

# WORKING REMOTELY

## Terms & Phrases

### WORD BANK

## Key vocabulary

Here, we present the essential vocabulary for talking about working remotely.



### People

- attende**
  - Teilnehmer(in), Anwesende(f)
- commuter** = Pendler(in)
- co-worker**
  - Kollege/Kollegin
- facilitator** = Moderator(in), Sitzungsleiter(in)
- line manager** UK
  - direkte(r) Vorgesetzte(r)
- meeting host**
  - Sitzungsmoderator(in)
- participant**
  - Teilnehmer(in)
- remote employee**
  - mobile(r) / nicht vom Büro aus arbeitende(r) Mitarbeiter(in)
- remote worker**
  - mobile(r) / nicht vom Büro aus arbeitende(r) Mitarbeiter(in)
- remote workforce**
  - mobile Arbeitskräfte

### Types of meetings

- ad hoc meeting**
  - Ad-hoc-Sitzung, -Besprechung
- catch-up call**
  - Anruf zur Aktualisierung seiner Informationen
- (conference) call**
  - Telefonkonferenz, Konferenzschaltung
- face-to-face meeting**
  - persönliche Besprechung / Sitzung, persönliches Treffen
- impromptu chat**
  - spontanes (informelles) Gespräch
- in-person meeting**
  - persönliche Besprechung / Sitzung, persönliches Treffen
- video call**
  - Videoanruf, -telefonat
- virtual stand-up (meeting)**
  - virtuelles Stehtreffen
- virtual teamwork**
  - virtuelle Teamarbeit

### Working from home

- commuting time**
  - Fahrt-, Pendlerzeit
- distraction** = Ablenkung
- flexible working**
  - flexibles Arbeiten
- home environment**
  - häusliches Arbeitsumfeld
- office hours**
  - Büro-, Geschäftszeiten
- remote teamwork**
  - Arbeit(en) im Teleteam / virtuellen Team
- remote work** = Telearbeit
- remote work environment**
  - virtuelle(s) Arbeitsumgebung, -umfeld
- schedule** = (Arbeits-)Zeitplan
- setting** = Umfeld
- study** = Arbeitszimmer
- work-from-home policy**
  - Richtlinien für das Arbeiten im Homeoffice
- working environment**
  - Arbeitsumgebung, -umfeld
- working pattern**
  - Arbeitsmuster
- work-life balance** = ausgeglichenes Verhältnis zwischen Arbeit und Privatleben

### Key verbs and expressions

- access sth.**
  - Zugang zu etw. haben
- allow time for sth.**
  - Zeit für etw. einräumen
- be mindful (of sth.)**
  - auf etw. achten

Illustration: Bernhard Forth

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### IN CONTEXT

## Meet and greet

On the next six pages, we present extracts with key phrases and expressions you can use when working remotely.

**THE SITUATION:** Sam Morton is starting a new job as a remote worker at Garden Imp, a company that designs garden furniture. During her first week, she has a lot of contact with her line manager, Chris Baker.



### 2. First meeting

**Chris:** I've just sent out an invitation to the team meeting. Can you check your messages?  
**Sam:** Thanks. I got it. Do you use the waiting room function?  
**Chris:** Yes, we've had hackers bombing our calls. Since we've upped the security level, they've stopped. We don't have the most sophisticated of tools, but it shouldn't happen again. I'd advise you to use the waiting room function, just in case. I'll have Seb send you a "how-to" guide.

