

Study your study:

Modifications for the single-room-home to increase your work related wellbeing



Improving your work related wellbeing and satisfaction with work means being able to leave your work behind, even when you can't leave your room.

This booklet helps you study your study environment, and provides tips and inspiration to create a space which feels different from the rest of the room, so you only have to focus on work in that space.



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Starting point

1



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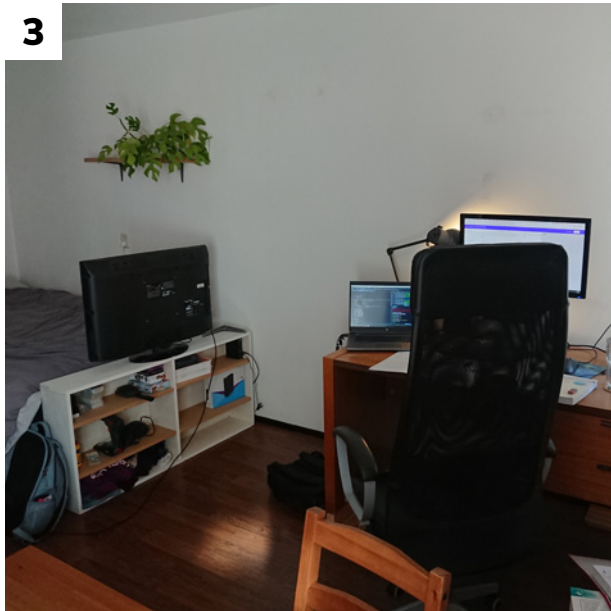
1

Limit the open sides of your workspace

2

Use a different accent colour in your workspace.

3



4



3

Limit what you can see of your relaxation area

4

Use your work setup only for work and study.

Inspiration

The previous tips are a great starting point to improve your ability to work from home.

These tips can be divided into two aspects (as illustrated in figure 1);

- The area bordering your work space (physical barrier),
- The area inside your work space (visual distinction).

When combining tips from both aspects you can create a space which is perceived differently from the rest of your room. And you can enjoy the benefits which you would normally experience from a second room.

The following pages provide background information into these aspects and more inspiration on how to implement these tips.

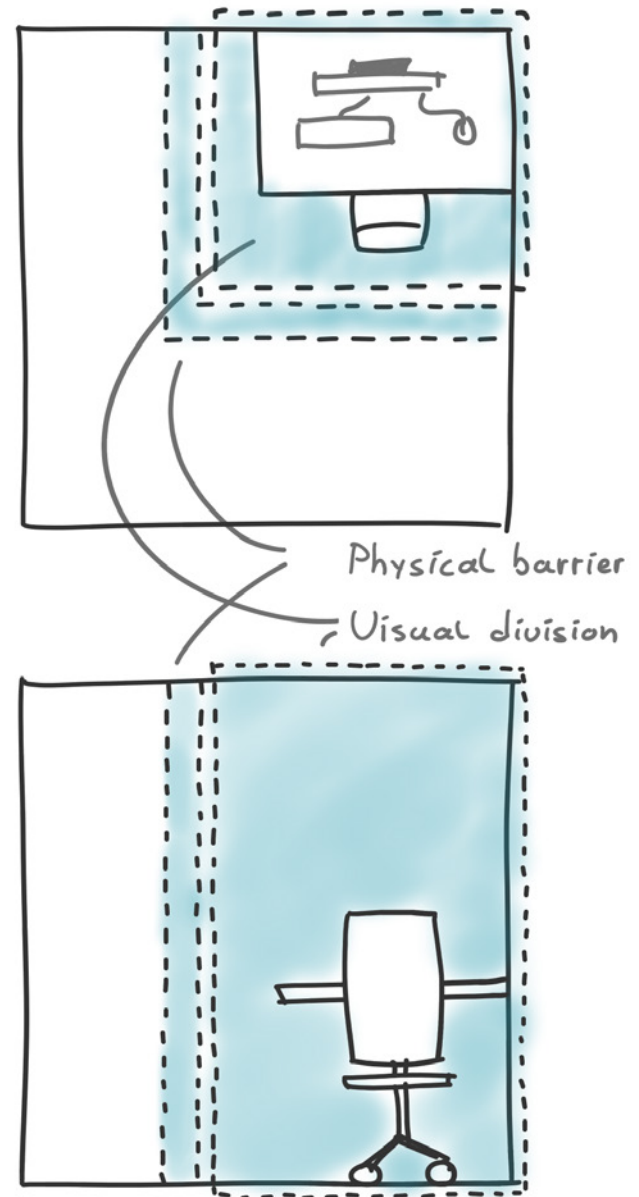


Figure 1: The two factors of the workspace

Physical barrier

A physical barrier marks the border of one space to another. It can be permanent, such as a bookshelf, or a temporary construction with a movable wall.

By creating a (temporary) physical barrier around your workspace, the perception of the environment might change by altering the proportions and form of the space (Bakker, 2014).

