

## **Building a Home Office**

Today's home work space is no longer limited to just the kitchen table or a corner of the guest bedroom; it has been promoted to a room of its own. A 2007 consumer preferences survey by the National Association of Home Builders found that a home office was the third most desired specialty room, following the laundry and dining rooms, respectively.

In addition to saving on commute time to the office, as well as gas expenses, individuals who work from a home office enjoy the luxury of personally creating a work environment that enhances their individual performance.

If you are looking to create a home office, or revamp an existing one, keep the following points in mind:

### **Separate Your Space**

Although you are physically working in the house, it is important to set up your home office with clear boundary lines between your home life and your work life. By creating a barrier, you will be less tempted to take a television break in the middle of your work day or work on spreadsheets when you are supposed to be "home from the office."

### **Design Your Office to Match Your Work Style**

When choosing the furniture and layout of your office, make sure it fits the way you choose to work. For example, if you believe in "a place for everything and everything in its place," be sure to allot enough space for adequate storage and file cabinets. If you work on several different projects, set up separate, smaller work stations dedicated to each task. When you build your personal office at home, be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to design an atmosphere that will cater to your work preferences and maximize your production.

### **Show Off Your Style**

There is no such thing as "one design fits all." While one person may prefer the look of dark woods and rich colors, someone else may favor a more whimsical look with bright colors and clean lines. This is your chance to bring in designs and items that best reflect your personality and interests. Don't be restricted by what you think a home office *should* look like. Make it your own since you will be the one spending the most time there.

### **Make It Comfortable**

When choosing the furniture and amenities for your office, make sure that you are physically comfortable and that your work space is conducive to productivity. Your chair should be adjustable with adequate seat cushioning. Add a couch or armchair to the room to allow for additional seating for guests or to provide a place to read away from your desk. Install recessed lighting which is less harsh, and buy smaller desktop lights focused on task areas that are used for reading and writing to reduce eye strain.

While these are a few tips to keep in mind for constructing a home office, there are many important factors to consider when you decide to start any new project on your home. For more information or to contact a local builder or remodeler who specializes in home offices, visit [www.mbaonline.org](http://www.mbaonline.org).

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