# Home office

**There are many good reasons for working from home: balance of work and family life, saving time on long commutes, flexible working hours, measures to minimize the risk of infection in the event of an epidemic (coronavirus), etc. Working at home offers many advantages, but there are also downsides. Here are some basic rules to turn this experiment into success.**

**Fixed work hours**
Work in the home office should follow the same principles as in the office. Stick to fixed work hours and take regular short breaks. Your supervisors and co-workers should be able to rely on you being available and answering emails and phone calls as usual. Fixed work hours in the home office also mean that you do not have to be available 24 hours a day.

**Separation of professional and private life**
Your private life and work should always be kept separate. However, when you work from home, this is easier said than done, since the work is carried out in a private environment where you are inundated with countless distractions. A package is being delivered, the laundry needs to be put in the dryer, or a personal phone call comes in. Therefore, it is important that you stay focused. This is not equally easy for everyone and requires a high amount of self-discipline. Set up a workplace where you can focus and work productively. Let your family members or roommates know that you do not wish to be disturbed. To get into the right mindset, it also helps to dress as if you were going to work. Keep reminding yourself that despite the home environment it is a normal workday.

**Set goals**
Staying organized takes high priority when you work from home. Of course, it helps if the company specifies the tasks, goals, and deadlines. That way, even home office employees know exactly what is expected of them. Nevertheless, outside motivation

is limited in the home office and a high amount of self-discipline is required. Make a conscious effort to start your home office day the right way. Create a morning routine at home and then go to your fixed work station. Take time to document the most important tasks on a to-do list. Be conscious of your own habits. Take short breaks in order to consciously continue working afterwards.

**Maintain social contact**

Lack of contact with co-workers can make you feel isolated and lonely. You also lose important sources of motivation and inspiration, such as briefly consulting the person next to you or interacting with others at the cafeteria table. Consequently, combining home office and on-site work provides an ideal solution. If that is not possible, you can maintain contact via email, telephone, or online conferences. Generally, the following applies for working from home: Communicate a lot and opt for a phone or online video call here and there instead of just relying on emails alone.

**Know when to call it a day**

Even the workday in your own four walls eventually comes to an end at some point – hopefully! Working from home should not cause you to extend your workday into the late evening hours or not to shut down at all. When you are calling it a day, do it right. Signal to yourself that you are now allowed to distance yourself from work and relax.

That may include that you to take a moment to reflect on your workday. Then turn off your laptop and other devices that you use for work. Stand up and consciously leave the workstation. Change your clothes if you feel like it. You can also define other rituals for yourself, but the most important thing is that you finish your workday in your mind. Use the remaining time for personal commitments and take time to do things that give you pleasure and make you feel good. After all, finding time to relax and spend time with loved ones and getting enough “me time” is essential so that the next workday in the home office can begin fully recharged.

If you have any questions about working from home, we are of course happy to help!