

Overworking can be bad for you

Signs you need to log off and tips to find balance



The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone in significant ways, and many of our work schedules may still be evolving due to its lingering effects.

Technology makes it easier to do things faster—emails and texts keep us always in touch and the answer to any question takes just a quick search. While being constantly plugged in can make us feel connected, it also means we never really clock out.

Working extended hours occasionally to finish a project or deal with a crisis is one thing, but routinely doing it can have negative impacts on your health and quality of life.

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6 SIGNS YOU MAY BE OVERWORKING

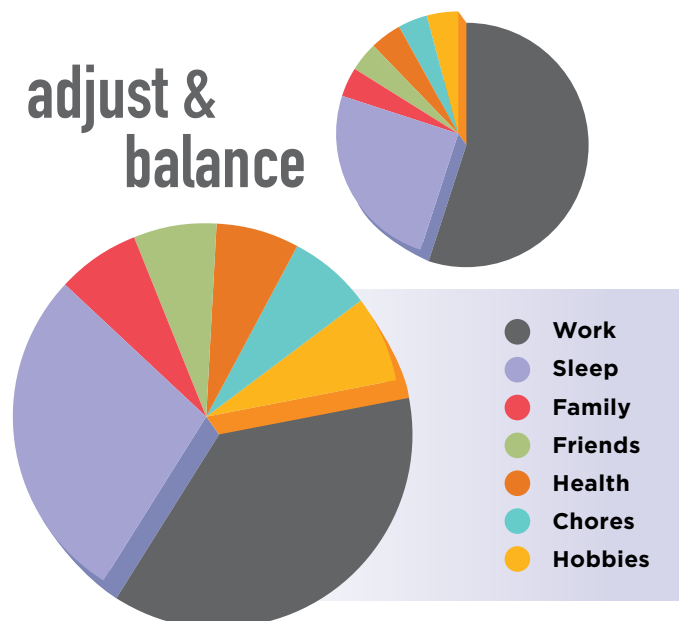
1 You have trouble disconnecting.

In our fast-paced and wired world, we're always "on." This constant stimulation makes it difficult to truly disconnect and rest.

2 You feel like you're always behind.

The ironic thing about overworking is that it actually makes you less productive—both at work and at home. You spread yourself so thin that you can't focus on what's important.

adjust & balance



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3 Your health is declining.

Here are some symptoms of overwork:

- × Exhaustion, brain fog and difficulty concentrating
- × Stress — feeling tense and on edge
- × Anxiety and depression
- × Weight gain/loss and poor eating habits
- × Insomnia

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, pay attention. If you don't, you could develop more serious issues later, like heart disease.

4 You can literally count the hours.

There's a very easy way to know if you're overworked: how many hours you work each week. In some cultures, 50- and 60-hour workweeks are the norm. However, research shows the 40-hour workweek is optimal to have a healthy balance between work, recreation, relationships, and rest.

5 You feel distant from friends and family.

When work becomes more important than the people around you, everyone feels the impact. Your partner notices. Your kids notice. Your friends and family and community notice.

6 You've lost your passion.

If the spark that ignites your passion is burned out by working long hours, it's a good sign that you're spending too much time at the office.

HOW TO MANAGE BEING OVERWORKED

Feeling overworked should not happen often. When it does, here are some things you can do to create a good work-life balance.

- ✓ **Set and keep boundaries.** For example, when you're on vacation or logging off for the night, let your team know you won't be checking messages until the next day.
- ✓ **Communicate with your manager.** They may not realize how you're feeling so keep the lines of communication open. For example, ask for help in prioritizing projects to understand which timelines might be flexible.
- ✓ **Complete one task at a time.** Focus on the most important thing first and don't worry about the next task until the first one is finished.
- ✓ **Make meaningful connections.** Create a strong network with your coworkers so you can support and encourage each other during challenging times. With your coworker's help, you may be able to problem solve more quickly than working it solo.
- ✓ **Use your paid time off.** Take time off after completing difficult assignments so you can return to work recharged and motivated.
- ✓ **Practice relaxation techniques.** Exercise and meditation are great ways to reduce stress and increase happiness. So is finding hobbies you enjoy so you have something to look forward to after work.

KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME TO LOG OFF

Sometimes, working long hours can feel rewarding — even energizing in the short term. However, when we make a habit out of it, it can make us feel stressed and unhealthy. The key is paying attention to how you feel. If it's interfering with your mental, physical, or emotional health, it may be time to reprioritize.



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