Prevent Remote Work Burnout By Updating Your Home Office

**How to Update Your Home Office So Working from Home Is Productive and Pleasurable**

As we cross the one-year mark social distancing began and remote work became a fact of life, burnout is becoming a big issue for many of us. Feeling exhausted, emotionally spent, cynical about work, or unable to focus — these are [symptoms of burnout](https://weworkremotely.com/think-you-ve-hit-burnout-learn-the-signs-and-how-to-reset) that many of us are all too familiar with.

Burnout can have serious health consequences. If you’re experiencing the symptoms of burnout now, talk to a mental health professional to find your balance again.

If you’re worried about getting burned out, there are [several impactful things](https://www.themuse.com/advice/work-from-home-burnout-coronavirus-pandemic) you can do to stay energized and engaged in work — including a revamp of your office space.

My office space is important to me, because it is where I live now that I am working from home. I want to be in a space that I enjoy. The color, the décor, and the light in my office are as critical as the options I have for sitting or standing.

Here are the physical projects or ways to improve the office and home that I’ve implemented:

* I need a happy space to work. Because of that, I painted the walls of my office yellow. Yellow is a color that encourages cheer, attention, positive energy, and warmth. I also wanted to make sure that the wall space that I faced when standing or sitting at my desk was uncluttered and had works of art before my eyes. I have adorned my walls with large paintings by my favorite artist, [Linda Rowell Kelly from Maine](https://www.facebook.com/Linda-Rowell-Kelley-Art-252133127198/), that evoke feelings of calm, joy, and positive energy.
* A bigger issue that I considered when I constructed my office was natural light. So, I have a skylight above me, and two full-size windows on the walls opposite me. I can look up and see the sky, or look to the right (or left) and see a white picket fence, birds at the bird feeder, and our gardens. When the windows are open, I can hear the sounds of nature outdoors, which prevents me from feeling held captive in a closed building on a beautiful day. If adding a skylight or windows isn’t an option, consider full spectrum light bulbs for all your office lighting. Also, don’t be stingy with the lighting. More is better. You can always turn a light off. If you don’t have enough, the dim environment can drag you down, especially in the winter months if you live in colder climates. In Alaska, my colleagues swear by [SAD lights](https://www.alaskanorthernlights.com/).
* I don’t sit well. I find that if I sit in my office, I become uncomfortable while working. As such, I struggle to write with focus, and I start to feel neck and back tension. I’ve learned that I need to alternately sit and stand during the day. I often start the day standing at a standing station in my office; then, I might move to a Pilates ball or a wobble chair that I can adjust for my standing station or for a traditional desk. Typically, by evening, I’m ready to sit and can adjust my monitors, remove the standing station and, *voila*, I can sit and work like most other people. I recently purchased a [Gaia Wobble Cushion](https://www.gaiam.com/products/05-61439_2?variant=32665675329) to add to my options and I love it!
* I look forward to Spring every year, when the weather is warm enough for me to utilize my screened-in front porch as a morning office space. The sun comes up on that side of the house and shines on the porch — I have a table and chair set up in the space, which also has a ceiling fan. I take my laptop, phone, and paperwork to the porch to work while the sun is there. I can listen to the birds, feel the breeze, and enjoy a change of scenery that simply lifts up my spirit. If I choose to read, I have an old easy chair, covered with a soft quilt, where I can sit and read (and hopefully not fall asleep).

If you don’t have a screened in porch, what other options might be available to you? If you have a yard, can you purchase [a three season “campsite” screenhouse](https://familycamptents.com/best-screen-houses-for-camping/) to provide you with the option? Are there any [outdoor workspaces nearby?](https://www.workspaceinteriorsod.com/blog/the-great-outdoors-corporate-style-alfresco-workspaces-are-a-breath-of-fresh-air/) Or, sunny indoor courtyards?

These things work for me to make the time I spend in my home office less stressful and more productive. There are a lot of other great ideas on my Pinterest board at https://www.pinterest.com/susanfitzell/business-learn-fast-achieve-more/office-ideas-for-a-positive-workspace/

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For more information, visit Susan's website at www.susanfitzell.com.

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Aim Hi Educational Programs

PO Box 6182

Manchester, NH 03108

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