

Coronavirus: How to work from home alongside your partner — and get along

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As coronavirus continues to spread around the world, many office employees are being told to work from home - meaning couples are now sharing the same workspace for the first time.

Under normal circumstances, lots of people wish they could spend more quality time with their partners. But with the general public under quarantine and tensions high amid the Covid-19 pandemic, it's easy for tempers to fly when spending 24/7 with a loved one. Suddenly, you are eating together, socialising together and now you are working together.

Working remotely can be a challenge for many reasons - and it isn't always the domestic bliss you might have imagined it to be. When one person is trying to join a conference call and the other is blasting out music, arguments can arise. So how can you share an office space peacefully while in the confines of your own home?

"We all have our own routines, habits and needs. Being together in a confined space magnifies these differences," says Karin Peeters, a coach & psychotherapist at [Vitalis Coaching](#).

“One of us might be more tidy than the other, or spends more time buying and preparing food. Some need more space for themselves, while others feel isolated and want to talk more than usual.”

Be considerate

Many of us are guilty of being passive aggressive instead of just being honest when things are annoying us. If you're struggling to concentrate on work and answer emails because your partner is watching something aloud on their laptop, ask them to put headphones in.

Likewise, try to think about your actions when they are trying to work. If they are focusing on something, make sure you're being quiet and considerate instead of turning the volume up on Netflix.

It's important to set boundaries too. If you have to concentrate on urgent work, make sure your partner knows so they can give you space without interrupting you. Respecting each other's privacy is going to help reduce arguments and help keep you both happy and productive.

Make sure you have some alone time

Spending 100% of your time with any one person can be a challenge sometimes, even if you've been together a long time. It's totally normal to crave some solitude during the day and it's important to carve out some alone time during the day.

If you have the space in your home, it can help to work separately - even if one person works in the bedroom while the other makes use of the living room. Take turns in swapping working areas to keep things fair.

If you don't have the space, there are still things you can do to create the illusion of space when working in one room together, such as putting up temporary room dividers.

Talk to each other

“When we start to feel resentful or irritable, it's important to talk about our needs and wishes,” Peeters says, adding we should also check in with each other regularly.

“When we listen to the other without experiencing it as a personal attack, we can find a middle ground that suits both partners,” she says. “For example we can agree to not talk about covid19 in the bedroom, schedule lunch together, exercise when your partner has a confidential meeting.”

Do something to signal the end of the working day

It's hard to switch off when you are both working from home, but doing something to signal that it is the end of the working day can help. Whether it's a glass of wine together or a walk - if you can get out of the house - gives you both something to look forward to.

Creating a schedule you can both stick to is a good idea as you can designate a time to stop working.