**up sth.**  
= etw. erhöhen

Illustration: Bernhard Forth

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### WORD BANK

- bring sb. in**
  - jmdn. einbeziehen
- check in (on/with sb.)**
  - sich kurz bei jmdm. melden
- collaborate**
  - zusammenarbeiten
- commute** = pendeln
- cut out** = sich ausblenden
- dial in (to a call)** = sich (in eine Telefonkonferenz) einwählen
- do a roll call**
  - jede(n) Teilnehmer(in) einzeln aufrufen
- engage with sb.**
  - sich auf jmdn. einlassen
- feel abandoned**
  - sich im Stich gelassen fühlen
- get distracted**
  - abgelenkt werden
- meet virtually**
  - sich virtuell treffen
- mute (sb.)**
  - (jmdn.) stumm schalten
- onboard sb. (remotely)**
  - jmdn. (virtuell) eingliedern
- put in a full working day**
  - einen vollen Arbeitstag einlegen
- send out an invitation**
  - eine Einladung versenden
- set boundaries**
  - Grenzen festlegen
- share sth. (with sb.)**
  - etw. (mit jmdm.) teilen
- sign in** = sich einloggen
- sign out** = sich ausloggen
- supervise sb./sth.**
  - jmdn. beaufsichtigen; etw. überwachen, kontrollieren

- take the lead**
  - die Führung übernehmen
- telecommute**
  - Telearbeit machen
- turn on/off sth.**
  - etw. ein/ausschalten
- unmute (sb.)**
  - die Stummuschaltung (von jmdm.) deaktivieren
- update sb.** = jmdn. auf den neuesten Stand bringen
- work from home**
  - im Homeoffice arbeiten
- work in a virtual team**
  - in einem virtuellen Team arbeiten
- work long hours**
  - lange arbeiten
- work remotely**
  - nicht vom Büro aus arbeiten

### Key technical terms

- backdrop** = Hintergrund
- backup** = (Daten-)Sicherung
- bandwidth** = Bandbreite
- disruption** = Störung
- glitch** ifml. = Panne, Störung
- landline**
  - Festnetz (anschluss)
- mute button**
  - Stummuschaltaste
- remote desktop software**
  - Fernwartungssoftware
- screen sharing**
  - das Teilen des Bildschirms
- security issue**
  - Sicherheitsproblem
- time lag** = zeitliche Verzögerung

- time tracking**
  - Zeitüberwachung
- videoconference**
  - Videokonferenz
- videoconferencing service**
  - Dienst für Videokonferenzen
- work computer**
  - Arbeitsrechner

### Key adjectives

- audible** = hörbar
- challenging** = schwierig
- ergonomic** = ergonomisch
- fast-paced** = rasant, zügig
- frozen** = eingefroren
- inadequate** = unzureichend
- inappropriate** = unangemessen
- lagging** = rückständig
- overwhelmed** = überlastet
- reliable** = zuverlässig
- remote** = Tele-, virtuell
- secure** = sicher
- sophisticated**
  - ausgefeilt, hochentwickelt
- sustainable**
  - tragfähig, nachhaltig
- unsuitable** = ungeeignet

### Key abbreviations and acronyms

- FOMO (fear of missing out)**
  - Angst, etwas zu verpassen
- VPN (virtual private network)**
  - virtuelles privates Kommunikationsnetz
- WFH (working from home)**
  - (Arbeiten im) Homeoffice

### Phrase Bank

For a list of all the key phrases used in the dialogues, see pages 12–13

### 3. The start

**Chris:** Hi, everyone! Welcome to this onboarding meeting for Sam. Before we kick off, let's check who is here. As there are ten of us today, I'd like to do a roll call. I'll call out your names. Could you say yes when you hear yours? And also give us a very short introduction. Sam, you'll go last. OK, shall we get started? Seb.

**Seb:** Yes! Welcome, Sam! It's good to have you on the team. I'm Seb O'Leary and I'm in charge of design. I'm also the resident quizmaster of our virtual pub quiz!

**Chris:** That's true. And his quiz nights have us laughing so much.

- charge: be in - of sth.**
  - für etw. verantwortlich/zuständig sein
- kick off** ifml.
  - starten
- onboarding**
  - Einführung
- resident**
  - wohnhaft; hier: hauseigen

### 4. The end

**Chris:** That was a good meeting. Thanks, everyone. As you all know, working from home has meant a huge culture shift for some of us, but it's going well. Remember, as always, you can reach me any time between 8 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. for an impromptu chat. I'm here if you have any questions or concerns. Just message me if my status is green to set up a time. Have a good start to the week, everyone!

