

Live Well, Work Well

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Bringing the Outdoors Into Your Work-from-Home Routine

Whether a stroll through the park or a day spent hiking, general exposure to green spaces is linked to numerous physical and mental benefits—including improved attention, lower stress and better mood. As such, spending time in nature can help remote employees be more focused, inspired and creative.

You don't have to go on a two-hour hike or even break a sweat. You can benefit just from being outside among trees and other green spaces for roughly five minutes a day.

Benefits of Time in the Outdoors

Here are ways some outside time can support your mental health and overall well-being during the workday:

- **Boosts your mood.** Exposure to natural light stimulates your body's production of mood-boosting vitamin D and serotonin. Studies also show that it can lower anxiety and depression.
- **Lowers stress.** While being outdoors can be an immediate stress reliever, the most significant impact comes from spending 20 to 30 minutes outside.
- **Regulates sleep.** Sunlight regulates circadian rhythms to align with your body's internal clock. As a result, going outside for a few minutes helps keep you awake and alert during the day, making it easier to get better sleep at night.
- **Improves mental capabilities.** Spending time outside before starting tasks can help improve your memory and your ability to concentrate and focus.

Ways to Incorporate the Outdoors Daily

Since outside time can be beneficial to your mental health, consider the following ideas to get started and incorporate the outdoors into your daily work-from-home routine:

- Meditate outdoors for 10 to 15 minutes in the morning.
- Move your workspace by a window so you can see greenery or be exposed to more natural light.
- Add indoor plants or fresh flowers to brighten up your workspace.
- Take regular activities outside, such as reading or working on your laptop.
- Go on a lunchtime walk for a midday break.
- Have a picnic lunch or dinner.
- Try an outdoor workout class before or after the workday.
- Take up gardening to regularly connect with nature.

Conclusion

You don't have to be outdoorsy to reap nature's benefits. Find small ways to incorporate fresh air and sunlight into your daily schedule to improve your overall well-being. If you're unsure how to do it, talk to your manager to discuss options that work for your schedule.

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