

The colourful way South Korean workers cope with long hours

‘Deskterior’, a **portmanteau** of ‘desk’ and ‘interior’, is the act of decorating one’s office desk with favored, adorable items. The term is becoming increasingly popular on South Korean social media, especially among young employees.

portmanteau 混合词

In a 2017 poll of 788 workers conducted by the job search engine Job Korea, 44% of women and 29.7% of men said they thought of themselves as a so-called ‘deskterior person’. The trend is especially popular with millennials.

As interest in deskteriors has grown, a new market for **quirky** office supplies has emerged: there are wireless keyboards, laptop stands, colorful desk mats, sitting cushions, mood lights, action figures, **wrist** guards, small plants and air fresheners. You can even find mini water purifiers and small vacuum cleaners for desks. Many of them have cute characters to appeal to young South Koreans.

quirky 古怪的; 离奇的

wrist 手腕

Lee Hyang-eun, a professor of design engineering at Sungshin Women’s University in Seoul, says that the deskterior phenomenon is more than just a way to reduce stress and make the office more comfortable; rather, it’s **emblematic** of a shift in how people approach work, especially young people.

emblematic 象征的

“Korea is now undergoing a significant change in terms of work environment. As work-life balance becomes a big social issue, more people prioritise personal happiness as much as their performance at work,” she says. “I think ‘deskterior’ comes from a tendency to seek a relaxing personal space amid **hectic** daily routines.”

hectic 紧张忙碌的; 狂热的