Furthermore, we might benefit from the location updating effect (Radvansky, 2011), where we more easily forget things when we move between spaces.

Other students also noted they found their moment of studying more official after placing a barrier.

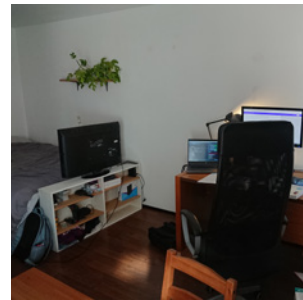
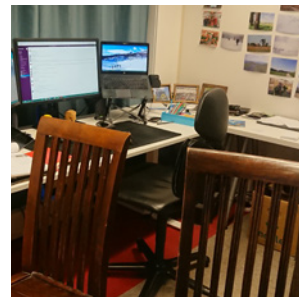
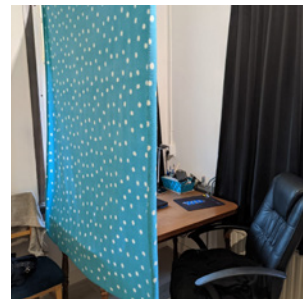
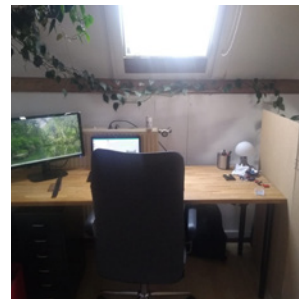
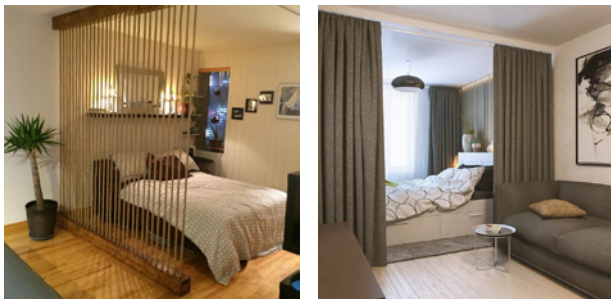
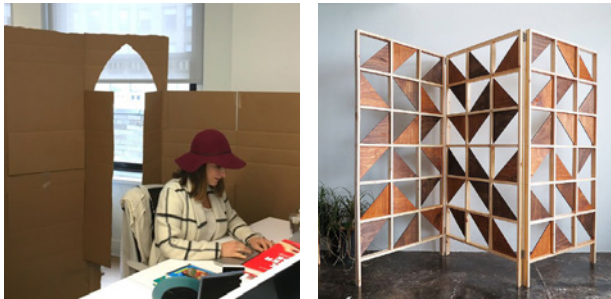


Figure 2: Inspiration of students



Inspiration:



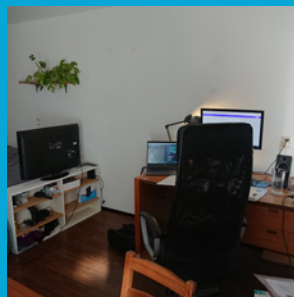
Explanation:



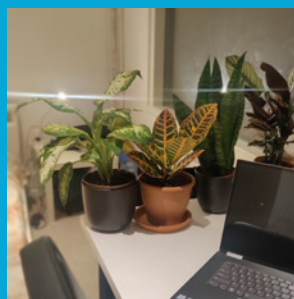
A very cheap (€10) and easy to build barrier can be used to mark the border of your workspace, and also act as a door to your workspace.



Keep it simple!
Placing one or more chair around your workspace can help you divide your room.



Rearranging the furniture in your room can help to create the perception of a second room.



Keep it simple!
Placing plants around your workspace can be an easy way to divide your space, and create a nice view.

Visual distinction

A visual distinction marks the area inside a space, and acts as a reminder that you're inside a different area. These can be temporary, such as coloured light. Or permanent when you paint the walls.

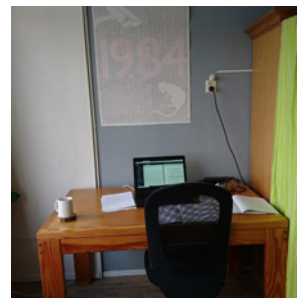
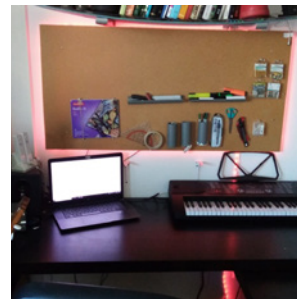
By changing the space itself, it might be perceived as a different place with its own emotional profile (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) which links your actions to a space or area. While also reducing the effect of the interactional past (Miligan, 1998) which consists of the precious associations with that space or area.

In the related graduation thesis, satisfaction with the work/life balance was found to be the most positive factor, raising the average wellbeing score from 6.0/10 to 7.4/10.

