

Pros and Cons of Working From Home

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Pros of Working From Home

ROLE: You are going to defend the Pros of working from home. These ideas might help you.

Pro: More flexibility to take care of appointments and errands.

One of the hardest things about committing to a 9-to-5 desk job is that it prevents you from being able to handle almost anything else that comes up in your life, whether attending a routine dentist appointment or picking a sick kid up from school. When you work from home, while you still have to meet your deadlines and be available when you say you will be, you generally have wider bandwidth to tend to other responsibilities without jeopardizing your job.

Pro: There are fewer interruptions from meetings and chitchat.

It's easier to get into a deep state of focused work when you're in your home office without colleagues dropping by and sitting down impromptu to talk about their weekends. Limiting unnecessary interruptions from your colleagues and boss is a big plus of working from home and is one reason many remote workers are often more productive than office-based workers. While you may need to dial in for specific meetings, you'll likely get a break from attending several others – many of which may be unnecessary to your role – that confront staff workers daily.

There is no commute time or expense.

You can save a lot of money and avoid wasting hours spent getting to and from work when your office is right down the hall. Avoiding traffic battles tops the list of benefits for some of those who work from home. Many remote workers also mentioned saving money by eschewing a pricey professional wardrobe unless they meet with clients.

More time spent with family.

While the "con" above of having blurred boundaries between work and leisure time can definitely create chaos, there's an upside for families: more time together. Office workers must kiss their loved ones goodbye each morning when heading off to work; not so for virtual workers, who can work side by side with a work-from-home spouse or with kids who are learning in a digital classroom. By doing away with the commute time, there is more time to be spent with loved ones.

You can often do your work when you're most productive.

When you work in an office, your schedule is rarely your own. Between the aforementioned interruptions from colleagues and meetings, plus your boss hovering nearby with agenda items and to-dos, accomplishing your focus work may be a "catch as catch can" situation, grabbing time to think and compose important reports and communications between events that others have imposed.

It's still always essential when working from home to be mindful of your team's needs and be available to dial in for virtual meetings. But remote employees generally have greater latitude to select their time of peak productivity to do their most important work and – depending on who else is working at home with them – have more quiet time to hone in on tasks that require concentration.

Reduction in work absences

Since working from home offers flexibility, it can also reduce work absences. Whether you're sick or have to schedule an important appointment, working from home can reduce how often you need to take a day off.

Increases satisfaction

Employee satisfaction in remote positions may be higher because of the flexibility in performing their jobs. Not only are you able to make decisions independently, you're also able to work comfortably without the worry of office-related stress, interruptions or other challenges you might find in a traditional workplace. This can have a direct influence on your overall job satisfaction.

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No physical separation between work and leisure time.

Many who work from home lamented that they often find themselves working around the clock, since their labor has no definite start or end times; those lines can often be blurred. As a result, they sometimes feel as if they are always at work, making it difficult to shift to the post-work relaxation mode that many office workers take for granted.

The absence of an obvious division between the personal and professional realms means some remote workers get distracted by housework. Setting boundaries and sticking to them is important when you're working from home.

Distractions at home

Distractions like the television, pets or household chores can affect how you perform your job. Too many distractions can lead to a decrease in your productivity and motivation. You can avoid this by limiting anything that you find distracting in your home. Use noise-canceling headphones and play relaxing music to block out noises like traffic and neighborhood activity.

It's easy to misread cues via electronic communications.

While few who work from home expressed feeling "lonely," as is typically assumed, many did point to the difficulty of getting the tone right through digital communication systems, such as email, chat, social media and text. Without body language, facial expressions and other cues, remote employees have to put in extra effort to maintain positive communications.

You have to make the effort to get a change of scenery.

What can be a blessing can also become a curse in the form of cabin fever. Some freelancers and others who work from home lamented that where they work during the day is the exact same place where they'll be sitting later that evening; getting involved in their work often translates to spending a huge portion of the day indoors. Pre-pandemic, many stressed the importance of scheduling lunches

and other meetings to keep them in the mix and avoid the rut of never leaving the house.

There is less in-person contact with co-workers.

While you may have more time with loved ones when working from a home office, the flipside is less opportunity for face time (minus a screen) with people at your company. If your co-workers drive you crazy, then reduced time on-site might be a perk for you. But if you enjoy office-based camaraderie and like to be able to socialize with your team in person, then the remote life might make you miserable.

Increased isolation

You can become quite isolated working from home if you spend the majority of your time by yourself, working independently. The key to avoiding loneliness and isolation as a remote worker is to schedule outings and events with friends and family. Some remote workplaces offer regular team events to encourage socialization.

You are not on-site for in-office perks.

You can't swing by the break room and grab a doughnut from the box or hit the company gym if you're working from home. This may be more of a disadvantage for workers in industries such as tech, with impressive on-site offerings like game rooms and chef-made food, but if there's a perk you like about being in the office, then working from home may make you miss it.

Home office costs

Some remote positions require specific equipment like headsets, webcams or software to perform essential tasks and projects. If you want to set up a desk, chair and other furniture, you can expect to cover some initial costs to get your home office organized. Keep your costs low by spending only what you need to perform your job.

Risk of overworking

Telecommuting also comes with the risk of working longer than you should. This can definitely lead to burn-out and increased work-related stress. You can avoid this by clearly defining your schedule and allocating specific times for your job tasks and personal tasks. For some people, it's important to have a designated workspace that you can leave when the workday is over.