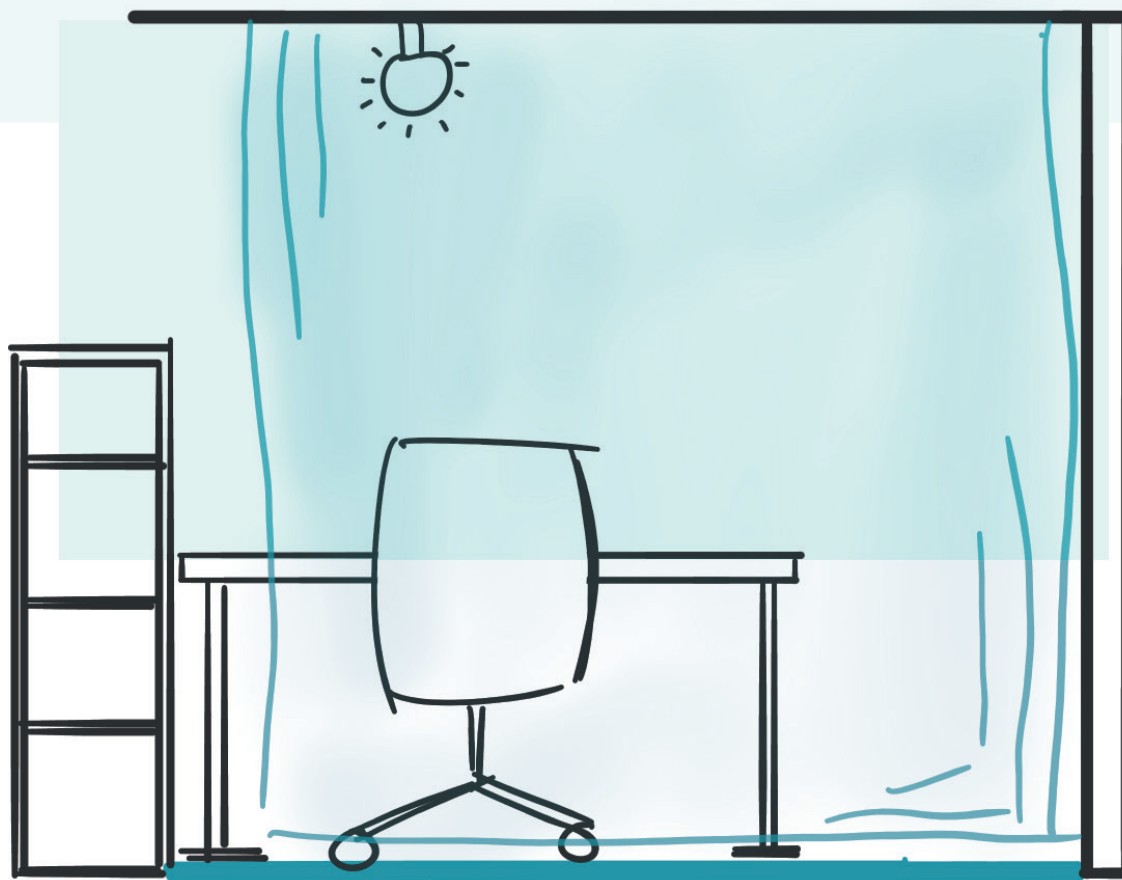


Guide:

Home-environment-modifications to improve work related satisfaction and wellbeing



This book is a guide with tips for improving your working from home environment, focussed on small (student) rooms.

Research has shown two factors influencing the experience working from home;

- A separate space to work from
- Your previous experiences with tasks in your room.

In this guide we show you how these factors can be implemented in a small (student) room. Which help increase your satisfaction and wellbeing while working from home.

The guide will focus on three aspects, which have a basis in the literature of Bakker (2014):

- Physical barrier
- Visual division
- Ergonomic setup & facilities

It is recommended to integrate all aspects to get the best results.

Rearranging your room

Rearranging your room is a method of reducing the effect of your previous experiences. Additionally, during the rearrangement, you can focus on creating a separate work space.