- set up a time**
  - eine Zeit festlegen, vereinbaren
- shift**
  - Veränderung, Wandel



### IN ISOLATION

When working remotely, it's easy to feel isolated. It's also easy to become worried that you are not doing the right thing. Don't try to second-guess your colleagues. Instead, always make sure you all understand what is expected of everyone in the team. It's better to "overcommunicate" in remote working environments, especially when this way of working is new to you or any of your colleagues.

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# WORKING REMOTELY

## Terms & Phrases

IN CONTEXT

### A new normal?

Here, we present some more key phrases and expressions you will find useful when working from home.

#### 5. Quick chat?

**Seb:** Hi, Sam. How's it going?

**Sam:** Pretty good. Can we have a quick chat about working patterns? As you're the most experienced member of the team, I was hoping you could bring me up to speed on how the team like to work.

bring sb. up to speed on sth. *ifmt.*  
→ jmdn. über etw. auf den neuesten Stand bringen

#### 6. Essential information

**Sam:** What's the most important thing that I should know?

**Seb:** There's a core time when we all have to be available. Three days a week for four hours — that's Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Outside those hours, Chris trusts us to get the work done. As for me, I'm at my desk from 8 a.m. every day.

core time  
→ Kernzeit

#### THE SITUATION:

Sam is discussing the way the team likes to work with Seb, the most senior member of the team.

#### 7. Understand the culture

**Sam:** I've read the virtual team guidelines, but I'd also like your personal insight. How would you like us to work together? What communication channel do you prefer?

**Seb:** Any channel on our collaboration tool. It's a secure instant messaging platform that allows us to share files, hold video calls and set up private or dedicated communication channels. It's completely changed the way we collaborate. The first thing you need to do every morning is to sign in to this tool. You can set it up so that you are notified when there is an update on your channels.

**Sam:** Is video the ideal channel for quick catch-ups?

**Seb:** I use it a lot for ad hoc meetings. And coffee breaks with colleagues.

collaboration → Zusammenarbeit  
dedicated → hier: speziell eingerichtet  
guideline → Richtlinie  
insight → Erkenntnis

#### 8. A necessary break

**Seb:** If you need to take a break during core working hours, change your status to "AFK", for "away from the keyboard". It's the code we use to show everyone that we're not at our desk. It's really important that we all use the same abbreviations.

take a break → eine Pause machen

#### 9. Regular updates

**Seb:** Morning, Sam. I'm just checking in with you. How's it going?

**Sam:** Perfect.

**Seb:** Do you have everything that you need?

**Sam:** I'm quickly getting the hang of the tools. Are you happy with me sending a few ideas by email?

**Seb:** You could upload them on to our team channel.

**Sam:** I'd prefer to run them by you first. I'll send you a private message with my thoughts and contact you tomorrow, OK?

**Seb:** Great. If you need any help, let me know. Keep in touch!

hang: get the - of sth. *ifmt.*  
→ etw. kapieren  
run sth. by sb.  
→ hier etw.a: etw. an jmdn. schicken

IN CONTEXT

#### 10. Key messages



**CHRIS** 12.15 p.m.  
I saw that Seb has sent you the first design for the Imp200 project. If you'd prefer to discuss the next steps in person, let me know. I can give you a call later today. I'm around from 3 p.m.



**SAM** 12.17 p.m.  
Could we set up a video call at 3.30 p.m.? I'd like to share some information with you. Would you prefer to discuss this one-to-one, or should I invite Seb, too?



**CHRIS** 12.21 p.m.  
3.30 suits me. 👍 I'll send out an invitation to you and Seb.

Phrase Bank  
For a list of all the key phrases used in the dialogues, see pages 12–13

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IN CONTEXT

### Tech and games

Here, we provide some key phrases and expressions you might need when you have problems with technology when working remotely — or for when you are having fun with your remote colleagues.

#### THE SITUATION:

Sam and Seb have a video call, but it doesn't go well.

