

Coronavirus has changed our relationship with learning.

With the possibility of children needing to self-isolate, some children will undertake a mixture of remote home learning and attending school.

Here are some tips for learning workspaces at home.



## Why learning spaces matter

A home learning environment can help children:

- understand the value of learning and to make space for this
- extend their investigation of the world
- apply and strengthen their learning
- with books, have accessible choices for reading
- develop independent thinking and learning

By making a learning space at home we encourage a spirit for learning that will positively impact our children's lives for many years to come.

## Planning your home learning space

Most important is for children to feel comfortable. Here are some questions to ask:

- Is your child active? Do they like sitting for long periods?
- Do they like quiet spaces, or, do they like music to accompany them? Perhaps both?
- Do they prefer a quiet space, or are they okay with open spaces and with others around (you and/or siblings)?

Most families don't have the luxury of a whole extra room just for learning. Also, if tight on money, 'upcycling' can create individualised and unique spaces. To find your [local reuse centre](#) visit [reuse network](#). Focus on creating consistency and reliability; it's important for children to know they have space and resources for learning.

After deciding your child's learning space, focus on removing distractions, less is more. Perhaps include a photo of someone or something significant to them.

## Tips for learning workspaces:

### 1. Collaborate with your child

Talk with them about their experiences of learning at home. Things to consider about creating a home learning space:

- Where do they study best?
- Do they feel productive in the space they have?
- Do they need to be close to an adult?

### 2. Consider ergonomics

Your child will benefit from sitting in a chair with good lumbar support that provides correct table/desk height. This is especially important if using a screen; try to ensure eye level with the screen.

### 3. IT and devices

Test Wi-Fi at your chosen spot. Is the signal strong? If not, you may need to consider a booster. Checking signal strength will help to prevent losing valuable work as a result of a poor or broken internet signal. For more information on signal strength see our tips sheet - [Tips for improving internet access and speed](#).

If you don't have IT, devices, or a router, don't forget to take advantage of the U.K. Government scheme. For more information about this see [Government guidance](#) and [DeviceDotNow](#) an industry led response to ensure people aren't digitally excluded.

### 4. Bright and light!

Light level is important as light levels change throughout the day. Not having enough light can strain eyes and lead to headaches. Lamps can improve a room, but wherever possible natural light is best. If you don't have windows or much natural light, you could try placing a mirror across the window to reflect more light into the room.

### 5. Video calling and online safety

Some learning may have moved online and include face-to-face teacher/class time via video conferencing. Should your child be taking part in these activities be sure to check the process with their school to ensure safe and secure connection. To give extra confidence about your child being safe online check [Internet Matters](#).

### 6. Stationery supplies

With some high street shops being open, now could be a good time to check supplies for essential stationery. If you're having difficulty obtaining stationery, contact your school, as they may be able to help.

## 7. Encourage bookworms

Research shows that **children benefit from books in the home**<sup>1</sup>. Try to have books available, books from school, reference books, a dictionary, fiction and non-fiction. Books, and encouragement for reading, will help your child explore new interests, develop literacy, and encourage them to choose reading as a pastime.

## 8. Get messy!

An essential part of children's learning is about being creative. Perhaps you live in rented property and worry about your tenancy. To protect your home and to enable creative fun, you might want to ask: "How can we make a mess, but without ruining our home?" And "What resources do we need to protect our home?"

## 9. Remember to move!

Be sure to encourage breaks throughout the day. Stretch out, get up and walk about your home, if you can, get some fresh air. Taking regular short breaks (5-10 mins) will help children focus, reduce stress, and help retain information. Don't forget to eat and drink to fuel the body and the mind!

## 10. Leave room for growth

Allow opportunity for spaces to grow and develop alongside your children's interests, as their passions will develop and evolve over-time. Make a space that plays into their interests and encourages them to learn.

## To sum up

By creating a consistent and reliable learning space you'll put learning at the heart of your home. By linking home and school, you will make the best of education for your child, for now and their futures!



### Other tips sheets:

- **IT and Online Support for Families**
- **Internet Access and Speed**
- **Supporting home learning routines**

## Our home 'learning space'

### Planning our space

Remember there is no 'perfect' the most important thing is to create a space that works for you.

Area		Our plan
	Collaborate	
	Ergonomics, desk and seating	
	IT and devices	
	Lighting	
	Video check and online safety	
	Stationery supplies	
	Home library	
	Art space	
	Breaks and movement	
	Other	

<sup>i</sup> Sakora et al (2018) 'Scholarly Culture: How Books in Adolescence Enhance Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Technology in 31 Societies'