

Top 7 Home Office Ideas

With COVID came remote work, and with remote work came a new set of challenges for workers. Where do you put your office?

Speaking from experience, there's nothing worse than having to work from the kitchen table—dishwasher running behind you, microwave beeping beside you. A dedicated office space is certainly a luxury, but whether you're looking for home office ideas for your new space, or trying to make the kitchen table work for you, let's cover some critical tips to improve your work-from-home life.

Make working from home feel less like work

1. Where do you set up?

Everyone has different needs when it comes to choosing a place to work. Some can work in high traffic areas without issue, while others may need to tuck themselves away in a quiet corner of the house. Only you know what the correct answer is, and we suggest you take your time with this question. However, if the kitchen table is making you nostalgic for your boring, musty cubicle, then it's time to do some reorganizing.

If you're lucky enough to be designing or repurposing a quiet space for yourself, are you choosing a quiet part of your house? Will noise from the street seep into your room? Is your backyard-facing office too close to your neighbour's barking dog? Is your office door in a high-traffic area where you'll hear roommates or family members walking around?

So, take your time and consider what's best for your circumstances.

2. Where do you store things in your home office?

You need: pens, paper, a printer, books, and who knows what else in order to fulfill your work obligations—the question is where do you put it all? Build vertically, and if you don't have space, like in a kitchen, we suggest using dead space. Do you have room under a countertop, in a cupboard? Maybe you have a shelf for cookbooks that you can repurpose.

If you're working with a dedicated space, building storage vertically will allow you to maximize it without stealing any space from the office itself. Shelving units are a great way to accomplish this, as are closets, bookshelves, and built-in cabinetry.

3. Okay, but where do I plug everything in?

If you're like me, you need at least three monitors to even be half useful at work. Then you add your printer, your shredder, your laptop or computer, desk lamp, USB hub, coffee warmer—if

you're lucky, an espresso machine—and whatever other modern comforts you've convinced yourself you need. Now where do you plug it all in?

If you're dedicating a room in your home to be your home office, make sure you have enough receptacles to plug everything in. If you're designing a new office space, or extension onto your home, including this in the design is imperative. You can never have enough electrical outlets!

However, if you're stuck with too few outlets, the easiest solution is to buy yourself some multi-plug outlet extenders—preferably ones with surge protection and if it's hooked to your computer, battery backup.

4. What about office layout ideas? How do I organize all my stuff?

The first thing to consider is how your room is shaped. One thing you may not have considered when choosing your office space is whether or not the walls are straight. Oddly shaped rooms can be a nightmare to organize, especially when it comes to desks, cabinets, and shelving.

Next, think about where you want to put your major items. Your desk, for example, can cause you headaches if you don't place it properly; you don't want screen glare from a window, and you don't want to be facing an empty wall all day. If you're someone who takes many video conference calls, you'll want to consider your background as well. Will there be people passing behind you? Can they see the clutter or an ugly part of your wall?

Which brings us to our next tip.

5. How do I keep my office space professional?

Many remote jobs include meeting with clients virtually or even in person. And most office jobs include some kind of meeting with coworkers and bosses. The last thing you want is for people to know how messy you are. You don't want to look like you're working from your garage—even if you are.

Natural lighting or a ring light can help, and ensure that your desk is set up so that your background is advantageous—if you have a nice view from your window, that can make for a great background and help provide natural light all in one.

Decorating your walls with local art or personal items can help you enjoy your space, and if it's interesting enough, it can be a great conversation starter with clients. We all complained about how boring the office was when we were there, so take this opportunity to express yourself.

6. How do I organize my furniture?

Choosing the correct furniture—furniture that's suited for your room, your work, and your body—is one of the most important aspects of designing a home office. For example, a standing desk can be a perfect solution if you're finding it difficult to fit a comfortable office chair, or if you're trying to improve the ergonomics of your space.

Other ways to keep your space working for you is keeping your monitors at eye level to avoid both eye and neck strain. If you're meeting clients in-person, having comfortable chairs will be a great investment when meetings inevitably stretch on.

Our best tip when it comes to organizing your furniture is to focus on hard-to-move items like desks and bookshelves. You don't want to move these multiple times, trying to figure out where everything should go, so focus on large, heavy furniture and work around them.

Final tips to make your office more like home

7. Miscellaneous Tips

We could talk for days about designing your home office, so here are some quick and final tips on how to make the most of your space.

- Some municipalities allow for detached garages to be used as home occupation. If you're looking for the ultimate quiet space for your office, **a detached garage can be the perfect solution**
- **Ensure your office space has access to services you need** like high-speed internet. Including ethernet cords or a Wi-Fi extender during design can turn any room, in any corner of your house into a home office
- If you're building new, before installing drywall, **add Rockwool insulation and "Safe & Sound" doors to help keep distracting noises out of your office**

So whether you're *embracing* or *surviving* remote work, ensuring your home office is inviting and working for you can make the difference between a good day and a bad day.

Ready to build a home office that works for you?

We always suggest clients consider office space when designing a new home, as remote and hybrid work is becoming increasingly popular. So, if you're ready to design your perfect home office, contact us today!