#### 11. Sound issues

**Seb:** You cut out there for a moment. Could you move closer to your microphone? And could you speak up?

**Sam:** ...

**Seb:** I can't hear you at all now. I think you need to unmute your mic. You're still muted, Sam.

**Sam:** Oops. Sorry, I was on mute.

**Seb:** Better, but I'm picking up a lot of background noise. I hate to ask, but have you got the TV on?

**Sam:** That's my son in the next room. He's at home from school today. I've got my headset on.

**Seb:** I think you're using your laptop speaker, not your headset.

mic(rophone) → Mikro(fon)  
speak up → lauter sprechen

Phrase Bank  
For a list of all the key phrases used in the dialogues, see pages 12–13

#### 12. You're frozen

**Sam:** There seems to be a time-lag problem with the video.

**Seb:** Can you see my screen now?

**Sam:** No, it's still loading. Great, now my screen has frozen. Seb, can you say that again?

**Seb:** You seem to be having connection issues.

**Sam:** My son's online and choking my bandwidth again! Sorry, Seb, I'll have to call you back.

choke sth. → etw. drosseln  
issue → Problem

#### 13. I'm back

**Sam:** I think my son's got FOMO. It's not easy for him being at home.

**Seb:** And it's not easy for you working from home when the kids are around. I know from experience.

**Sam:** Do you have any tips? I'm a sucker for productivity hacks!

hack *ifmt.* → Lösung(svorschlag), Tipp  
sucker *ifmt.* → Sauger; hier: Person, die alles begierig aufsaugt



#### 14. Key tip

**Sam:** I find I get so easily distracted by all the notifications coming in.

**Seb:** You should customize your notifications. Mute all non-essential channels, and switch off all notifications if you need to focus on your work for longer periods of time. And set your status to "DND", for "do not disturb". That way, we know only to contact you if it's urgent.

**Sam:** Thanks!

**Seb:** And set up reminders for important tasks. You can feel overwhelmed by all the pings, but there are ways to keep it under control.

customize sth. → etw. individuell einrichten  
reminder → Erinnerung(shinweis)

IN CONTEXT

#### 15. A bit of fun

**Seb:** To combat isolation, we arrange virtual meet-ups every Friday at 4.30 p.m. and hold a pub quiz together. It's voluntary, of course. Are you in?

**Sam:** Absolutely!

**Seb:** One question first: what's the national animal of Scotland?

**Sam:** No idea! A horse?

**Seb:** Close, but wrong. Zero points. It's the unicorn.

**Sam:** Seriously? But it's not even a real animal.

**Seb:** Don't worry, you can still come. See you later!

combat sth. → etw. bekämpfen

unicorn → Einhorn

voluntary → freiwillig

#### YOUR TEAM

Without the opportunity for face-to-face meetings, team members can feel more like strangers than colleagues. It's important to spend time with your co-workers talking about and doing things that are unrelated to your work. Even virtual events, such as a fitness session or pub quiz, can help create team spirit. You will have to decide if you can say no to such invitations without becoming isolated from the team — or getting a reputation for not being a team player.

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# WORKING REMOTELY

## Terms & Phrases

### PHRASE BANK

## How to say it

In this section, you'll find a collection of the phrases and expressions used in the extracts on the previous pages (pp. 6–11). The numbers (1–14) after each of the phrases refer to the extract it was taken from.

### Staying connected

- How are you today? [1]
- Can you say a few words about yourself? [1]
- How's it going? [5, 9]
- I'm just checking in with you. [9]
- Keep in touch! [9]

### Leading a virtual meeting

- Hi, everyone! [3]
- Let's check who is here. [3]
- I'll call out your names. [3]
- Could you say yes when you hear yours? [3]
- OK, shall we get started? [3]

### Talking about routines

- We have a daily meeting at 10.30 a.m. [1]
- You can reach me any time... [4]
- I'm at my desk from... [6]

### Talking about processes

- Message me if my status is green. [4]
- The first thing you need to do every morning is... [7]
- Change your status to... [8]
- Are you happy with me sending a few ideas by email? [9]
- You could upload them on to our team channel. [9]

