

10 Tips to Work From Home in a Coronavirus-Plagued World

If you're new to the remote work world, it can be a tough learning curve to climb. Here's how to make it easier.

[Dan Caplinger](#)

(TMFGalagan)

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The COVID-19 outbreak has changed the lives of billions of people worldwide. Many businesses both large and small have closed their doors, urging their employees to work remotely to avoid potential infection.

For many workers, having the flexibility of being able to [work from home](#) has been a dream they've pursued for a long time. There are indeed real benefits to working remotely, but there are also big challenges to overcome. From the perspective of someone who's worked from home for 14 years, here are 10 tips to make your remote work experience as productive and successful as it can be.

1. Have a dedicated workspace in your home if you can

Those who are fortunate enough to have a guest room or spare room to turn into an office have an easy place to transform into an effective workspace. Even if you live in less spacious quarters, though, having a specific place to work is useful -- even if it's just a corner of a living room or bedroom.

2. Use to-do lists -- but with a twist

Every morning, it's useful to have a to-do list of things you hope to get done that day. The key, though, is to understand that many days, you won't be able to finish it. It's important not to beat yourself up over that, especially when you're first starting out.

3. Deal with distractions well

Anyone working from home inevitably gets distracted, and it's obviously even worse if you have family who's around because of the coronavirus. However, try to keep yourself distracted in the same ways you did at work. For me as a financial writer, that means

letting myself surf market websites for five minutes, but not binge-watching movies or television series.

4. Learn from your experience

As you find out how long it takes you to get certain things done when you're working from home, build those new expectations into your schedule. That'll help you get more productive over time.

5. Take breaks -- ideally out of your house

When you live where you work, it's even more important to get out of your workspace at times during the day. The COVID-19 outbreak makes this more challenging, but even a few breaks each day to take a walk around the block can make a huge difference to your attitude.

6. Don't lose touch with your work friends

If you have a strong social life at work, don't let working remotely take that away. If you can't get together in person, then take advantage of the increasingly useful and innovative tools available from workplace [tech companies](#) like **Slack Technologies** and **Zoom Video Communications** to interact with video and audio in large groups.

7. Make working comfortable

Do what you can to make your workspace at home as comfortable and functional as possible. Working an eight-hour day in a bad chair can do an immense amount of damage to your body -- and your attitude.

8. Set goals -- and beat them

To keep yourself motivated, it's helpful to set some aspirational goals for how much work you hope to get done in a given day. Keep records of what you do, and then see if you can top your personal best from day to day.

9. Deal with being disconnected

As good as Slack, Zoom, and other tools are, nothing can replace communicating face-to-face. Remote workers inevitably feel like they're out of the loop. The good thing at this point is that everybody's in the same boat, so you don't have to worry about the people still at the office who can fill in gaps and talk further even after a conference call or video conference ends.

10. Cut yourself some slack

You're not going to be as efficient or productive in getting work done from home as you were at the office. Don't get down on yourself because of that. Even if you

feel like you're getting nothing done at first, you'll eventually get the hang of things and find your bearings.

Good luck!

If you're working from home for the first time and it has you in a near-panic, you're not alone. Just about every remote worker went through what you're going through. Have the confidence to know that you will get through this tough first stage and find success sooner than you think.