

Creating Work-Life Boundaries

Work often intrudes on personal time, which can make it feel like the workday never truly ends. This can lead to exhaustion and burnout. **Work-life boundaries** keep your work and personal lives separate so you can shed your work persona, engage more in your personal life, rest, and recharge.

Wind down.

Tying up loose ends just before the end of your workday prepares you to set a firm boundary.

Tidy up your work area.

Write down tomorrow's tasks.

Silence work notifications on your phone.

Set an intention.

Making a *conscious* decision to set a firm boundary increases the chances of follow-through. It also helps to pair your intention with a small, meaningful activity.

Find a landmark you see every day on your way home from work. As you pass it, say to yourself, "From this moment on, I'm leaving work behind."

Choose a container and put it by your front door. When you get home, drop in your keys and any work items, and tell yourself, "I'm done with work until tomorrow!"

When you finish work, splash some cold water on your face. Say to yourself, "Goodbye, work!" and imagine rinsing away your work worries.

Modify your environment.

Your environment can make or break a work-life boundary. Making your personal space look and feel distinct from your workspace is critical.

Change into comfortable clothes.

Use relaxing or invigorating lighting, scents, and music.

If you work from home, close off your workspace with partitions.

Change your behavior.

Doing a non-work activity lets you step into another role and creates distance from work thoughts. Aim for an activity that helps you relax, recharge, and get into a different mindset.

After work, it's tempting to zone out on your phone or in front of the TV. Indulge in this for 15 minutes, then get up and do something more enriching.

Immerse yourself in an activity distinct from your work, like playing with a pet, taking a walk, or visiting with a friend.

When work thoughts pop up, gently turn your attention away from them and refocus on the activity you're doing.