Another room is typically characterized by two factors, the walls surrounding the room, and the interior inside the room.

Inside a small student room these can be implemented with a physical barrier, and a visual distinction, between your workspace and the rest of the room. As illustrated in figure 2.

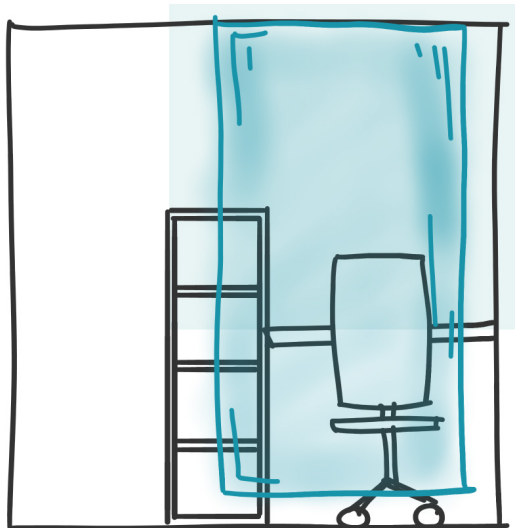


Figure 1: An example of the work environment

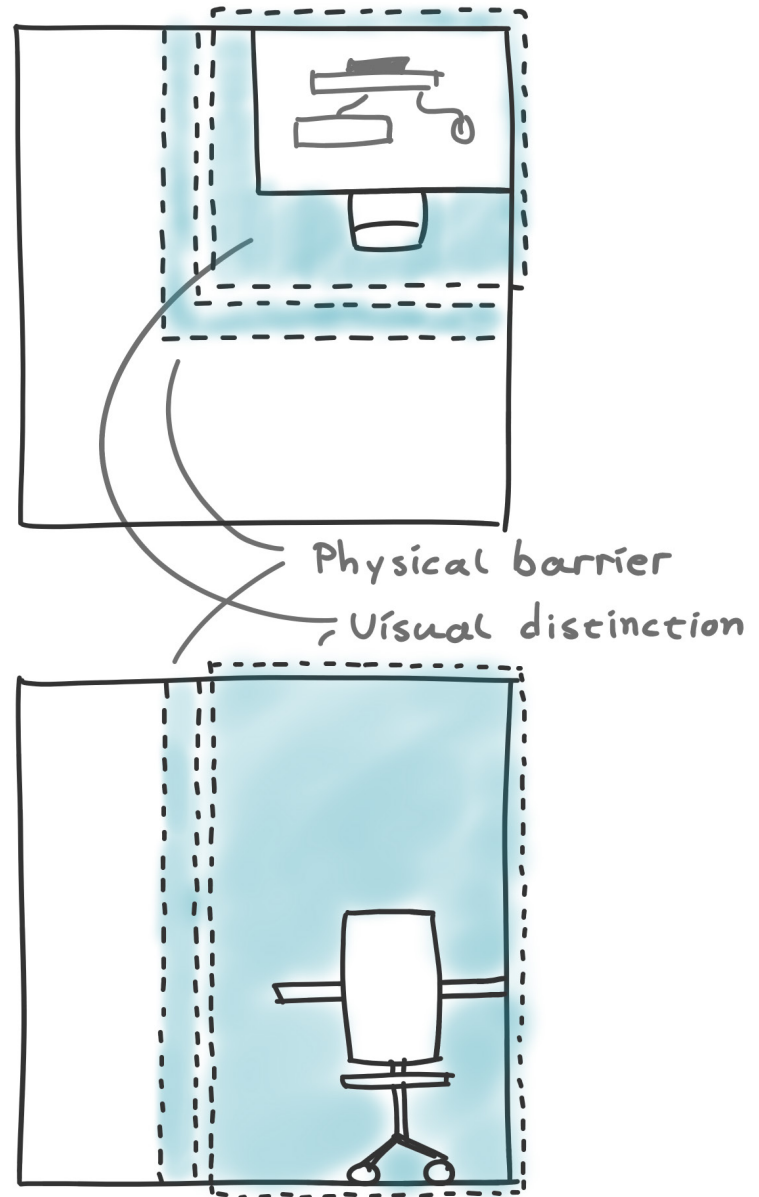


Figure 2: The two factors of the workspace

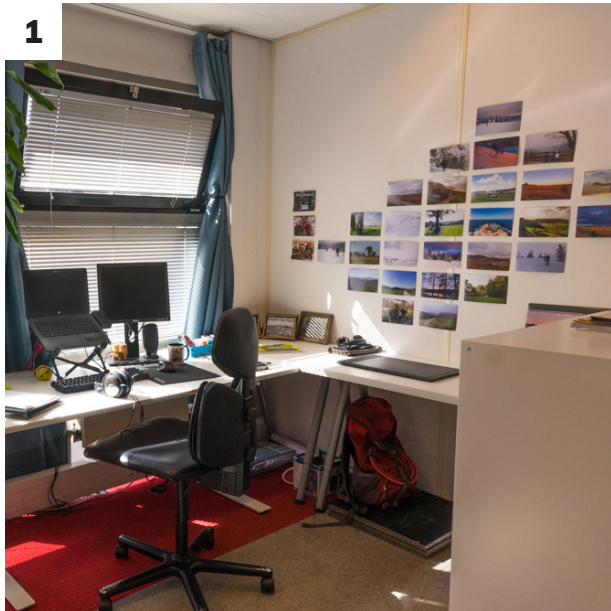
1 | Rearrangement tips

A physical barrier or visual distinction could be added through additional products.

But changing the room itself can also be a great starting point to improving your home work environment. Where the layout of your room can support the perception of a separate space.

On this and the following page four tips/best practises are described for you.

The following pages provide inspiration on what can be achieved with a room rearrangement.



1
Arrange your furniture and workspace in a way that the open sides of your workspace are limited.

2
Use a different accent colour in your workspace.

3



4



The test:

For the test there are two possibilities of rearranging your room:

- Moving your desk to a different part of your room to reduce the effect of your previous associations.
- Rearranging the room to create the perception of a second room.