- You should customize your notifications. [14]
- Mute all non-essential channels. [14]
- Switch off all notifications. [14]
- Set your status to "DND", for "do not disturb". [14]

### Making arrangements

- I can give you a call later today. [10]
- I'm around from 3 p.m. [10]
- Could we set up a video call at...? [10]
- I'll send out an invitation. [10]

### Asking for advice

- I was hoping you could bring me up to speed on... [5]
- What's the most important thing that I should know? [6]
- How would you like us to work together? [7]
- Do you have any tips? [13]

### Being supportive

- I'd advise you to... [2]
- It's good to have you on the team. [3]
- That was a good meeting. [4]
- Have a good start to the week, everyone! [4]
- Do you have everything that you need? [9]
- If you need any help, let me know. [9]



### Talking about technology

- Do you use the waiting room function? [2]
- You cut out there for a moment. [11]
- Could you move closer to your microphone? [11]
- You need to unmute your mic. [11]
- You're still muted. [11]
- I'm picking up a lot of background noise. [11]
- I've got my headset on. [11]
- You're using your laptop speaker, not your headset. [11]
- There seems to be a time-lag problem with the video. [12]
- It's still loading. [12]
- My screen has frozen. [12]
- You seem to be having connection issues. [12]

### Discussing communication

- I've just sent out an invitation to the team meeting. [2]
- Can you check your messages? [2]
- Can we have a quick chat about...? [5]
- What communication channel do you prefer? [7]
- Is video the ideal channel for... [7]
- I'll send you a private message with my thoughts and contact you tomorrow, OK? [9]
- If you'd prefer to discuss the next steps in person, let me know. [10]
- Would you prefer to discuss this one-to-one? [10]
- Should I invite...? [10]

### Dealing with problems

- Could you speak up? [11]
- I can't hear you at all now. [11]
- Can you say that again? [12]
- I'll have to call you back. [12]



### MASTER THE TECHNOLOGY

There are many tools that you can use to share information, meet electronically or collaborate on a project in a virtual environment. Make sure that you know which tools your company normally uses for which purposes — and how to access them. Don't be afraid to suggest new tools if you are sure that they can help improve communication in a remote team.

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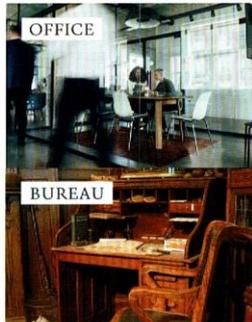
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### FALSE FRIENDS

## A different home office

There are many words in German and English that sound similar but have very different meanings. They are called "false friends".

**Skill Up! Audio**  
You can do an exercise on Business Spotlight Audio.



### What's Büro in English?

- Büro = office
- I'll be in the office on Monday.

### It's not bureau!

bureau = Sekretär (UK); Kommode (US); Amt, Behörde; Agentur

- This Victorian bureau has a wonderful secret drawer.

Note: In the US, "the Bureau" means the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation).



### What's Handy in English?

- Handy = mobile (phone) UK, cell (phone) US
- You can reach me on my mobile this afternoon.

### It's not handy!

handy = handlich, praktisch

- These gym bands are really handy for doing strengthening exercises at home.

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### FALSE FRIENDS

### TRICKY TRANSLATIONS

## Expressions with "home" in German

- If you want to say that you work from home, the traditional translation for this was always von zu Hause aus arbeiten. Today, it's more common to say im Homeoffice sein or Homeoffice machen. Note, however, that native speakers of English would not say "I'm doing home office": "I'll be working from home tomorrow." - Ich werde morgen Homeoffice machen.
- The abbreviation WFH [ˌdʌb-ɪ-juː eɪ 'etʃ] stands for "working from home". We like to use it in emails and text messages, and may say it in informal situations. In German, you would probably write (im) Homeoffice: "WFH tomorrow!" - Homeoffice morgen!
- The noun homeworking is also used to describe the concept of working from home, but not usually homework (Hausaufgabe(n)). Homeworking is also translated as Heimarbeit or Homeoffice: "What are the current guidelines for homeworking?" - Was sind die aktuellen Richtlinien fürs Homeoffice?
- Be careful how you translate home office. In British English,

(the) Home Office is the government department that deals with all domestic affairs in the UK. It's translated as Innenministerium: "The Home Office will issue a statement later today." - Das Innenministerium wird im Laufe des Tages eine Stellungnahme abgeben.

