

yhl

Your Home & Lifestyle Magazine™

APRIL 2014

**Design Ideas
That Get the
Job Done**

**Setting Up
an Ergonomic
Workstation**

work space solutions

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Recipe

LAMB ROASTED WITH HERBES DE PROVENCE WITH PINOT NOIR SAUCE

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

1¼ pounds top round lamb
3 tablespoons olive oil
sea salt
freshly ground pepper
½ cup herbes de Provence

Pinot Noir Sauce

16 ounces Pinot Noir
2 tablespoons prepared demi-glace
2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Demi-glace is a classic French brown sauce that is quite labor intensive to prepare. If you cannot locate it locally, substitute beef or chicken stock. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Rub lamb with 2 tablespoons olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and press herb blend into the lamb. Heat the other tablespoon of olive oil over high heat in a large skillet. Sear the lamb in the hot skillet, about 3 minutes per side. Set aside skillet (do not clean) to use for sauce. Place lamb in a shallow roasting pan and cook for 30 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 125 degrees F for medium rare. Prepare Pinot Noir Sauce while lamb is roasting. Add ½ cup of the wine to skillet and deglaze over medium-high heat, scraping up any bits left on the bottom of the pan. Mix in the remaining wine, demi-glace, and butter. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes. Let lamb rest 5 minutes before slicing. Arrange on serving plates, drizzle with sauce, and serve. *Written by Kim A. Fuqua. Photography by Suzanne Farmer.*



an office space for everyone

Entice the Entire
Family to Create a
Personal Workspace

A designated home office has become a coveted spot. With today's flexible technology, carving out a place of your own is definitely doable. Unlike the lackluster styles from the past that resemble commercial environments, the latest home office trends look and perform better than ever before.

There is much to consider, such as comfort in the form of ergonomic or upholstered side chairs. And let's not forget privacy; if you need it to get the job done, then a room with a door is a must. For those who live in warmer climates, a separate structure in the backyard makes a great place to escape. An addition over a garage is another viable option.

STATE YOUR PURPOSE. Make a list of what you have to accomplish in your home office. If it's simply a place to pay bills and sort the mail, a narrow desk inside a nook may be all that's needed. You can also take advantage of an existing element in your home, such as a kitchen island or dining table, if you lack spare space. Just clear a cabinet or drawer for storage.

If your family wants to share a work space, pair two desks in the center of a spare room to accommodate two or more people. Add some seating, and you've got yourself a hub for homework as well as games and crafts when you're ready to take a break. An extra closet can be a great place for an office that you can hide at night by simply closing the doors.

GET YOUR GADGETS. Though it's tough to keep up with advances in technology, be familiar with your equipment before planning your office space. For instance, if you have a desktop computer, consider the space that a monitor and tower (if applicable) demand. If a laptop is your main tool, and you have a wireless network, you can set up shop just about anywhere in your home. Still, it's nice to have a specific spot for supplies. Upgrading to a wireless printer in one central location allows everyone to share and frees up some surface space for your work materials.

DOUBLE-DUTY. Carve out a study space for kids in their rooms whenever possible, so that they can do their homework in a private and quiet environment. If two siblings share a room, you might place a desk between the beds that doubles as a

nightstand. Or, try a space saver like a loft bed that incorporates a desk and storage area below.

Another solution would be to line a wall in a family room or lower level with a series of desks and shelves for the whole family to enjoy. This can be a place to work and play, depending on the time of day. It can also provide a spacious surface to spread out materials for a project of any kind; be it a presentation, gift wrapping, or scrapbooking.

IT'S PERSONAL. Each family member can add personalization with bulletin boards for inspiration, calendars to stay on track, desk blotters for organization, and anything else that comes to mind. If creativity is an important part of your daily routine, add zest with colorful accessories and accent pieces, such as trash bins and rugs. File cabinets have morphed from metal to more stylish varieties that go incognito as dressers and such.

Baskets, trays, clocks, globes, and paperweights are among the conversation pieces that distinguish a home office from your average cubicle. A glass tumbler can hold pencils while a decorative soap dish corrals paper clips. Industrial-chic wood shelving, old library catalog card files, or mail sorters lend warmth and charm to any work space. Define different areas brimming with these items, such as a place to snack and a place to take a nap (when needed or time allows).

