How To Create A Productive Off-Campus Workspace

Here at Smarta, we know the sense of freedom and excitement that comes with off-campus housing. Free reign, hardcore fun, and total control of the way you’re living— what’s more liberating than that? With all those nearby bars, parks, and shows, it’s almost easy to forget that you’re still studying. Unlike dorm-life, renting a house or an apartment forces you to create a schedule independent of college’s constant ticking clock. You’re more than a student— you’re a renter, and fully adult.

Striking a balance between complete autonomy and productivity becomes super important when you’re renting. Once the search for good, cheap housing is over, you’ll want to optimize your space to be just as productive as your favorite library or campus nook. Having a plan for that is helpful, and that’s what we at Smarta are about— helping you have the most seamless off-campus experience possible.

So yes, use your newfound freedom to live your life and party hard, but don’t neglect to carve out a corner for your most productive self. These Smarta pointers will give you the structured boost you need to make the most of your new off-campus space. Here’s how to rev up the good work, and keep it coming:

1. Designate a section of your apartment or house for work and work only.

Whether it’s an entire room or just a corner, creating a proper, dedicated workspace is of the essence. That means not just plopping down at the kitchen table or on the couch, but setting up a desk or surface. Pick the quietest spot in the house, nab a window if you can, and lather on the decor. That way, you can always have control of your environment and know that it suits the way you work. The beauty of renting off-campus is the endless personal twists you can put on your space.

To complete your ideal study heaven, amp up the zen with some plants and pictures. Nothing inspires like a striking image, and having your favorite art on deck will put your brain at ease. Having this designated space will do wonders for your ability to get in the zone and stay in it. You’ll instantly switch on, surrounded by the stuff you dig in a space you’ve created.

2. Declutter and keep it clean.

Keeping your workspace tidy is key to productivity. Papers and pens galore will cloud your focus, as will empty coffee cups, overflowing trash cans, and dying plants. There’s no doubt that decluttering your space will declutter your mind.

Leave that messy-dorm mindset behind, and embrace the off-campus apartment life of independence. Be the perfect roommate to yourself. Trust— it’s the lifestyle change that will do the most for your output as a student *and* an adult.

3. Have a special spot to put aside your gadgets while you work.

Phone, game console, tablet— constant notifications will get in the way of your focus. Now that you’ve got your own apartment, finding a faraway place for your tech should be a breeze. Make it about you, your laptop, books, and notes now that you have this personal space. Whether it’s a drawer or another room, a little distance between screens goes a long way for your workload.

4. Come to an understanding with your roommates about noise levels and study time.

Maybe background noise or music suits your style of work, but there’s no denying that calm and quiet are ideal for studying. You can deck out your den perfectly and *still* get caught up if your housemates are messy and loud.

Roommate relationships are important to keep cool and neutral, so talking over what you need when you move-in is smart. Establish boundaries, designate quiet time, and create a culture of support and success. That way, you can buckle down when you’ve got to, and get loud when it’s time to get loud.

5. Designate an area to take breaks in.

It’s highly important to be able to get away, both physically and mentally, when you’re too tired or simply stuck. Just like a study space, having somewhere to decompress is essential. Maybe your apartment has a common area that does the trick, or maybe it’s a stroll outside— the key is to break away.

Take your breaks, move around, and refresh your mind. It’ll be a boost for your focus and a breather for your brain. You’ll get back to your study nook cool, calm, and ready for what’s next.

Taking your studies off-campus can be a challenge, but it’s definitely the way to go. All that freedom just means more control over how you live, study, and work. With these Smarta productivity tips, you’re set to make the most of your new rental, with a workspace optimized by and for you.