# How to Work From Home: A Checklist of the Essentials

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**Here’s some advice for how to work best from home.**

—**Make sure you have all the tools you need**: the right laptops, network access, passcodes and instructions for remote login.

—**Minimize distractions and noises from others in your household**. Separate your workspace from your personal space as much as possible. Use a pair of noise-canceling headphones to block out sounds. On conference calls, mute your microphone when you aren’t speaking. When videoconferencing, be mindful of what the camera is picking up behind you.

—**Use digital collaboration tools to communicate with colleagues.** Schedule group meetings by videoconference and set up group chats via programs like Slack or Microsoft Teams. If email is leading to a misunderstanding, pick up the phone and have a conversation.

—**Talk with your manager about child-care challenges**. If you’re asked to work from home and your children’s school or day-care shuts down, that might affect your ability to do remote work during normal business hours. In some cases, children may be old enough to fend for themselves. But younger children will need more attention. One possibility might be to set up shifts at home, where one parent works remotely and the other parent cares for the child, and then they switch.

—**Take steps to improve your internet speed.** You may encounter slowdowns during periods of heavy use, like when you’re trying to work from home while your children are watching videos or playing games. Switch to Ethernet if you can. If not, move as close as possible to your Wi-Fi router.

—**Fight the feeling of isolation.** While you want to minimize distraction from your family members or roommates, you also want to avoid feeling like you are completely alone all day. Maintaining social connection is tricky while trying to create social distance to stave off the virus. But there are ways to maintain your mental health: Call people on the phone or videochat, and break up the day with some exercise. Some employers have also begun offering online resilience training to address the challenges of working from home during the outbreak.

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