



Remote Work

How Working From Home Changed Everything

The revolution that turned kitchen tables into offices and pyjamas into work uniforms

■ B1 Reading ■ 30 min ■ Work & Education

Level	B1 (Intermediate)
Skill	Reading
Topic	Work & Education
Duration	30 minutes
Age Group	Teens & Adults

Learning Objectives

- ◆ Read and understand a text about the remote work revolution
- ◆ Learn 15 key vocabulary items related to work, technology, and lifestyle
- ◆ Identify benefits and challenges of working from home
- ◆ Discuss personal preferences for work arrangements
- ◆ Write about an ideal working setup

1 Before You Read — Work Life

Think about how and where people work and discuss:

1. Would you prefer to work from home or in an office? Why?
2. What do you think are the biggest advantages of working remotely?
3. Do you know anyone who works from home? What do they say about it?

2 Reading: The Home Office Revolution

The Home Office Revolution

A few years ago, the idea of working from home every day seemed like a distant dream for most office workers. Then the world changed almost overnight. A global health crisis forced millions of companies to send their employees home, and within weeks, spare bedrooms, kitchen tables, and even garden sheds had been transformed into makeshift offices. What many people expected to be a **temporary** arrangement turned into a permanent revolution that has fundamentally changed the way we think about work.

Today, surveys show that more than 30 percent of workers in developed countries work remotely at least part of the time, and that number continues to grow. Major technology companies have adopted **flexible** working policies, allowing employees to choose when and where they work. But is remote work truly better than the traditional office? The answer, as with most things, is complicated.

The Benefits: Freedom and Flexibility

The most obvious advantage of remote work is the elimination of the daily **commute**. The average worker in a large city spends over an hour travelling to and from work each day — time that could be spent sleeping, exercising, or spending time with family. Remote workers consistently report higher levels of **satisfaction** with their work-life balance, and many say they would accept a lower salary rather than return to the office full-time.

Productivity has also surprised many managers. Studies from major universities have found that remote workers are often more productive than their office-based colleagues, partly because they face fewer **distractions** — no chatty colleagues, no unnecessary meetings, and no noisy open-plan offices. People can work during their most productive hours, whether that is early morning or late at night, and take breaks when they need them rather than watching the clock.

The Challenges: Loneliness and Blurred Boundaries

However, remote work is not without its problems. One of the most commonly reported issues is **isolation**. Without the casual conversations, shared lunches, and spontaneous **interactions** that happen naturally in an office, many remote workers feel disconnected from their colleagues and the company culture. This can lead to loneliness, reduced motivation, and a weaker sense of belonging.

Another significant challenge is the difficulty of separating work from personal life. When your office is your home, it can be hard to **switch off**. Many remote workers report working longer hours than they did in the office, checking emails late at night, and feeling guilty about taking breaks. The **boundary** between "work time" and "personal time" becomes blurred, and over time this can lead to **burnout** — a state of physical and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress.

The Hybrid Model: The Best of Both Worlds?

In response to these challenges, many companies have adopted a **hybrid** model — employees work from home two or three days per week and come to the office for the rest. This approach aims to combine the flexibility and focus of remote work with the social connection and **collaboration** that offices provide. On office days, teams hold meetings, brainstorm ideas, and socialise. On home days, employees focus on deep, concentrated work without interruption.

The hybrid model is not perfect — coordinating schedules can be difficult, and some employees feel that they get the worst of both worlds rather than the best. But for many organisations, it represents a reasonable **compromise** that acknowledges the reality that the traditional nine-to-five, five-days-a-week office model may no longer be the best way to work.

Tips for Successful Remote Work

If you work from home, experts recommend several strategies for staying healthy and productive. Create a **dedicated** workspace — even if it is just a corner of a room — and avoid working from your bed or sofa. Set clear working hours and stick to them. Take regular breaks, go outside for fresh air, and schedule virtual coffee chats with colleagues to maintain social connections.

Most importantly, learn to close your laptop and walk away at the end of the day. Remote work gives you freedom, but that freedom only benefits you if you use it wisely. The best remote workers are not those who work the most hours — they are those who work the right hours, protect their personal time, and understand that rest is not laziness — it is a **necessity**.

