

Tips for WIL students: working remotely

Be clear about expectations

- › with your manager/supervisor, establish:
 - your core work hours and any flexibility
 - the frequency and schedule for check-ins and other meetings
 - if needed, how to advise of short interruptions to your availability or responsiveness, for example when you're taking a lunch break
- › with your family or roommate(s), agree on how you will:
 - respect each other's privacy, workspace, noise tolerance and hours of work
 - handle interruptions
 - share household and family responsibilities



Keep to a schedule

- › have a clear beginning and ending to your workday
- › establish a routine that balances your commitments
 - core work hours
 - meeting schedule
 - non-work responsibilities
- › adapt your schedule if you need to, and be sure to let your manager/supervisor and your team know of any changes



Be intentional about connecting

- › keep a running list of questions you can ask at your regular one-on-one meeting with your manager/supervisor
- › arrange one-on-one video meetings with team members when collaborating on tasks and ask them to share any tips
- › take advantage of opportunities to connect with colleagues socially
- › continue to build your professional community beyond the workplace

Prepare your workspace

- › set up a workspace that supports your productivity
- › create an ergonomically safe and comfortable workspace for your desk, computer, seating, and other equipment
- › pay attention to lighting, sound, and the right room temperature
- › limit distractions
- › stay organized
- › work outside for a change of scenery

Take care of yourself

- › prepare yourself for your workday
 - clear your mind of clutter
 - reflect on your intention for the day
 - show up in appropriate attire
- › take small breaks throughout the day to move around
- › use mindfulness to calm the mind and reduce stress
- › understand your rights and responsibilities and advocate for yourself if necessary

Tips for WIL students: getting work done

Prioritize your work tasks

- › determine the 2-3 most important tasks for the day and focus on these first
- › prioritize based on importance and urgency
 - first focus on important and urgent work
 - then move on to important, non-urgent work
 - avoid tasks that aren't important (even if they seem urgent), or deal with them at the end of the day
- › prioritize the most valuable work
- › estimate level of effort and start with those that will take the longest
- › be flexible, realistic, and know when to stop work on a task that's no longer a priority
- › take stock at the end of the day and plan for tomorrow



Tell people what you're working on

- › stay connected, whether that's through daily 'huddles' or online collaboration tools
- › let people know what you're working on to avoid wasted or duplicated efforts.
- › be alert to changing priorities and deadlines that may have shifted

Block time for focussed work

- › important work often needs deeper thinking and more focussed concentration
- › book a block of time (90 minutes is recommended) in your schedule, as if you're attending a meeting. This will signal that it's time to dive into the work and you aren't available to respond to emails or other interruptions
- › try the Pomodoro Technique
 - focus your work in 25-minute bursts using a timer
 - take a 5-minute break
 - repeat up to four times before taking a longer break
 - use an app to help, such as Focus To-do (Android) or Focus Keeper (Apple)

Optimize work to match your energy levels

- › spend a week tracking your energy throughout the day and note when you're best able to concentrate
- › block your time accordingly, so that you're working on the important tasks that require deep-thinking while at your peak
- › leave simple, repetitive tasks for other times of the day



Use productivity tools

- › if available, use your workplace tools for managing projects
 - ask about creating a private space within those tools for your own tasks and tracking
- › use free apps/tools to help you to succeed
 - project management/planning tools, such as Basecamp, Teamwork or Plan
 - kanban-style tools for tracking and visualizing projects and workflows, such as Trello
 - idea tracking and note taking apps, such as Evernote and OneNote