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Workforce

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Study finds hybrid work schedule can make you more productive—Shop these office products

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Reviewed

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A Harvard study has found that a hybrid work schedule is helpful in productivity. The study, published in March 2022, concluded that intermediate levels of working from home (i.e. not working completely remotely or completely in-person) are associated with the highest levels of positive intra-office communications. Just as remote work has the benefit of flexibility, office work reduces feelings of isolation. The in-office portion of a hybrid work schedule can be just as fulfilling as the remote portion if you make your stay comfortable and productive. Here are some ways to improve your in-office experience.

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1. A back support pillow

One of the worst things about the office is spending hours sitting in an uncomfortable chair. This might not seem too bad at first, but it can lead to discomfort overtime. To improve your office environment, we recommend getting a plush cushion that supports your back, such as the ergonomic pillow sold by Cushion Lab. This pillow is designed to reduce pressure on the

lower back and offer all-day support. Amazon reviewers love it for the support and comfort it brings to long periods of sitting that would otherwise hurt their backs.

\$66 from Amazon

2. A water bottle

Staying hydrated can help improve your mood and cognition, enhancing the quality of your workday immensely. When you're home, it's easy to get a glass of water whenever you're feeling thirsty. This can be more cumbersome at the office. We recommend keeping a water bottle at your desk and refilling it periodically. You can't go wrong with the Brita BB11 Premium Filtering Water Bottle, which is the best water bottle we've tested. It filters out odors, opens with one hand and keeps water cool for 24 hours.

\$30 from Amazon

3. A travel mug

A hot cup of coffee or tea is the perfect way to wake up in the morning for a productive day of work. To keep your drink hot throughout the day, you'll want a quality travel mug. Out of all the travel mugs we've tested, our favorite is the Zojirushi SM-KHE48 because it retains temperature well and is easy to carry.

\$29 from Amazon

4. Noise-canceling headphones

When you're used to a quiet home, being in an office can be a shock to the system. To add a bit of peace and quiet to your office routine, we recommend using noise-canceling headphones like Sony's WH-1000XM5. Out of the headphones we've tested, we found these to have the best noise-canceling capabilities, blocking out the droning sounds of fans as well as higher-frequency chatter. If that wasn't enough, they boast excellent audio quality.

\$398 from Amazon

5. A smart doorbell

Thanks to the power of video doorbells, you can keep tabs on your home even when you're away, giving you much-needed peace of mind. You'll be able to see who or what passes in

front of your door. Our favorite smart doorbell is Nest Doorbell (battery) which is reliable, accurate and supports both battery and hardwired installation. If that wasn't enough, the Nest Doorbell can differentiate between packages, animals, vehicles and people.

\$150 from Best Buy

6. A picture frame

Let's face it, many office spaces are drab, making it hard to stay motivated throughout the day. Fortunately, a little decorating goes a long way in sprucing up your workspace. A simple picture frame can go a long way in motivating you, whether it be filled with a picture of your friends, family or a far-off vista. With a digital picture frame, you won't have to choose just one picture. We've picked the Bsimb 10" Wi-Fi Digital Picture Frame as the best value digital picture frame thanks to its impressive display, ease of use and the fact that it resembles an actual picture frame.

\$50 from Amazon

7. A face mask

COVID-19, influenza, and RSV are still making the rounds and with January often being the peak of flu season, it's likely that you'll have to deal with potential exposure being in an office. Fortunately, wearing a mask goes a long way in keeping you safe. KN95 and N95 masks filter 95% of the particles responsible for illnesses, so make sure to pack one each time you leave for work.

\$12 from Bona Fide Masks

8. Hand sanitizer

Germs can spread via surfaces when you touch them with your hands and then inadvertently touch your eyes or mouth. To stay safe, disinfectant your hands often, preferably with soap and water, though hand sanitizer with 60% percent alcohol can be used in a pinch. Travel-sized hand sanitizers are highly useful on the go as you can keep one at work, one in your purse and other easily accessible locations.

\$12.15 from Amazon

9. A laptop stand

A laptop stand is a helpful addition to your desk if you find yourself having to adjust your neck to look comfortably at your computer screen. Eight hours of this for several days a week can lead to discomfort. A laptop stand can elevate your screen to be level with your eyes, alleviating this issue. The best laptop stand for desks is the Rain Design stand—it's ergonomic, available in several colors and keeps your laptop secure. If you have a separate keyboard, it can be easily stored under the top portion of the stand.

\$40 from Amazon

10. A laptop bag

If your job requires toting a laptop to and from work, consider grabbing a new messenger bag to safely transport your tech without the need for an overly bulky bag. The Kenneth Cole Reaction Leather Laptop Case is one of the most highly-rated messenger bags that you can buy online thanks to its slim yet roomy structure. Plus, its full-grain leather makes it quite stylish.

\$136 from Amazon

11. A Fitbit

Okay, you're probably not running any marathons at work (unless you can convince your boss to get treadmill desks for the office), but it's good to get up and stretch your legs throughout the day. Your body and your joints will thank you. Wearing a Fitbit fitness tracker can make sure you're moving periodically, as they give reminders throughout the day to stand up, move around and even drink water. Our favorite Fitbit is the Fitbit Charge 5 which is comfortable, easy to use and tracks a lot of helpful health information.

\$130 from Amazon

12. A planner

With so many meetings and deadlines, it can be hard to keep everything organized. Using a planner can help you to keep track of everything you need to do. The Inamio planner features hourly, daily and weekly spreads so you can manage your time efficiently and get all your tasks done. The paper is thick and features beautiful, rose-gold edges.

\$19 from Amazon

13. An organizer

If you find your office desk is cluttered, an office organizer is just the thing you need. Many tout that clean spaces can improve mood and an organized desk will certainly help your productivity, as you'll spend less time looking for your supplies. MaxGear's organizer is perfect for storing essential supplies such as scissors, rubber band, tape and thumb tacks.

\$14 from Amazon

14. A wireless charger

Charging your phone wirelessly can free up desk space and declutter your work area. The best wireless charger we've tested is the Yootech X2. It charges quickly and supports several different brands of smartphones. Plus, its subtle design makes it pair well with any desk and its small size doesn't take up much space.

\$15 from Amazon

15. A pet camera

Separation anxiety is all too real when you have fur babies at home all alone while you're away for upwards of eight hours a day, depending on how long your commute is. Using a pet camera, you can rest easy and work comfortably knowing that your pets are okay. The best pet camera we've tested is the Petcube Cam, which is affordable, compact and has great features such as smart alerts and instant vet chat capabilities.

\$35 from Amazon

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