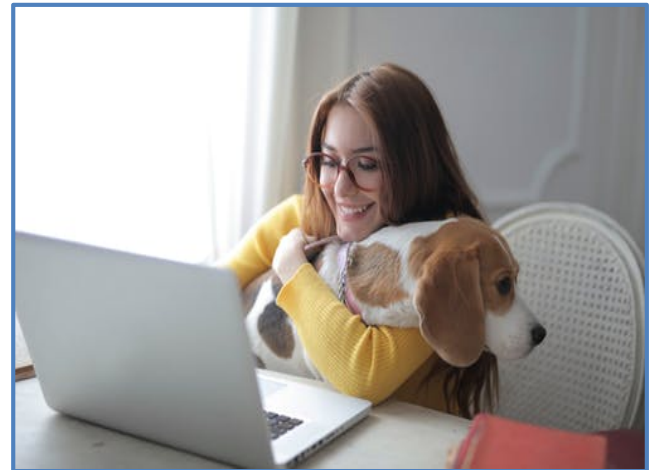


The joys of working at home

Nearly 90% of companies have encouraged or required their employees to work from home, according to a March survey by Gartner Inc. of U.S. human resources departments. This is new for most employees who are now learning how to work outside of the office, stay productive and healthy and adapt to working with kids who are home from school and daycare. Here are a few tips that can help:

- Create a comfortable workspace. It can be a home office, a desk in your bedroom, or even the kitchen table. Make sure it's a place you can concentrate and avoid disruptions.
- Make a conscious separation between work and home to encourage healthy work-life balance. Closing the computer lid, closing your office door and changing into your evening attire can all help you transition from work to personal life.
- Get yourself ready for work. A study published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* found that people who dress for work are more productive and ready to start their day. There is even a study from Harvard that shows wearing makeup leads to higher self esteem and better work.



When you're working from home, it's easy to forget about taking breaks, but it's important to incorporate them into your day. Review your calendar daily and find time to take small breaks to re-energize yourself and boost creativity. It's important to get up and move every 30 minutes, which could be as easy as standing up and stretching, shoulder shrugs or calf raises. Consider incorporating nature daily; use walking meetings, go outside for a walk during lunch or schedule regular outdoor physical activity.

If working from home is new to you, here are some tips:

- Plan and embrace disruptions from animals, children and partners. It's OK.
- If you don't have anyone to help with your children, set up a school workstation nearby so you can easily monitor them without frequent disruptions.
- Keep water at your desk to stay hydrated.
- Talk with others in your home about using a sign, such as finger in the air, to limit distractions.
- Negotiate work needs with people in your home, such as quiet time for important meetings, internet bandwidth and child care as needed.

Sources: health.harvard.edu*, nhlbi.nih.gov*, cnn.com*, thewirecutter.com*

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