3 Key Vocabulary

Word / Phrase	Definition	Example Sentence
temporary	lasting for a limited time; not permanent	What started as a temporary change became a permanent revolution.
flexible	able to change or be changed easily to suit different needs	Flexible working policies let you choose when and where to work.
commute	the regular journey between home and work	Eliminating the daily commute saves over an hour every day.
satisfaction	the feeling of contentment when needs are met	Remote workers report higher satisfaction with work-life balance.
productivity	the rate at which work is completed effectively	Studies show remote workers often have higher productivity.
distractions	things that take your attention away from what you are doing	Working from home means fewer distractions from colleagues.

Word / Phrase	Definition	Example Sentence
isolation	the state of being alone or separated from others	Isolation is the biggest challenge of working remotely.
interactions	occasions when people communicate or work together	Casual interactions in the office help build team relationships.
switch off	to stop thinking about work; to relax and disconnect	Many remote workers find it hard to switch off at the end of the day.
boundary	a line that marks the limit between two things	Setting a clear boundary between work and personal time is essential.
burnout	physical and mental exhaustion caused by too much stress	Without proper breaks, remote workers risk burnout.
hybrid	combining two different approaches or elements	The hybrid model mixes home and office working days.
collaboration	working together with others to achieve a shared goal	Office days are best for team collaboration and brainstorming.
compromise	an agreement reached when both sides give up something	The hybrid model is a compromise between full remote and full office.
dedicated	used only for one particular purpose	Having a dedicated workspace at home improves focus.

4 Useful Collocations

remote work · work from home · work-life balance · flexible hours · video call · virtual meeting · team collaboration · open-plan office · daily commute · time zone · home office · career development · job satisfaction · digital nomad · hybrid model · set boundaries

5 Reading Comprehension

1. What percentage of workers in developed countries now work remotely at least part-time?

- a) About 10%
- b) About 20%
- c) About 30% ✓**
- d) About 50%

2. What is the most obvious benefit of remote work?

- a) Higher salary
- b) Elimination of the daily commute ✓**
- c) Free lunch
- d) More meetings

3. Why are remote workers often more productive than office workers?

- a) Because they work longer hours
- b) Because they have better computers
- c) Because they face fewer distractions ✓**
- d) Because managers check on them more

4. What is 'burnout'?

- a) A technical problem with computers
- b) Physical and mental exhaustion from prolonged stress ✓**
- c) A type of flexible working arrangement
- d) A way to end a video meeting

5. What is the hybrid model?

- a) Working from home every day
- b) Working in the office every day
- c) Splitting time between home and office ✓**
- d) Working for two companies at once

6. What is the most important tip for remote workers?

- a) Work as many hours as possible
- b) Never take breaks
- c) Learn to close the laptop and protect personal time ✓**
- d) Always work from bed for comfort

6 Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blanks

Complete the sentences with the correct word from the box:

commute · burnout · flexible · isolation · productivity · hybrid · boundary · dedicated

1. The average daily _____ in a big city takes over an hour each way.
2. Working too many hours without breaks can lead to _____.
3. Many companies now offer _____ working hours so employees can choose their schedule.
4. _____ is the biggest challenge — remote workers often feel lonely and disconnected.
5. Studies show that remote workers often have higher _____ than office workers.
6. The _____ model combines working from home with regular office days.
7. It is important to set a clear _____ between work time and personal time.
8. Having a _____ workspace at home — even a small desk — helps you focus.

7 Answer Key

■ Vocabulary Exercise Answers

1. commute
2. burnout
3. flexible
4. Isolation
5. productivity
6. hybrid
7. boundary
8. dedicated

8 Speaking & Writing Tasks

■ ■ Speaking Task: Discussion

Discuss these questions with a partner or your teacher:

- Do you think remote work will become the norm in the future, or will offices return?
- What would be the hardest thing about working from home for you?
- Should companies pay for home office equipment if employees work remotely?
- Would you like to be a 'digital nomad' — working while travelling? Why or why not?

■ Useful Phrases for Advantages and Disadvantages

- **One of the main advantages of** remote work is the flexibility it offers.
- **On the other hand,** many people struggle with loneliness when working from home.
- **While it is true that** remote work saves time, it can also blur work-life boundaries.
- **From my perspective,** the hybrid model seems like the best solution because...
- **The biggest drawback is that** it is difficult to switch off when your home is your office.

■ Writing Task: My Ideal Work Setup

Write a paragraph (120–160 words) about this topic:

"Describe your ideal working arrangement. Would you work from home, in an office, or a mix of both? What would your perfect workday look like? Why?"

Use vocabulary from this lesson. Explain the advantages of your choice and how you would deal with the challenges.