monitor should be as far back as possible to reduce the amount of side-to-side neck movement required to utilize the entire screen.

**Make sure you're comfortable**

A low-quality desk chair can actually cause injuries over time. It is paramount that you choose an office chair that is both comfortable and designed to protect you from injury.

The ideal ergonomic chair features an adjustable seat height, arm height, arm position, and seat tilt. It should also be on casters to allow it to roll. Look for an office chair featuring lumbar support for your lower back.

While some office chairs can be pricey, there are many less costly options, as well. Just remember that if you plan to sit for much of the day, a good desk chair is one of the best investments in your home office setup that you can make.

**Think about an ergonomic setup**

The dangers of repetitive motion injuries come from not only the height of your desk, but also from the use of peripheral equipment such as your mouse and keyboard. Consider an [ergonomic desk setup](https://remote.com/blog/benefits/ergonomic-home-office-budget) that includes peripheral devices specifically designed to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, and other such injuries.

An ergonomic keyboard may be more expensive than a standard keyboard, but if you spend a lot of time typing, it may very well be a worthwhile investment. Ergonomic keyboards are divided into two halves or columns and provide support for the wrists while you type. These keyboards are designed to reduce muscle strain, fatigue, and repetitive motion injuries by allowing you to type with your shoulders, arms, wrists, and hands in a natural position.

Similarly, an ergonomic mouse is also designed to keep your arm and wrist in a more natural position than a standard computer mouse. An ergonomic mouse is designed to fit your body, promoting a more upright wrist and hand position and causing less strain on the forearms, wrists, and hands.

If you spend any significant amount of time on phone calls, invest in a comfortable, noise-canceling headset. Cradling your desk phone or cell phone between your shoulder and your ear is a recipe for injury, including muscle strain, pinched nerves, and so on. The noise-canceling feature will also prevent a good amount of household and ambient noise from reaching the person on the other end of the call.

**Prioritize privacy**

It can be next to impossible to focus on work when your environment is chaotic. Even a family member or roommate moving around your living space can be distracting while you attempt to concentrate. While working from home, if you must share your living space with anyone, it is important to set up your home office in an area with minimal distractions.

This means working away from the television or other sources of noise, as well as ensuring your home office space is not located in the middle of heavily trafficked areas in your home. If you must share a co-working space with a partner, family member, or roommate, try to maintain separation if possible by using room or desk dividers, facing opposite directions, and so on.

It is also essential that you prevent others in your home from seeing or accessing any kind of sensitive information. Password-protect your devices or, at the very least, your professional documents and files if you must use shared devices.

Even though your home office is, by definition, part of your home, it is essential to maintain a work-life balance. Keep your home office as separate as possible from your living space.

**Identify a safe place to store sensitive documents**

You should never allow sensitive professional documents to intermingle with personal paperwork, which could lead to mistakes, inadvertent destruction of important work documents, or accidental disclosure of sensitive information.

Instead, create a designated place for work documents, such as receipts, customer files, invoices, or other important records. Whether you use a filing cabinet or an accordion file, keeping these documents separate from other paperwork is just as important in your home office as it would be in a workplace.

**Invest in high-speed internet**

When working remotely, high-speed internet is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity. Spotty internet service can have catastrophic effects on productivity, not to mention your ability to attend virtual meetings, take calls, upload and download files, and perform your required job responsibilities on time.

Most regions have at least one internet service provider (ISP) that offers high-speed internet. Look for a bare minimum of 50Mbps, opting for a higher speed if possible, especially if several people in your household use the internet at the same time.

**Maximize vertical space**

When space is scarce in your home, the last thing you want to do is fill a room — or even a corner — with home office equipment, files, storage, and various other work-related sundries. Rather than expanding your work area outward, consider expanding upward.

Maximize the available vertical space in your chosen workspace by choosing a desk with shelves or installing shelves on the walls above or beside your desk. A pegboard is a handy way to store office supplies, unused headphones and other equipment, and even office décor.

A tall filing cabinet or vertical shelving with bins or other storage containers could provide the space you need for sensitive work documents, office supplies, and more.

Get creative, and think upward, not outward!

**Other remote work necessities**

In addition to your home office setup, including furniture and computer equipment, there are a number of other items or services you might find helpful while working remotely.

**Blue light glasses**

Because you are most likely working through computer screens and mobile devices, think about using blue light glasses or contact lenses. Blue light can cause headaches, eye strain, dry eyes, and other vision issues and can even expose you to possible future eye problems like cataracts and age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Specialized blue light-filtering eyewear is designed to minimize the amount of blue light that enters your eyes from your device screens.

**Wifi hotspot**

If you don't have access to high-speed internet or Wifi in your home, you can still work remotely by connecting to your mobile device's Wifi hotspot. A prudent suggestion before doing so is to contact your telephone service provider to ask about data caps, other limitations, and possible upgrades.

**Noise-canceling headphones**

Using noise-canceling headphones may be the difference between laser-sharp focus on work and constant distractions. To maximize productivity in your home office, consider investing in a good set of noise-canceling headphones to improve your concentration and boost your efficiency.

**Stationery**

While working from home, you will likely need standard office supplies, such as paper, pens, scissors, paper clips, and stationery. Stock your home office with the necessary items to make working from home just as convenient as working in the office with its well-stocked supply cabinet.

**Maximize productivity in your home office**

Using the tips and suggestions in this article, you can create the ideal work-from-home office space. Click here to read more about how [Remote](https://remote.com/ichooseremote) can help you [set up your home workspace on a budget.](https://remote.com/blog/remote-work/budget-home-office)

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