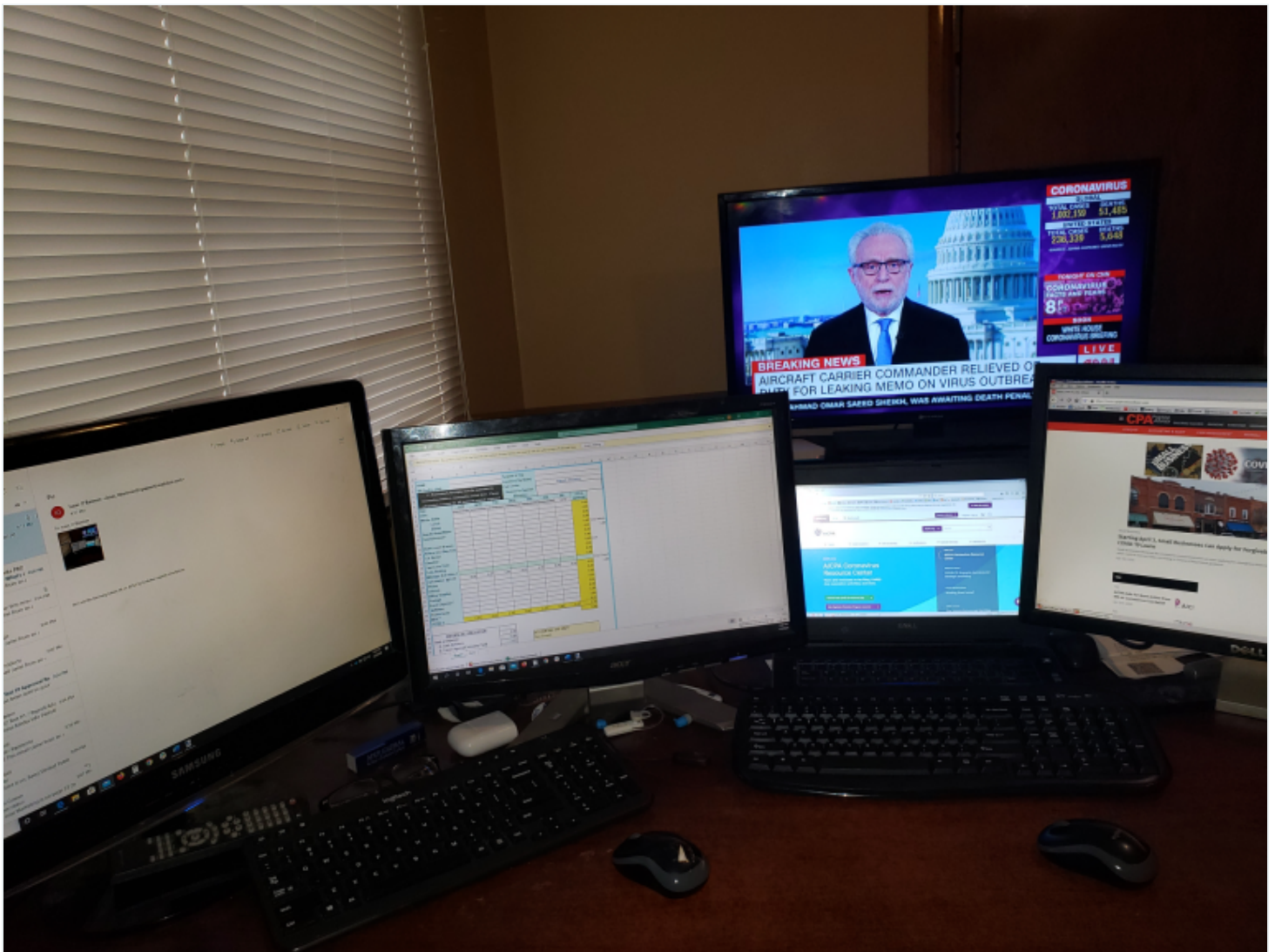


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Americans have transitioned to working from home instead of commuting to the office. While this change brings many perks, including a lot less traffic on the road ...

Apr. 24, 2020



Nothing about the COVID-19 crisis is typical or ordinary. Every aspect of our lives, from shopping for groceries to spending time with family, has changed, possibly forever.

Perhaps the most significant and lasting change will be how we work, as millions of

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and several shelves full of leather-bound books that produce the [unmistakable book smell](#). More likely, however, you've got a dining room table piled high with binders, reports, and notepads — possibly next to your kid's unfinished Lego project and cereal bowl.

Choosing a specific workspace makes a big difference: It creates consistency, helps you focus, and eliminates distractions. Make certain you've got enough physical space (if there's too much junk lying around, [price out dumpsters](#) to help you clear things out), and commit to using it exclusively for work.

Time Your Work

Few things are more American than working long after 5 p.m. comes and goes each day. "Working more" is always chosen as the answer to a problem, whether you want to get a promotion or make sure that big project is perfect once it's on your boss' desk.

But the reality is that [working less](#) can be more beneficial than working more: It makes you more productive, allows you to set realistic deadlines, and keeps you calm and composed when you're not working. Each day while you're working remotely, set a hard-stop deadline — and don't be afraid to interrupt work to take breaks for your health and sanity.

Snack Smarter, Not Harder

The temptation to check out the fridge every five minutes when you're working from home is hard, perhaps even impossible, to resist. Snacking is part of human nature, [dating back centuries](#), but snacking can also ruin your diet, your metabolism, and your attention span.

The solution isn't to give up on it, but to look for healthier alternatives. Substitute vegetables, nuts, and fruits for chips, crackers, and candy. High-protein, low-fat

snacks like yogurt and cottage cheese can help shut down hunger without hitting

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nothing more than a 3- or 4-day weekend just so you can have several consecutive days to escape from work. When every day starts to look the same, a long weekend away from the computer can have a bigger impact than it would normally.

If you've [protected your savings and credit](#) accordingly, you can also take a bigger vacation while working remotely, like renting a mountain cabin or a seaside condo for a week. That way, you can get work done and then have fun in the great outdoors.

Get a Co-Worker

The pandemic has launched a new trend of people calling their kids and their pets “co-workers,” especially when they stumble into the sight of a virtual meeting camera. While we don't recommend adopting a German shepherd puppy because you want company, there's an array of smaller, [low-maintenance “co-worker” pets](#) you can get to keep you company in a home office.

Consider a beautiful betta fish, a fluffy little hamster, or a bright finch — a pet you can interact with but that won't demand more time and attention than you have to spare. Depending on the regulations at your office, you may even get to bring them back to work with you once the pandemic is over!

Network Locally

Big conferences and professional gatherings have been replaced by an endless series of Zoom happy hours, which might not be for everyone. Yet just because we work remotely doesn't mean we only have to make work connections virtually: If you're tired of getting minimal traction from a LinkedIn message, consider some face-to-face time with businesses near your home.

[Take a short drive and go barefoot](#) if you need to blow off some stress, and while you're out, look for potential employers, employees, or business partners. You can

still make face-to-face introductions, even if you have to stand 6 feet apart, and find

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