



Create a Fabulously Efficient Home Office

Whether you have set up your home office in the spare room, a corner of the lounge, or you're fortunate enough to have a dedicated room for this use, it's important to have organised systems so your work doesn't encroach on living areas, and vice versa.

I believe the minimum requirements for an efficient and effective home office are:

1. Good working desk

- Look at positioning your desk so you can take advantage of natural light.
- Keep it clear of clutter: pens, notepads, stapler etc can live in a desk drawer, or a container to the side of the desk.

2. Comfortable chair

If you're going to be sitting at your desk for any length of time, do invest in a good supporting chair. Your back will thank you.

3. Cupboards / Shelving / Filing Cabinet

It's essential you have an area where you can store everything, from files to resource material and stationery items.

- Filing cabinet/s: if you have a filing cabinet make sure it's set up efficiently so files are easy to access and well labelled.
- Cupboards: these can take the place of a filing cabinet and with simple storage systems, can house files and other working materials.
- If your home office is in a spare room, the wardrobe can be organised with partitions, shelves or storage trolleys to handle all of your filing needs.
- Shelves: open shelving also works well particularly for storage/archive boxes and vertical magazine file containers. Stacking items sideways will enable easy viewing and access.

Once your office is created the systems you put in place will make all the difference to your productivity and the pleasure you'll take in working in the space.

▪ Master the paper

Instead of scraps of paper lining your desk, consider using a bulletin board or whiteboard to capture reminders and phone numbers; or better still use your computer diary system to note action items, and log names and phone numbers in your contact database.

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- **Desk drawers**

Use organisers or trays for small stationery items so you're not rummaging around in a messy drawer.

- **Computer cables**

There are many different solutions for handling the spaghetti of cords emanating from computer, printer etc. Cable clips, Velcro straps or ties wrap them neatly, and split tubing allows for easy insertions of cables and cords.

- **Filing Solutions**

As mentioned above, whether using a filing cabinet, shelves or cupboards, filing systems need to be put in place.

- Archive boxes work on shelves or in a cupboard.
- Magazine files are good in both places, and are also effective on the desk because they take up less space than standard file trays and it's easier to flick through the contents.
- L-shaped plastic file pockets are firm enough to stand up in the magazine files and allow you to see what they contain [much better than manila folders].
- Storage boxes can be used for resource material or archived material.

To underline the pleasure of an effective home office, here's a comment from one of my clients:

"I completely underestimated the value to me of getting my office organised. I have saved time and money by being more organised, but more importantly it has freed me to spend energy on the creative side of my business and I have reaped the rewards from that. I would highly recommend Angella, not just for her organisational skills which are excellent but for her positive and bubbly personality. She was been a joy to work with."

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