- In US English, home office usually refers to the place where a company or organization has its main strategic and administrative centre. In the UK, we usually prefer the terms headquarters or head office. All three expressions can be translated as (Firmen-)Zentrale, Unternehmenssitz, Hauptgeschäftsstelle or Generaldirektion: "They moved the home office to Seattle last year." - Sie haben die Firmenzentrale letztes Jahr nach Seattle verlegt.
- The room where you work at home is your home office, especially if you use a computer. Before the digital age, it was more common to call this room a study. Translate both as Heimarbeitsplatz, Heimbüro or Arbeitszimmer. "My home office is the kitchen table." - Mein Heimbüro ist der Küchentisch.

Foto: valentinasarov, Getty Images, Illustration: Don White/Stock.com

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# WORKING REMOTELY

## Terms & Phrases

### COLLOCATIONS

## Communication

How many word partnerships do you know that sound natural with "communication"? Take a closer look at our overview of common collocations and learn how to use them.

### "Communication(s)" with nouns

- communication breakdown / breakdown in communication(s)** = Zusammenbruch der Kommunikation (Sverbindung(en)); Störung in der Kommunikation (mit anderen)
- communication channel / channel of communication** = Kommunikationskanal, -weg
- communication(s) hub** = Kommunikationszentrum
- communication line / line of communication** = Kommunikationsweg
- communication protocol** = Kommunikationsprotokoll
- communication skills** = Kommunikationskompetenz, kommunikative Fähigkeiten
- communication system / system of communication** = Kommunikationssystem
- communications team** = Kommunikationsteam

### Nouns with "of communication"

- lack of communication** = mangelnde Kommunikation, Kommunikationsdefizit

### "communication(s)" + noun

breakdown  
channel  
hub  
line

protocol  
skills  
system  
team

### noun + "of communication"

lack  
means  
mode

- means of communication** = Kommunikationsmittel
- mode of communication** = Kommunikationsart

### HOW TO USE IT

Communication describes the exchange and interpretation of messages and their meanings. We generally use **communications** — with an "s" — to talk about the way these messages are sent and received. That's why you'll usually see **interpersonal communication** but **satellite communications**. In the corporate world, we often use **communications** to talk about the marketing department and its activities. In this case, we are referring both to the messages and the way they are delivered. We talk about the **communications team**, as they focus on the information and the **mode of communication**.



### COLLOCATIONS

### adjective + "communication"

direct  
effective  
formal  
honest

informal  
interpersonal  
non-verbal  
official

open  
poor  
verbal  
written

### verb + "communication"

establish  
facilitate  
improve  
prevent

### Adjectives with "communication"

- direct communication** = direkte/unmittelbare Kommunikation
- effective communication** = effiziente/erfolgreiche Kommunikation
- formal communication** = formelle Kommunikation, formale Mitteilung
- honest communication** = ehrliche Kommunikation
- informal communication** = informelle/lockere Kommunikation, formlose Mitteilung
- interpersonal communication** = zwischenmenschliche/interpersonelle Kommunikation
- non-verbal communication** = nonverbale Kommunikation
- official communication** = offizielle Mitteilung, amtliche Nachricht
- open communication** = offen (zugängliche) Kommunikation
- poor communication** = schlechte Kommunikation
- verbal communication** = verbale/mündliche Kommunikation
- written communication** = schriftliche Kommunikation

### Verbs with "communication"

- establish communication** = Verbindung (zu jmdm.) aufnehmen, Kommunikation (mit einem Gerät) aufbauen
- facilitate communication** = die Kommunikation erleichtern
- improve communication** = die Kommunikation verbessern
- prevent communication** = Kommunikation verhindern

### More effective communication

**Mandy:** I fear there's been a **breakdown in communication** with the client. We have to find a way to **improve communication** with them.

