

Healthy work habits for home office

The possibility of working from home enables employees to organize their work more flexibly in terms of space and time, which has many advantages. However, everyday working life in the office cannot be translated one-to-one to everyday working life at home. This handout is intended to give you some assistance on what to watch out for in order to ensure a healthy working environment.

Healthy habits while working at a computer

Whether on campus or working from home, it is important to adopt healthy habits while working at a computer. Working at a desk and in front of a screen for long periods of time is particularly hard on a person's back and eyes. For this reason, make sure that you set up your workstation in a posture-appropriate way, even when working from home, and be sure to get up from your desk and move around a bit from time to time. It has been proven that regular breaks over long periods of sitting have a positive effect on your health.

Tips on healthy habits while working at a computer, suggestions for back and eye relaxation exercises, and tips for correct sitting and incorporating more movement in everyday working life are available [here](#).

In addition, UGM@Home, a platform run by University Health Management via e-learning, offers a collection of digital health-promoting offers and suggestions for your everyday working life, whether working from home or in the office. Video exercise courses, interviews, and other information material on healthy everyday working life are available. Find out more about the wide range of offers [here](#) or directly on the [Intranet](#) (in the section *University Institutions and Organisations/ University Health Management/ UGM@Home*).

Mental health

Working from home can also be psychologically stressful. This makes it all the more important to have targeted breaks and to use them for individual self-care or talking with colleagues. For example, short and spontaneous meetings - such as in the office, in the corridor or in the kitchen - can also be realized by way of a digital meeting using TEAMS.

You can find recommendations on mental health [here](#).

Ergonomic furnishing of the workplace is important both at home and in the office. Have a look at the [information material](#) on the UGM website.



Breaks

When working from home, your workplace is always only a few steps away. Although this makes the commute much shorter, it also quickly blurs the boundaries between working time and free time in a way that is not the case in a traditional office setting. This may tempt some people to eat lunch at their desks or to routinely delay the end of their workday in order to "take care of one last thing". We therefore ask that you pay particular attention to the **observance of break times** and the total daily working time completed from home. Clocking in and out can easily be done via the time recording [web client](#).

- For working times of six hours or longer, a break of 30 minutes is prescribed by law. From a working time of nine hours, a break of 45 minutes must be taken. Breaks can be divided into periods of at least 15 minutes.
- Your total working hours may not exceed 10 hours per day; this also applies to home office.

Make sure that you take these breaks and spend them away from your desk if possible. Give yourself an active break: a walk in the fresh air, a quiet lunch or a short exercise session. Find out what works best for you as a really restorative break.

Only by adhering to the break and total working times can you recover sufficiently, which is an important prerequisite for your physical and mental well-being and is thus very important to us. For this reason, in addition to extended break times, also pay attention to short recovery moments and use them for exercise and/or conscious relaxation. For this purpose, we particularly recommend that you take advantage of the active break programmes offered by University Health Management.

Actively communicate your break and working times to your colleagues so that they can respect your breaks and working times and you can protect your recovery periods.

These recommendations for your break times apply equally to breaks on campus.

Why not encourage your team to book an [active break](#) via the UGM?



Availability

In order to ensure effective cooperation at our university, employees must ensure that they are available when working from home just as they are when working in the office. The following applies: availability should be ensured for the most part based on your regular working hours similar to your usual attendance time on campus. Just like in the office, break times are excluded from this. It is perfectly acceptable to call back after your lunch break or the following morning in case of queries after work.

There are various channels available to you for ensuring availability when working from home. Coordinate the individual implementation of your availability with your supervisor and colleagues.

- To ensure that you can be reached by telephone, make sure that **your telephone calls are forwarded** to a private line where you can be reached at home. For internal university calls, you can also use Microsoft TEAMS (see below), so that you do not have to use your private connection to return internal calls.
- It is just as easy to reply to **e-mails** from home as it is from the office. The important thing is that all processes must be digitized so that e-mails can be processed.
- In addition, you can use Microsoft **TEAMS**:
 - In consultation with colleagues, the use of TEAMS may be helpful and facilitate teamwork since, for example, documents can be edited together, short agreements can be made via the chat function and you can see whether a person is currently in a meeting. The display of the presence status (green, yellow, red, etc.) is not used to check presence or performance, but only to facilitate teamwork. The status colour can also be set manually.
 - Use these technical possibilities to communicate your breaks and availability.
 - If you have any questions about TEAMS, Matthias Scharf (matthias.scharf@uni-bayreuth.de, Tel. 3134 of the IT Service Centre will be happy to help you.

If appointments and meetings have been scheduled, you should ensure your participation from home. While face-to-face meetings are the norm at the University of Bayreuth, **groups may also meet in a hybrid or digital format if you see fit**. Please check whether this is possible for your team and the subject matter concerned. If digital attendance is not possible for an appointment that you absolutely must attend, then your physical presence will be required. The cancelled home office day can then be taken at another time in agreement with your supervisor.

Please remember to do any necessary filing of printed documents that must be carried out on campus once you return to the office.

We hope that this handout helps you and your team on the topic of healthy habits for home office.

Stay healthy - whether working from home or in the office!