

Planning for a home office

Working at home is becoming more of a reality for more people

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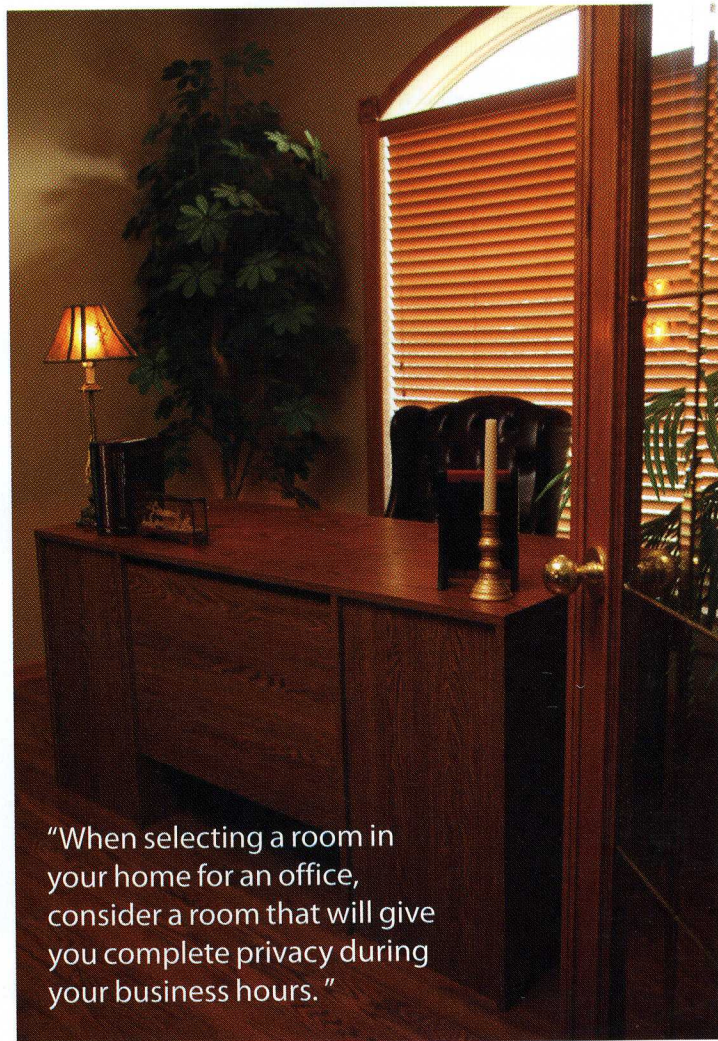
Ideally, our homes should be a place where we can relax and leave the stress of work behind. However, nowadays more and more employees are breaking the chains of the corporate world in order to pursue careers that give them a sense of self-worth and allow them to spend more time with their families. Traffic jams coupled with the high cost of gasoline are also reasons why working from home is becoming more attractive. Technological advances are also making this transition more feasible for employers. With that said, incorporating a well-organized home office is an important part of this equation.

When selecting a room in your home for a home office, consider a room that will give you complete privacy during your business hours. Distractions may interfere with your work schedule, so it's important to ensure you have good self-discipline when it comes to work ethics. Rugs and window coverings can help to reduce unwanted noise within the room. Choosing a room with a large window can make your workday more pleasant by allowing exposure to natural daylight. Sunlight has been proven to increase brain activity and efficiency - use it to your advantage. General lighting conditions also play an important role in any home office, it should be incorporated evenly throughout the room to avoid heavy shadows and glare.

Arrange your office so that it will prepare you for challenges. If you're surrounded by disorganization and chaos, it hinders your creativity and productivity. Creating a comfortable and clutter-free environment can help to pave the way to success in all aspects of your life.

The key to designing a successful home office is to also incorporate elements that reflect the décor around the rest of your home. Begin with the main focus of the room, which would be your desk. You want it to be attractive to look at while having ample surface space to work on. It is best not to situate your desk with your back to the door. Accompany it with a comfortable chair that fits your style. Add accessories such as lamps that are not only functional, but serve as decorative elements as well. Desk accessories in a home office are the details that enhance the appearance and keep you organized.

Another challenge in setting up an office is maximizing the storage space. Determine what your storage requirements are and incorporate them into your design. Look for furnishings that serve dual functions like an armoire that can store files and media equipment at the same time. Stackable wire or wicker file baskets are good alternatives to boring, metal file cabinets. Think vertically by adding shelving, cabinets and bookcases over your work area to increase space and accessibility for frequently used items. If you have a bookcase that's visible in the room, take advantage of the open shelves by displaying more than books.



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Add photo frames, decorative storage boxes, and collectibles from your travels. Even a simple thing as stacking some of the books horizontally, and others vertically, will help make it more interesting to the eye.

The ultimate goal is to make your home office an enjoyable space onto its own. Paint the walls with soothing colors; create a gallery effect by showcasing framed family photos on display ledges or on easels for a unique look. If you have a pet, dedicate a small area for them to be comfortable. Surround yourself with the things you love and which make you feel good, it will prevent you from feeling isolated.

When planning and decorating your home office have fun and enjoy the process. And remember, there are no corporate rules to follow - you're the boss! 