**Carl:** What's usually the best **channel of communication**?

**Mandy:** My preferred **mode of communication** would be a face-to-face chat in the coffee bar next to their offices, but those **lines of communication** aren't available to us right now. I could set up a video call.

**Carl:** Good idea. But can we discuss the **communication protocols** in detail before the meeting?

### GRAMMAR CHECK

## "Have", "get" and "let" structures

Knowledge of the basics of English grammar will help you to communicate clearly and confidently. Here, we look at different structures with "have", "get" and "let".



### Have it done

We use "have" + object + past participle to describe something that is done for you by somebody else. This structure is connected to the passive form and it means "cause something to happen". The emphasis is on the action, not on who did it. In German, you would use the expression *etw. machen lassen*:

- They **had the wine delivered** to their offices.
- We **had the desk designed** especially for her.
- I'll **have the bike repaired**.

- I'll **have the bike repaired** by an expert.

### Get it done

More informally, you can use "get" instead of "have". We use "get" + object + past participle in the same way:

- They **got the wine delivered** to their offices.
- We **got the desk designed** especially for her.
- I'll **get the bike repaired**.

### Get it working

We use "get" + object + the "-ing" form of the verb to mean "cause to happen":

- Can you help me **get my audio working**?
- Did he **get the computer running** again?
- Will you be able to **get the car going**?

### GRAMMAR CHECK

### Instructing somebody

We use the structure "have" + object + infinitive when we talk about instructing someone to do something. We use it to emphasize the person who will do the action:

- I'll **have Paul send** you the new guide. (= I will instruct Paul to send you the new guide.)
- We **had the team test** it. (= We instructed the team to test it.)

We can also use "have" + object + the "-ing" form of the verb to describe an ongoing action that someone or something is causing:

- His quiz nights **had us laughing**. (= His quiz nights made us laugh.)
- I **had the team watching** all the "how-to" videos yesterday. (= I got the team to watch all the "how-to" videos yesterday.)

More informally, we can use "get" + object + "to" + infinitive:

- I'll **get Paul to send** you the new guide.
- We **got the team to finish** it.

### Talking about experiences

We use "have" + object + the "-ing" form of the verb to talk about an experience or an event, especially to show that an action lasted a long period of time:

- We've **had hackers bombing** our virtual meetings all the time.

### Let happen

We use the structure "let" + somebody + infinitive to show that we allow somebody to do something. In German, you would say *jmdn. etw. tun lassen*:

- Why doesn't the company **let everyone work** from home?
- We don't **let employees use** their work laptops for their personal use.



### IT'S DONE!

The past participle "done" in "get something done" can also simply mean "finished" or "completed":

- Chris trusts us to **get the work done**.
- We **got everything done** before the meeting.

# WORKING REMOTELY

## Terms & Phrases

### ESSENTIAL IDIOMS

## What did they say again?

English is rich in idiomatic expressions. It's important to understand exactly what they mean. Learn some key idioms here.



Going stir crazy?  
I hear you!

First, read the two versions of the short conversations. Then cover up the simpler version and read the idiomatic dialogue again. Can you remember the meanings?

