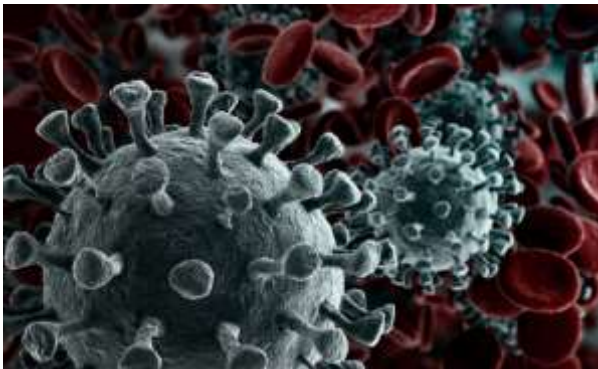


COVID-19: Tips for Home Working



Sometimes common sense goes out of the window in a crisis. Hopefully, frequent home workers will have already discovered many of the tips below and incorporated them into their daily work routine. For those who are new to the experience (and those who need reminding), here are lots of ideas to keep you healthy (physically and mentally).

- ❁ Try to replicate your office setup as far as possible.
- ❁ If you are using a laptop, ideally you should be using a [laptop kit](#) consisting of a separate keyboard, mouse and stand.
- ❁ In the short term and at the short notice created by the pandemic, a laptop kit and suitable desk/chair may not be an option. Take a look at our animated [Posture Guidance](#) to see how to achieve the ideal setup and then use our [Agile Working](#) guide to see how to make the best of any compromise.
- ❁ If you do have a study desk or you can use a kitchen or dining table, you will probably have a chair that is roughly the right height. If your chair is too low, use cushions to raise yourself up and/or support your back. A footrest (or box) may be required to support your feet.
- ❁ Whatever table/desk you work at, aim to get the screen roughly at arm's length and the screen top just below eye level. However, if you are using a small laptop or a tablet, you will probably want to bring it closer.
- ❁ Try to sit at the correct height with your elbows level with the top of the work surface and your forearms horizontal. If you have a mouse, keep it close to your keyboard.
- ❁ If you really have to use the sofa, don't do it for too long. Vary it with other postures. Don't use the bed!
- ❁ Place your equipment at right angles to a window. Do not sit facing a window unless you have no other option. Studies and spare bedrooms are often quite dark so an [LED lamp](#) on the desk may help both your mood and your vision.
- ❁ When making telephone/video calls, stand up and move around whenever possible. Movement is key to reducing fatigue and maintaining productivity.



- 📌 Take care of your mental & physical health:
- 📌 Start and end your day at fixed times. This helps create a balanced life style. Switch your device(s) off at the end of the day.
- 📌 Create an agenda. This gives structure to your day and ensures you mix 'you time' with work activities.
- 📌 Think about your 'normal' routine when you get ready in the morning. Some people prefer to dress for work when they work from home. Others even go out of the back door and come in the front door to create a sense of beginning their work day. If you are happy to work unshaven in your pyjamas, remember that this probably creates the wrong impression on video calls!
- 📌 Take regular breaks. Weather permitting, keep a window open for fresh air or go outside. If you do not have a garden or yard, do exercises at home. There are many helpful apps and videos online or you can start with our [simple Stretching Exercises](#).
- 📌 Avoid becoming chair-shaped! Fitback Physiotherapy offers their [Super 7 exercises in 7 minutes](#) to strengthen your back
- 📌 Our friends at Cardinus also have a useful app for both Apple and Android phones. At the time of writing, it is being updated to address the current issues more directly. Search HealthyWorking in the Apple App Store or Google Play.
- 📌 Keep in regular contact with colleagues to reduce feelings of isolation. A video call (Facetime / WhatsApp / Skype, etc.) is more beneficial than a phone call, provided there is enough bandwidth left in the country to support it!
- 📌 Schedule a virtual coffee break with colleagues. Better still, get your manager to do it for the team. This is one thing that does work better on the sofa!
- 📌 If you feel isolated or anxious, speak to your manager or contact your employer's EAP. This is a common theme for new home workers. Take a look at the [Action for Happiness](#) or [Mind](#) web sites for more ideas.
- 📌 Avoid distractions during the day wherever possible. This includes the people who share your home as well as social media prompts. Switch off social media alerts and set aside specific times to review it. You may need to agree some 'house rules' with family members about interruptions.
- 📌 The overarching uncertainty about this pandemic adds further stress for every one of us. If you're a LinkedIn user, check out Chris Croft's '[15 ways to make self-isolation a positive experience](#)'.
- 📌 Finally, another useful guide on LinkedIn from someone who has been working from home for a while. I don't know anything about Dave Officer, except that he is a graphic designer and he produced [this excellent pragmatic guide](#).



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