



## Tips, Tricks, and Resources for Working from Home

Use this document with co-workers, your team, or in your own work to think about how you can get the most out of your time working from home by setting up your workspace, staying connected to one another, managing your time and well being, and using resources for personal and professional development. For quick answers to frequent questions about the current COVID-19 outbreak and the UM System's response visit: [bit.ly/UMSystemQA](https://bit.ly/UMSystemQA)

### Setting up your (physical and virtual) workspace

- **Minimize distraction and disruption.** If possible, aim for a space with minimal distractions (noise or clutter) and disruptions. We realize this can be challenging with others home as well during this time.
- **Find a place for equipment and materials.** Identify a 'work base' where your equipment and materials can remain undisturbed, even if you shift locations during the day.
- **Think secure, be secure.** You can use many apps and sites with a standard internet connection. To securely access internal resources and work with confidential data, you might need to connect via VPN. More information about the university VPN, visit [DoIT's VPN help page](#).
- **Use your best connection.** A wired network connection is best, if possible. When using a wireless connection, consider your distance from the router and obstacles in between that can affect your connection quality.
- **Check your Zoom Settings.** Zoom is one of the technologies available to you as a UM employee that can assist with virtual meetings and teleconferencing. You are able to customize many different parts of your Zoom experience by visiting your Zoom settings. You can do so by accessing Zoom via your app, clicking the icon for your profile (in the top right corner for most computers), and selecting settings. For more information about how to use Zoom, check out watch [DoIT's video](#) on running a Zoom meeting.
- **Video on (when possible).** It makes for more inclusive meetings and helps you to be present and engaged in the meeting. It can also help to see facial expressions to increase connection and understanding.

### Staying connected to one another

- **Communicate often.** Make it a habit to connect frequently with your colleagues and stakeholders. Decide on a regular format to connect, which might be digitally in a chat, on Zoom, or a shared document.
- **Make space for fun.** Were you going to celebrate a birthday of a team member before going remote? Or do you have a weekly tradition to show thanks to team members? These can still be done online!
- **Be present and respectful when you meet via Zoom.** Limit multitasking during meetings. Turning on your video can show that you are paying attention and allow you to focus on the person or people on your call. Blur your background to reduce distractions.
- **Pause for others to speak on a Zoom call.** It can be hard to find space to speak in a meeting, and even harder when everyone is virtual. Make sure there's time and opportunity for all voices to be heard.
- **Monitor your Zoom meeting chat.** People may not feel comfortable breaking into the conversation or may be having technical difficulties. Check the Zoom chat for questions or concerns that may not be being voiced out loud.

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## Manage your time and well-being

- **Set expectations for availability.** Your daily schedule or even the hours that you work may change while working from home. Set expectations with your team (and those you live with) around your availability during the day.
- **Actively manage your time.** You may be used to planning your day according to a schedule already, but it might be helpful to take some time after you have been home for a few days what time of day you are most productive, what you can do to take a break, and any other factors that might contribute to your work from home experience.
- **Set boundaries.** It can be a challenge to switch 'off' from work when you don't leave the office—or switch 'on' your workday when you don't leave the house. If needed, set clear intentions about work time and home time to avoid burnout or being 'always on'.
- **Don't forget to take breaks.** It can be difficult to remember to take breaks. Use your calendar to turn meals and breaks into appointments so you get regular reminders. Block time on your calendar for exercise and fresh air—or just time to step away from your workspace.
- **Try to create work-life harmony.** We recognize that while working from home you may need to occasionally redirect your time and energy to your loved ones. Remember you have resources available to you, including the [UM System Employee Assistance Program](#).

## Using your resources for personal and professional development

- **Plan a conversation around a topic.** A great way to encourage development and engagement with your staff is to choose an article, video, or other media to share, and then host a time to connect for folks to discuss. It doesn't have to be long, and you can ask staff to take turns leading the discussion.
- **Evaluate your current reality related to change.** You may have some goals that relate to change in your department, organization, or office. This might be the perfect time to take advantage of your team's attention to work on a project that allows you to rethink your business practice – which can be a perfect way to develop your team members skills.
- **Network with peers.** With many people learning how to be remote leaders, team members, and employees, engaging with your peers (or reaching out to them for the first time) is a great way to learn together within the current reality.
- **Take advantage of myLearn's resources.** myLearn has thousands of courses, videos, and books that you can access from anywhere. Please note that if you are working on a home computer, it can be helpful to allow pop-ups while logged in to myLearn.
- **Review Success Factors courses.** Success Factors are a collection of competencies used by the University of Missouri to help define what effective performance looks like in your role. With Performance Appraisals approaching, now is a great time to review the Success Factors.

## Other helpful resources

- **Do you need more help with Zoom?** Zoom provides some great tips for you about running a meeting with your team that may be especially helpful if you don't use Zoom regularly! Visit [bit.ly/MeetLikeAPro](https://bit.ly/MeetLikeAPro).
- **Working from home as a parent?** Children adjusting to a new schedule or trying to complete schoolwork from home can add extra layers to your new work environment. The Harvard Business Review has tips for parents working from home here: [bit.ly/HBRParents](https://bit.ly/HBRParents)
- **For some UM System specific tips and suggestions about working from home, visit** [bit.ly/UMSystemWFH](https://bit.ly/UMSystemWFH).