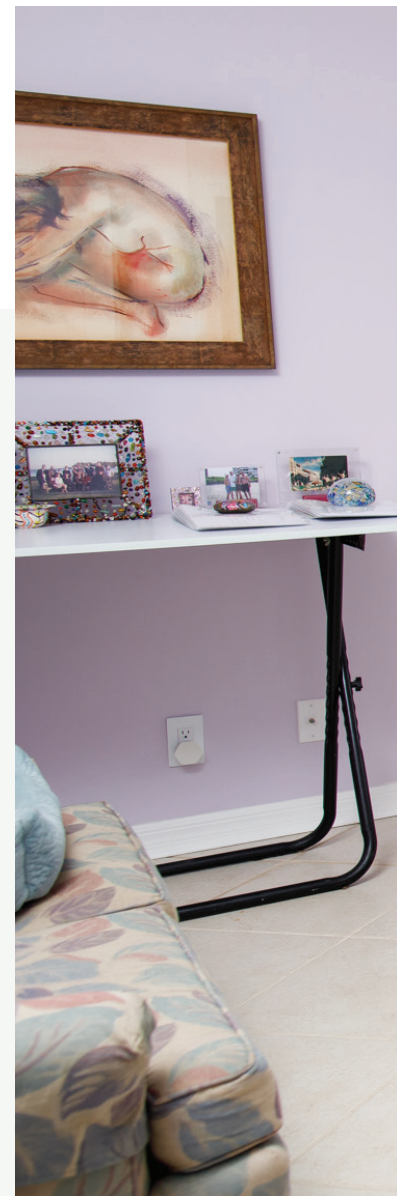


Home Sweet Office

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR HOME WORKSPACE

By Steve Gill

You've probably been doing a fair amount of working from home lately out of necessity, and may have realized that it definitely has some advantages. To keep your momentum going with more productivity, here are some tips on a few potential purchases and adjustments that can help your home office shine.



►CHAIR

"This is the thing I love: my Sayl chair," says Marla Ottenstein, Naples' Premier Professional Organizer. "If you buy it directly from Herman Miller [hermanmiller.com], it's around \$600, but if you divide that by the 12 years I've had it, I've gotten my money's worth. Ergonomics is really important."

►DESK

You don't have to work behind a massive oak fortress or an heirloom made from Brazilian mahogany. In fact, as long as the surface is flat and firm, it's more important to have the right height rather than any particular material. Just find a look you like. More surface area is often helpful, especially since Ottenstein's recommendation is to get something without drawers—you'll only fill them up with clutter.

►LIGHTING

Natural light is your friend, and Florida has plenty of sunshine, but you'll still want a reliable light source that doesn't strain your eyes. Naples Lamp Shop [napleslampshoponline.com] is well stocked with options; we're also partial to BlueMax lamps [fullspecsolutions.com], with special bulbs that mimic sunlight.

►SUPPLIES

"I have this wonderful rolling cart from The Container Store [containerstore.com], it's by a company called Elfa," says Ottenstein. "There are two drawers, and the top part holds files." She also stresses the organizational importance of keeping your files under control, as opposed to saving every piece of paper forever. Less is more, in general, including office supplies and desktop knickknacks; you don't actually need 30 pens.



▶ART

A bit of wisdom from Arsenault Studio and Banyan Arts Gallery's Paul Arsenault: "The art that I believe best augments a home office is art that inspires you and comforts you. Obviously, that is so personal ... some people may benefit from a beautiful landscape, and others from wild abstraction, others from a glass sculpture. That's one thing that's so wonderful about art." Still, the gallery's [arsenaultgallery.com] Amy Moglia Heuerman, James P. Kerr and Clyde Butcher are good starting points.

▶PLANTS

A spot of greenery is easy on the office worker's eyes, and in addition to providing visual beauty, some varieties, including philodendron or spider plants, help purify the air by removing toxins and carbon monoxide. Plus, they're fairly low maintenance and thrive on direct sunlight. Consider swinging by Clark's Nursery [naplesnursery.com], Calusa Palms Nursery [calusapalmsnursery.com] or other Southwest Florida vendors for a pot or two.

▶AMBIENCE

This element is also likely to vary from person to person—some people work best with absolutely no distractions, while others find total silence a distraction in itself. If you decide to put on some music, it often helps to make it instrumental. The free website mynoise.net has multiple adjustable options for streaming white noise, including one channel that simulates the background bustle of a coffeshop.

