

## How can I stay focused while working remotely?

Working from a remote location can be challenging, whether you are working from a global office, a client's office or just from your home. An unfamiliar work environment comes with its own set of obstacles and distractions. Consider the following information to learn how to stay focused in this new work environment.

### Write Down Daily Goals

To combat any distractions brought on by the new work environment, create lists of what you want to achieve every day. Make each list at the end of the work day for the next day's tasks. Writing down what you want to accomplish for the day gives you a sense of direction. During the day, as you complete each task, cross it off. This system can help you to stay focused and motivated in order to eventually cross off all the tasks by the end of the work day.

### Ergonomic Exercises

Your new workspace may take some time to get used to. For example, the chair, desk, keyboard or wrist pad may feel different from the ones you normally use in your regular office. As a result, your body may feel tense. Incorporate ergonomic exercises into your day, if possible and appropriate. Some ergonomic exercises can include shoulder rolls, wrist rolls, hand stretches and hand grips (squeezing a stress ball or hand grip). These simple exercises can get your blood flowing and keep your body relaxed. If your body is relieved of tension, you will be more likely to focus well.

### Personalize Your Work Environment

If you have to work remotely for many days or weeks, personalize your workspace if possible. Put up a photo of your family or friends, add some small art pieces or keep a favorite mug on your desk. Having something familiar to look at throughout the day will be calming and also give you motivation to continue working hard.

### Stay in Touch with Co-workers

In your usual work environment, working in proximity of your co-workers can keep you focused. This is because you are all likely working toward the same or similar goals under the same circumstances. Seeing them hard at work can be reassuring and help you stay on task.

Unfortunately, since you cannot be around your co-workers while working remotely, it is important to keep in touch with them via email, instant message or phone. Of course, you should not contact them excessively, but it may be a good idea to check in with the ones whom you work closely with at certain points during the day or week. Not only will this keep you all updated on one another's progress on mutual projects, but it will also remind you that you are not working alone and help you stay focused.

### Stick to Your Regular Routine

Although it may be difficult in a new environment, try to stick to your regular work routine if possible. This means starting and finishing work at the same times, as well as taking your regular lunch break. It also means doing the same activities that you normally do. For example, if you usually enjoy going for a walk outside for part of your lunch, continue doing so while working remotely. Similarly, if you like to have snacks at certain times during the day, continue doing this as well. Sticking to your usual routine will create a sense of stability, keeping you focused on what is most important: the work.



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