### First, the idiomatic way

**Meg:** My internet is a bit **hit-and-miss** today.

**Ryan:** **No worries**. Actually, I can hear you perfectly.

**Meg:** Could we keep this meeting **short and sweet**?

**Ryan:** That's **fine** by me.

### Now, more simply

**Meg:** My internet is sometimes good and sometimes bad.

**Ryan:** That's fine. Actually, I can hear you perfectly.

**Meg:** Could we keep this meeting quick, brief and relevant?

**Ryan:** I have no objections to that.

**hit-and-miss: be** - reine Glückssache sein

**No worries.** Aus. *ifml.* - Kein Problem.

**short and sweet: keep sth.** -  
- etw. kurz und bündig halten

**That's fine by me.** - Ich hab nichts dagegen.

### First, the idiomatic way

**Meg:** So, Ryan, **how are things at your end**?

**Ryan:** OK, but I've been going a bit **stir-crazy**. I haven't been out of the house all week.

**Meg:** I hear you!

### Now, more simply

**Meg:** So, Ryan, how are you and how's your work going?

**Ryan:** OK, but I've been going a bit crazy from being inside all the time. I haven't been out of the house all week.

**Meg:** I know exactly how you feel and feel exactly the same way.

**How are things at your end?** *ifml.*  
- Wie läuft's bei dir so?

**stir-crazy: go** - US *ifml.*  
- einen Lagerkoller bekommen

**I hear you!** *ifml.* - Ich habe dich schon verstanden!



Foto: mehrerhaz/istock.com

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### TEST

## Test yourself!

See how well you know the words and phrases presented in this booklet by doing the exercises below. Cover the answers at the bottom of page 23.



### 1. Choose the correct options to complete the following sentences.

- You invited far too many **attendees / attendants** to that video call.
- Impromptu / Prompted** chats are often a good source of important information.
- Remote working can save a lot of **commuting / commuted** time for many people.
- Not everyone has the perfect working **environment / ecosystem** at home.
- Try to keep the same office **hours / timing** when you work from home.
- For many people, remote working allows them to create a better **work-life / life-work** balance.

### 2. Complete each sentence below with the correct word. We've given you the first three letters.

- Can you speak up? Your voice is barely **aud** .
- My screen is **fro** . I think I have too many programmes open at once.
- I don't feel **ove** when I work from home — I find it easier than working in the office.
- The connection isn't great right now. That's why the video is **lag** .
- We use a lot of **sop** tools to communicate online.
- The WiFi connection in cafes is not always **sec** , so don't use them for work purposes.

Illustration: Bernhard Forth

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### ESSENTIAL IDIOMS



Should you draw the line?



**Skill Up! Audio**  
You can do an exercise on Business Spotlight Audio.

### First, the idiomatic way

**Meg:** I just wanted to **touch base** with you before the next project starts. Is everything OK?

**Ryan:** Another project? I just don't **have the bandwidth** for any more work. And I have to **draw the line** at working in the evenings every day.

### Now, more simply

**Meg:** I just wanted to talk briefly with you before the next project starts. Is everything OK?

**Ryan:** Another project? I just don't have the time, capacity or resources to take on any more work. And I have to say no very strongly to working in the evenings every day.

**touch base (with sb.) ifml.**  
- sich (bei jmdm.) melden

**have the bandwidth for sth.** -  
not - *ifml.*  
- keine freien Kapazitäten für etw. haben

**draw the line at sth.**  
- bei etw. die Grenze ziehen

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### TEST

### 3. What would you say in the following situations?

- You want to ask how someone is. Use "going".
- You want someone to update you. Use "speed".
- You need to explain to someone that they need to switch on their microphone. Use "mic".
- Ask if someone would prefer to talk to you alone. Use "discuss".
- Explain to someone you need to call again. Use "call".

### Answers from page 3:

- catch-up call = Anruf zur Aktualisierung seiner Informationen
- home office
- a bad thing (distraction = Ablenkung)
- meeting host = Sitzungsmoderator(in)
- glitch = Panne, Störung

### 4. Replace each German word (in italics) in the sentences below with the correct English word.

- (Homeoffice) tomorrow!
- Does the company have a global policy for (Heimarbeit)?
- The (Innenministerium (UK)) surprised everyone with the new measures.
- I left my (Handy) in the car while I was at the meeting and it was stolen!

### Answers:

- A. attendees; B. impromptu; C. commuting; D. environment; E. hours; F. work-life
- A. audible; B. frozen; C. overwhelmed; D. lagging; E. sophisticated; F. secure
- A. How's it going?  
B. I was hoping you could bring me up to speed.  
C. You need to mute your mic.  
D. Would you prefer to discuss this one-to-one?  
E. I'll have to call you back. (Other options are possible.)
- A. WFH / Working from home; B. homeworking; C. Home Office; D. mobile (phone) UK / cell (phone) US

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