GETTING SETTLED. When planning your home office, keep health in mind. Standing desks let you work vertically and are perfect for short projects such as checking e-mail. The right lighting is crucial wherever you land, especially in a space you'll use at night. Organization is essential, whether it allows for a place to put a notebook, store important documents, or stash office supplies.

A home office should evolve over time, so it's important to evaluate your work space on occasion and purge any unnecessary items. As with any good design, a little fine-tuning goes a long way. Now get to work. Your home office awaits you. *Written by Jeanine Matlow. YHL*



ready, willing, and able

Setting up a Functional,
Professional, and
Practical Home Office

You need an office that works just as hard as you do. But how do you actually begin planning one? If you already work from home, you have an advantage: you know what *doesn't* work for you. Now all you need to do is find what does. If you're new to the home office concept, you need to decide exactly how you are going to use your space before you can begin creating it. Then, explore the world of surfaces, storage, and style to create the perfect office environment for you.

According to Noreen Lennon, product placement specialist for Ikea, the first step in creating a home office is to evaluate the requirements of the space. "What activities will be taking place in the office? What will you need to store, and how much storage space will be necessary? These are some of the questions you must ask yourself in order to find the most effective office space for your needs," advises Lennon. Is your office separate or will it be a part of another room, like a living room, bedroom, or kitchen? Will you have clients visiting the space, or do you only need a simple desk for yourself? What types of and how many electronics do you require? And, finally, how large a space do you have to work with?

A desk (or writing surface) is the most basic item required in a conventional office; however, desks come in a range of widths, depths, and prices. "The Micke desk at Ikea uses a construction technique called board-on-frame, which is a solid frame with a lightweight core," says Lennon. "It is very sturdy, but weighs much less [than solid wood], so transportation is significantly less and the price tag reflects that." Other retailers such as Walmart, Target, Home Depot, and Lowe's, also offer affordable desk options from as low as \$50. Office supply stores often have more elaborate desk configurations that can cost up to several thousand dollars.

Ask the ultimate question: how are you going to use the desk? Will it be a place to work on your computer and house some paperwork? Or, will you use it as a surface for cutting fabric, studying architectural blueprints, or holding a company meeting? If it's the latter, a large or expandable table will probably suit your needs much better than a traditional desk. Wires and cables can easily clutter an office space and make it look disorganized; Lennon suggests looking for an option that incorporates hidden storage for controlling electrical cords.

Storage is also a very individualized concern. A small stacked drawer cabinet can hold files, pens, pencils, and all the other miscellaneous small tools you might need in an office space. An open, freestanding shelving unit can be used to store reference materials, books, software containers, or DVDs. "For a small office, you might want to make use of the vertical space in the room. [Try] wall-mounted organizers, shelves, or storage units that use the height of the room rather than the width. Multifunctional pieces, like a desk that includes storage and a built-in area for cables and wires, will help make efficient use of a small area," explains Lennon.

Finally, make the space your own. Frame and display photos, posters, maps, or patterned wallpaper. Choose the perfect lighting for both style and function, and add a punch of color on the walls or around the room with containers, folders, a brightly colored chair, or patterned rug. Yes, you are ready and willing to get to work, and now you will be able to create the perfect office for you! *Written by Carolyn M. Runyon.* **YHL**

Individualize Your Office

1 Start from scratch. Lennon notes that Ikea offers an unfinished storage system that can be painted or stained to suit your decor or temperament.

2 If you already have a functioning desk, simply paint the legs a new color to give it your stamp of individuality.

3 Instead of buying a matching set of office furniture, try mixing and matching colors or styles.

4 Blend refinished secondhand finds with new furniture to make an office truly unique.

Sites such as Pinterest and Houzz offer hordes of ideas for customizing an office. Search ikea.com, hgvtv.com, housebeautiful.com, bhg.com, or realsimple.com for even more designs and floor plans.

in working order

Maintain Your Health and Improve Your Productivity with an Ergonomic Workstation

The modern work-from-home dynamic certainly comes with its perks: there is no need to pack a lunch, you can wear your sweatpants all day, and you'll never miss a FedEx delivery. But if you work mainly with a computer, it can also result in a more sedentary lifestyle than most corporate desk jobs. Without the normal distractions of meetings, scheduled lunches, and office gossip, at-home workers can easily spend too much concentrated time at their computers, resulting in physical discomfort or even injuries. Whether you work primarily in an out-of-the-home office or use it for only a handful of hours a day, it's important to set up an ergonomic workstation so you can continue to be productive and comfortable for the long run.

