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or full time or at least part time working from home.

**Gail Perry** • Jun. 15, 2020



If you are new to the art of working from home (WFH), you've probably discovered that what might have sounded easy and even fun at the start is more of a challenge as time goes on. You might be dealing with workspace issues, life distractions, the needs of other family members, lack of human contact with colleagues, health concerns, and more – all of this can produce frustration and stress for you, your family, your supervisors, and your clients.

Over the 20+ years I've worked from home, I have collected many techniques that

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room).

When the kids were in school, they would do their homework at their desks, right next to me. When they weren't busy with their assignments and wanted television or music, I found that noise-canceling headphones allowed them to still be with me while I was trying to concentrate. My tip: Find ways to incorporate your family into your life rather than trying to shut them out.

**Workspace:** Before working from the living room, I originally set up shop in our laundry room where that old kitchen table was being used for sorting and folding clothes. Once I was certain that working from home was going to be my future, I invested in a desk and set it up in the dining room, which I eventually took over completely and turned into my office. I used bins on the bottom shelves of bookcases to store office supplies. The general idea is that it's okay to turn a room into a multi-purpose area.

For tax purposes, if you plan on claiming a home office deduction, keep in mind that you need a dedicated place (it doesn't have to be a full room, but it does need to be a measurable area) that you use exclusively for your work. My tip: Be creative and find an area of your house or apartment where you can set up a permanent work area.

**Distractions:** It's SO EASY to add household chores to your workday once you're actually working from home. After all, what's wrong with getting up from your desk to start dinner, throw in a load of laundry, water the garden, feed the pets? You already know the answer to that. Starting dinner means checking with the family on mealtime and food requests, defrosting, measuring, collecting ingredients, pre-cooking, maybe with a glass of wine. Starting a load of laundry means emptying the dryer and folding and putting away clothes.

Watering the garden means a bit of weeding or pruning, chatting with the neighbors

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friends and share advice for best practices!

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