You can select the option you chose in the general survey at the end of this research.

3
Limit the products that you have an association of relaxation with in your peripheral vision.

4
Use your workspace arrangement only for work and study.

2 | Physical barrier

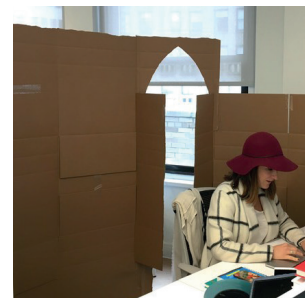
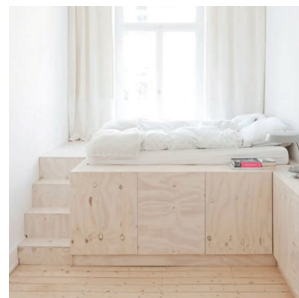
A physical barrier marks the line between two space in the same room. A physical barrier can be permanent, such as a bookshelf, or a temporary construction with a movable separation wall.

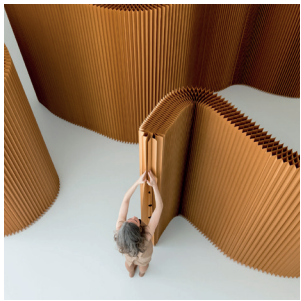
By creating a (temporary) physical barrier around your workspace, the perception of the environment might be changed by altering two of the factors on how we perceive the environment; proportions and form of the space (Bakker, 2014).

Furthermore, we might benefit from the location updating effect (Radvansky, 2011), were we more easily forget things when we move between spaces.



Figure 3: Examples of physical barriers





Tips:

Some examples related to creating a physical barrier:

- Create a workspace which you can only access from one direction, with the other 3 directions closed off from the rest of your room.
- Have an action which marks the start and end of your day of working. Such as moving a piece of furniture.
- Limit the products that you have an association of relaxation with in your peripheral vision.