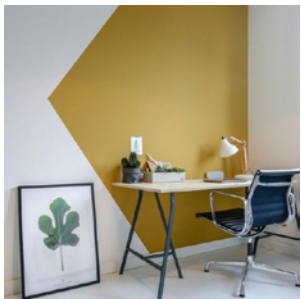
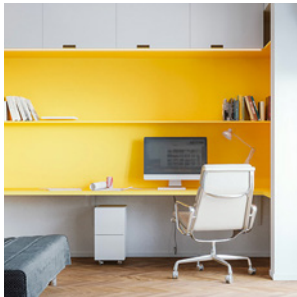
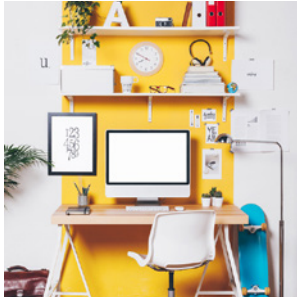
With a visual division, it is possible to create new association and separation of activities between spaces.



Figure 3: Inspiration of students



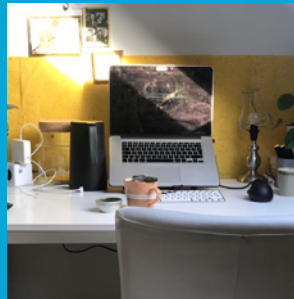
Inspiration:



Explanation:



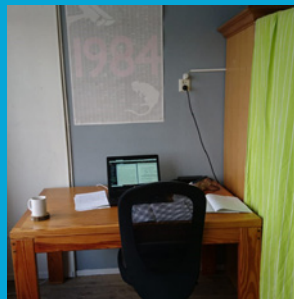
Keep it simple!
You can place a carpet on the ground to mark the boundaries of your workspace.



Placing an accent colour around your workspace can be an easy way to view your workspace differently.



Keep it simple!
You can use a coloured lamp, and use a colour setting (e.g. blue) when working in order to associate that colour with work.



Moving your desk to a different part of your room to reduce the effect of your previous associations

Ergonomics

Lastly, it is also important to check the ergonomics of your workspace. A few small adjustments can make a big difference in your ergonomic setup. And depending on the tasks you perform, you can prioritize the setup of your workspace to facilitate these tasks.

From the related graduation thesis, a non-ergonomic workspace was found to be the most negative factor on overall wellbeing.

For more information; check:

<http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/ergoguide.html>

1



1 - Your computer

- Use a separate keyboard, and place it as flat as possible.
- Sit in your chair and hold your arm out horizontally, your fingers should almost touch the centre of the screen.

Use a laptop stand or stack of books if necessary.

- Avoid direct sunlight shining on your monitor, for example by positioning your desk at an angle to the window, or by using blinds.

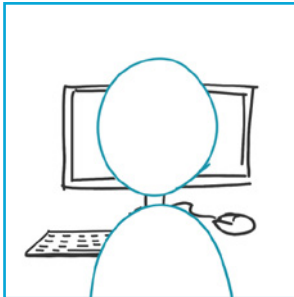
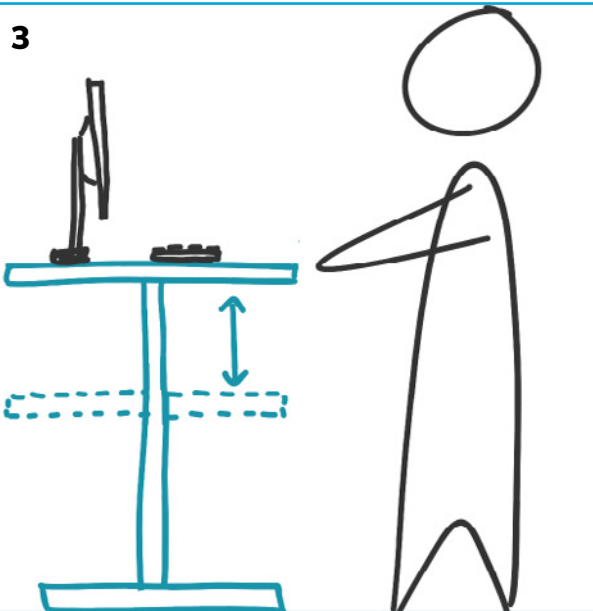
2



2 - Your workspace

- Pick a comfortable chair with good lumbar support
- Set the back rest angle of your seat between 100 to 110 degrees.
- Your desk is at the correct height when your forearms rest horizontally on your desk and your shoulders are relaxed. Keep your arms as close to your body as possible
- Make sure your desk provides a stable working surface.

3



3 - Your posture

- Your posture is the basis of a good working setup, and should most of all feel relaxed.
- Varying posture is important throughout the day, consider a height-adjustable desk, or a separate space to work standing.
- Make sure your monitor is straight in front of you; this prevents a twisted position.

4



4 - Other

- Regularly take a break from working at a computer screen.
- The background should be the same brightness as your screen.
- Limit the influence of the noise.