The term ergonomic ebbs and flows in popularity. Products touted as such are intended to provide comfort and help avoid stress and injury. Even if your office is ready for a makeover, ignore the immediate urge to stock up on all things ergo. As with anything health-related, it's important to review product research and claims, consult your doctor if you have any questions, and decide what makes the best sense for your body.

Start by assessing your desk and chair. This furniture is likely the biggest investment in your setup and can make the most difference. A chair should be adjustable and have good lumbar support. Ideally, you'll be able to adjust the back of the chair so you can sit upright and recline at several angles. Be mindful of your posture and change positions on a regular basis. Experts at the Mayo Clinic recommend adjusting the height of your chair so that your feet rest flat on the floor (or on a footstool if your stationary desk is high).

Most desks are a fixed height, but adjustable desks ensure a custom work surface. Companies such as The Human Solution offer electronic sit-stand desks that can be raised or lowered to your preferred height, for sitting or standing. The company even offers an assessment tool to calculate the best height for your chair, desk, and keyboard: for example, a five-foot-five-inch person should have a seat height of 15.5 inches and a standing eye height of 60.5 inches. Whatever desk you choose, make sure it has enough surface space to accommodate your desktop or laptop computer and any accessories you use on a regular basis.

Once you have a solid foundation, examine the placement of your computer, mouse, and keyboard. The Mayo Clinic recommends the top of your monitor be slightly below eye level and an arm's length away. If you work from a laptop, use a stand to raise the screen. Position your keyboard and mouse so your hands are straight and neutral, and use a wrist rest if needed. Elbows should be close to the body and bent at an angle of ninety degrees or more.

Finally, consider the small adjustments that can make a big difference. Place everyday materials within reach to avoid strain. Consider adding a freestanding, screen-mounted, or in-line document holder. If you're often on the phone, use a headset. And make sure you have appropriate task lighting that doesn't leave a glare on the screen.

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) offers a computer workstation evaluation checklist. Use this to ensure you've thought of everything the professionals recommend. But remember that not all fixes are ideal for everybody. Recognize what works best for you, customize your setup accordingly, and get to work. *Written by Maresa Giovannini.* **YHL**

Exercise Tips

No matter how perfect your workstation is, you still need to move on occasion to keep your mind and body in tip-top shape. Try these simple exercises to help your ergonomic setup go the extra mile.

Staring at a screen all day can quickly lead to headaches and blurred vision from eye strain. Curb ocular problems with the 20-20-20 rule: every twenty minutes, focus on something that's twenty feet away for at least twenty seconds. It's a quick yet effective practice.

It can be easy to get immersed in a project and stay at your desk for hours. Instead, make it a goal to get up for a new task every thirty minutes. At a corporate office, you might head to the watercooler, but at home opt for taking a trip to the mailbox, changing a load of laundry, or walking your dog. If needed, set a regular reminder on your computer calendar, or install software that monitors computer use and alerts you when it's time for a break.

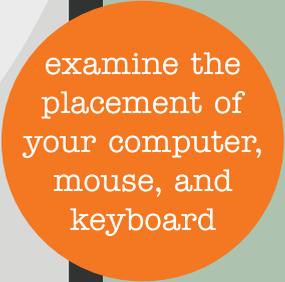
SCHEDULE



place
everyday
materials within
reach to avoid
strain



examine the
placement of
your computer,
mouse, and
keyboard



assess
your desk
and chair





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How to Conceal the Cords

State-of-the-art electronics make it possible to work remotely from practically anywhere. But with computers, printers, and docking stations come plenty of unsightly cables and cords. Streamline your home office with these innovative ideas for hiding electronic accessories.

Start by eliminating any unnecessary digital items. Replace collected technology with an all-in-one printer, fax, and scanner. Then, create a wireless hub in a central spot, so you and your family have the flexibility to work from anywhere in your home. Conceal the hub with an attractive empty three-ring binder or a hollowed out book. Create a charging station with a small cardboard box. Cover it in stylish wrapping paper (wrap the lid separately so it can be removed), place chargers and a power strip inside, and cut holes along the side of the box for easy access. If the DIY route is daunting, look for ready-made products from companies such as Great Useful Stuff or Smart Furniture.

You don't have to purchase all new items to conceal the mess. Instead, put everyday home decor to good use. Utilize molding to disguise white cables, and area rugs to prevent people from tripping over extension cords.



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