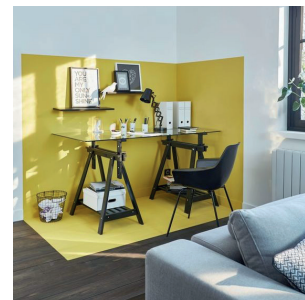
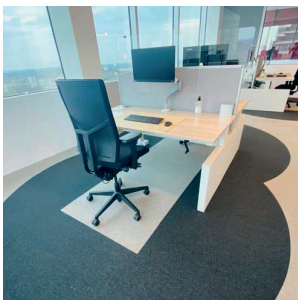
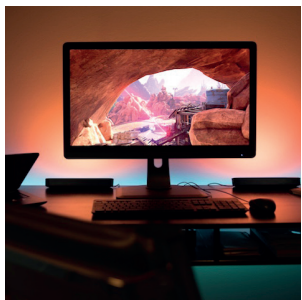
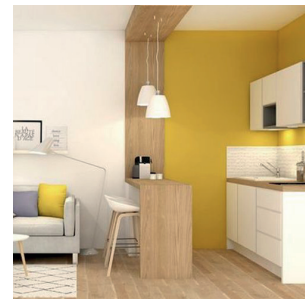
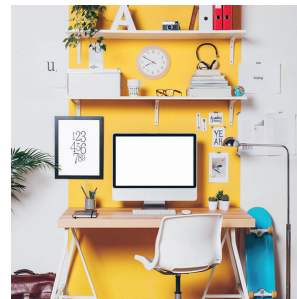
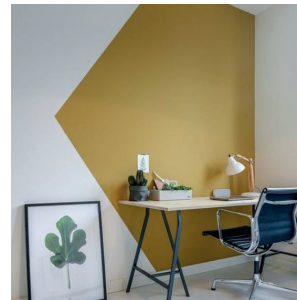
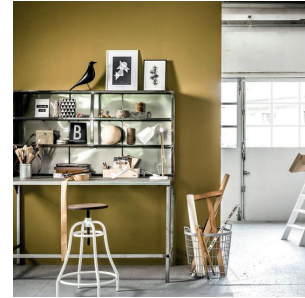
3 | Visual division

A visual division consist of something that marks the inside of a space, but is not an obstruction. For example, a different carpet on the ground does not obstruct your movement, and is a visual reminder. These can also be temporary, such as coloured light. Or permanent when you paint the walls.

By changing the space itself, it might be perceived as a different place with its own emotional profile (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) which links your actions to a space or room.

While also reducing the effect of the interactional past (Miligan, 1998) of the precious associations of tasks to that space.

Figure 5: Examples of visual divisions





Tips:

Some examples related to creating a visual division:

- Use your workspace arrangement only for work and study.
- Use a different accent colour in your workspace.

4 | Ergonomics

Depending on the tasks you perform, you can prioritize the setup of your workspace to facilitate these tasks.

For more information; check:
<http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/ergoguide.html>

1

1 - Your computer

Tips for working behind a computer:

- Use a setup where the keyboard is separate from your screen.
- Place your screen(s) at a height where you don't have to tilt or bend your neck, use a separate screen or a laptop stand if necessary.
- "Sit back in your chair at an angle of around 100-110 degrees (i.e. slight recline) and hold your right arm out horizontally, your middle finger should almost touch the center of the screen."
(ergo.human.cornell.edu)

2

2 - Your workspace

Tips for your workspace:

- Create a stable working surface.
- Pick a comfortable chair with good lumbar support
- Set the back rest angle at around 100 to 110 degrees.
- Keep the things you need close by.
- Place your keyboard flat on the desk.

3

3 - Your posture

Your posture is the basis of a good working setup, and should most of all feel relaxed.

- Varying posture is important throughout the day, consider a height-adjustable desk, or a separate space to work standing.
- Let your arms rest on a flat surface in a relaxed position
- *"Make sure the head and neck are as straight as possible."*
(ergo.human.cornell.edu)

4

4 - Miscellaneous

- The background should be the same brightness as your screen.
- Limit the influence of the noise around you.
- Take frequent breaks