

## Get the most from working from home

During the COVID-19 pandemic, working from home has become the new normal. If you're struggling with this adjustment, you're not alone. Here are some key steps to help you make the most of your work-from-home situation

### Make a routine

Wake up around the same time every day and make time to eat, get dressed (even if it's in athletic clothes for your at-home workout later in the day), and settle in to begin work on time with a cup of coffee or tea.

If your work allows, include regular morning and afternoon breaks. Don't skip these if they were part of your daily office life. Continue making time to take a break and recharge before jumping back into work.

### Create a dedicated workspace — and some boundaries

If possible, use a space you can dedicate fully to work. Try to avoid setting up in spaces you use for relaxation and family time to help maintain a healthy work/life balance.

You can also get creative with your desk. Stack some sturdy books on a table to create a standing desk or position an exercise ball in front of a lower table.

Having a properly set up desk is also important for your body. Use a comfortable, cushioned chair that supports your back. Elevate your computer monitor so the top of the screen is at or below eye level. You can stack your computer on sturdy books or buy a laptop stand that allows you to adjust its height.

Another healthy boundary to consider is setting a dedicated time for lunch and stepping away from your computer. Sitting away from your computer encourages your brain to separate work from everyday life. This can help you improve your mental health and come back after your break more refreshed and ready to work.

### Get up and move regularly

When you're working from home, you're less likely to get up and move around. Set regular reminders to get up and stretch, walk around the room for a minute, or set a time to call a coworker or friend while you take a quick walk around the block. You may even want to begin your day with a quick walk to replace the time previously dedicated to your commute.

### Communication is key

If you're new to working from home, remember that communication is key. Over-communicating with your boss or team is especially important if you aren't used to working from home.

If you're working from home for the first time with children, this applies here as well. Communicate with your coworkers that your children may occasionally be heard in the background and let your kids know that work from home means you really do have to work. Talk with others in similar situations to get tips and tricks that may inspire you.

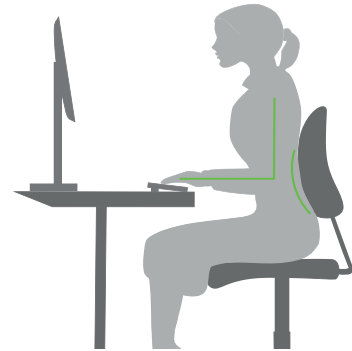
## Working safely at home

### Setting up your workspace

- Your work surface (desk) should be about 29 to 30 inches high.
- Use a chair with a supportive back and be sure its feet are firmly on the floor.
- Your computer screen should be about 20 to 24 inches from your face.

### Modifying your space

- To increase the height of your chair, put a flat cushion on the seat.
- Improve your posture by placing a rolled towel between your lower back and the seat back.
- If you use a laptop, use a cordless keyboard when possible to keep the monitor farther away.
- To raise your monitor, put it on top of a thick book or two.
- If your feet aren't firmly on the floor, use a thick book or a low footstool as a footrest.



### Ergo breaks and posture correction techniques

“Ergo breaks” allow you to change position and improve your circulation throughout the day.

- Stand up and walk around for a minute or two every 45 to 60 minutes.
- Use the 20/20/20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds to reduce the risk of eye strain and fatigue.
- Practice posture correction techniques (below) to improve circulation and reduce aches and pains.
  - » Check with your healthcare provider before doing any of these if you are injured or have pain.

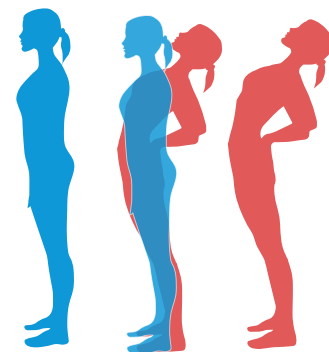
#### Neck retractions

While sitting or standing upright, pull your head backward as if on a drawer. Don't tuck your chin, tilt your head back or hold the position. Repeat 10 times every 1 to 2 hours.



#### Back bends

Stand with your feet about 1 foot apart. Put your hands on your hips or lower back and bend backwards. Don't hold the position. Repeat 10 times every 1 to 2 hours.



For more information, visit [osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics)