BIKEDESK™

The Work-From-Home Fitness Playbook

A practical guide to moving more inside the workday you already have. No gym bag, no 5am alarm.



From BikeDesk, an Australian brand for active workdays. bikedesk.com.au

START HERE

You don't have a motivation problem. You have a chair problem.

When the commute went, so did most of the accidental movement in a working day: the walk to the station, the stairs, the lap of the office to find a meeting room. What's left is a short walk from the bed to the desk, and a lot of hours in one position.

If that's you, the usual advice doesn't help much. "Just go to the gym" assumes spare time and spare energy at the end of a day that has used up both. This playbook takes the other route. It leaves your calendar alone and changes what happens inside it.



The four ideas

1. **Break up the sitting.** Short and often beats long and rare.
2. **Stack movement onto work you already do.** Calls, reading and thinking don't need a chair.
3. **Get ahead of the 3pm slump.** Move before it lands, not after.
4. **Add two short strength sessions a week.** Ten minutes, beside the desk.

How to use it

Read it once, which takes about ten minutes. Then go to the five-day starter plan on page 10 and do only that for a week. One small change a day. By Friday you will know which ones suit your work, and those are the ones to keep.

First, do your own maths.

Your desk hours each year

Hours sitting at a desk each day × days a week × 48 working weeks

Someone at a desk for 7.5 hours a day, five days a week, sits there for **1,800 hours a year**. That is 75 full days, around the clock. (The 48 weeks is a year less four weeks of annual leave.[2])



Each dot is a day of the year. The dark ones are the 75 spent sitting at a desk. Write yours here: _____ × _____ × 48 = _____ hours

What the guidelines ask for

2.5 to 5

hours of moderate activity a week for adults, or half that if it is vigorous.[1]

2 days

a week with some muscle strengthening activity.[1]

31%

of the world's adults were not active enough in 2022, about 1.8 billion people.[3]

The same Australian guidelines add a line that matters more for desk workers than any of the numbers: **minimise and break up long periods of sitting.**[1] Sitting less and moving more are two separate jobs. An evening run doesn't undo eight unbroken hours in a chair, and standing up every half hour doesn't replace the run.

How much does activity offset sitting?

The largest study on the question pooled data from more than one million adults. People who sat for more than eight hours a day and did very little activity had the highest risk of dying early. Among people doing about 60 to 75 minutes of moderate activity a day, that extra risk from sitting seemed to disappear.[4]

This was observational research, so it shows a pattern across large groups. It can't promise a result for one person.

Sixty minutes sounds like a lot after work. Spread across a working day, in pieces, it is far more reachable.

IDEA ONE

1

Break up the sitting.

The simplest change in this guide: don't stay in the chair for more than 30 minutes at a time. Stand up, move for two minutes, sit back down.

It sounds too small to matter. In one Australian trial, adults who broke up their sitting with two minutes of walking every 20 minutes had lower blood sugar and insulin levels after a meal than when they sat without a break.[5] It was a small study (19 overweight adults, measured over single days), so treat it as a pointer, not a promise. It lines up with the national guideline all the same: break up long periods of sitting.[1]

Make the cue do the work

Nobody remembers to stand up. Set it up once so you don't have to.

A repeating timer. Thirty minutes, on your phone or watch. Stand before you dismiss it.

A small glass of water. It runs out sooner, and it sends you for a walk later.

Tie it to something that happens anyway. Every time you hit send, or a call ends.

Put something out of reach. The charger, the printer, the bin. A few steps, many times a day.

What counts as a break



Two minutes is enough. Walk to the kitchen and back. Ten slow calf raises. Stand and stretch your hips. Take the bins out.

What doesn't count. Standing still to scroll your phone. The break is the movement, so move something: legs, hips, shoulders.

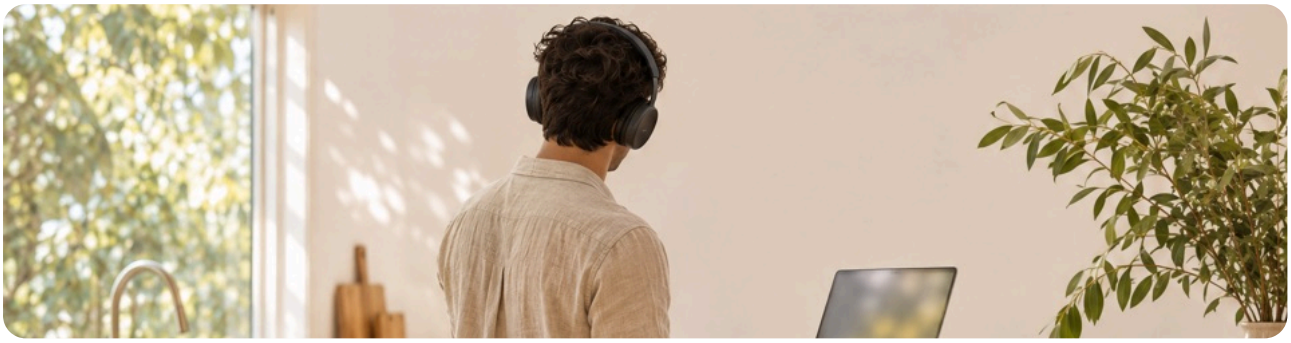
The arithmetic. A break every 30 minutes across a 7.5-hour desk day is 15 breaks. At two minutes each, that is 30 minutes out of the chair, with no single gap longer than it takes to make a tea.

IDEA TWO

2

Stack movement onto work you already do.

Not all work needs a chair. A lot of it only needs your ears and your voice.



THE WORK	WHAT IT NEEDS	HOW TO DO IT MOVING
Phone calls	Ears and voice	Walk. Around the house, the yard or the block. Headphones in, notes on your phone if you need them.
Video calls where you mostly listen	Ears, a camera	Stand, or pedal gently if you have a desk bike. Easy effort keeps your voice steady and your face still.
Reading and reviewing	Eyes	Stand at a bench with the laptop raised, or pedal at an easy pace.
Thinking and planning	Nothing but your head	Walk with a voice memo running. Many people find problems loosen up on a walk.
Email and admin	Hands, light focus	Standing or easy pedalling both work once you're used to it.
Deep work	Everything you've got	Sit. Do it properly. Stand up when the block ends.

Start with one call in three. Pick the ones where you mostly listen. On three hours of calls a day, that is an hour of movement you were already spending.

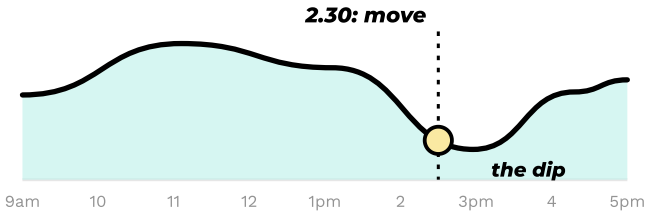
Keep it easy. If you're out of breath, you're going too hard for a call. Movement this light adds to a proper walk or ride. It doesn't replace one.

IDEA THREE

3

Get ahead of the 3pm slump.

The mid-afternoon dip is real, and it isn't a character flaw. Researchers call it the post-lunch dip. It shows up for many people even when they skip lunch, and a heavy, high-carbohydrate lunch tends to make it worse.[6] So expect it, and move before it arrives.



An illustration of the pattern, not measured data.

The 2.30 ten

Put a ten-minute block in your calendar for 2.30pm, every working day. Then do ten minutes of easy movement: a walk around the block, a few flights of stairs, an easy spin on a bike. You are not trying to train. You are trying to change state before the dip lands.



Four things that help

Step outside.

Take the ten minutes outdoors when you can. Daylight and a change of scene are part of the reset.

Eat lunch away from the desk.

A real break at midday, sitting somewhere else or not sitting at all, makes the afternoon feel like a second start.

Go lighter at lunch.

If the dip hits you hard, try a smaller lunch with less bread, rice or pasta for a week and see if it changes.[6]

Plan easy work for the dip.

Put admin, expenses and inbox clearing at 3pm. Keep the hard thinking for when you're sharp.

Try it for five days before you judge it. One afternoon tells you nothing. A working week tells you whether 3pm feels different. If your dip comes earlier, move the block earlier.

IDEA FOUR

4

Two short strength sessions a week.

Australia's guidelines ask adults for muscle strengthening activity on at least two days a week.[1] It's the part most desk workers skip, and it doesn't need a gym.

Here is a ten-minute routine you can do beside the desk in work clothes. Pick two days that aren't next to each other and do it straight after a meeting.

	**Sit to stand**	From your chair, stand up without using your hands, then lower slowly until you just touch the seat.	***10***
	**Desk push-up**	Hands on the edge of a sturdy desk or bench, body straight, chest to the edge and back.	***8 to 10***
	**Hip hinge**	Feet hip-width, soft knees, push your hips back and tip forward with a flat back, then stand tall.	***10***
	**Calf raise**	One hand on the desk for balance, rise onto your toes, pause, lower slowly.	***15***
	**Wall sit**	Back against a wall, slide down until your knees are bent, hold.	***30 seconds***

Go through the list twice. Rest for as long as you need between moves. Two rounds take about ten minutes.

Make it harder. Slow every lowering phase to a count of three, add a third round, or hold a full backpack.

Make it easier. Use your hands on the sit to stand, do the push-ups against a wall, hold the wall sit higher.

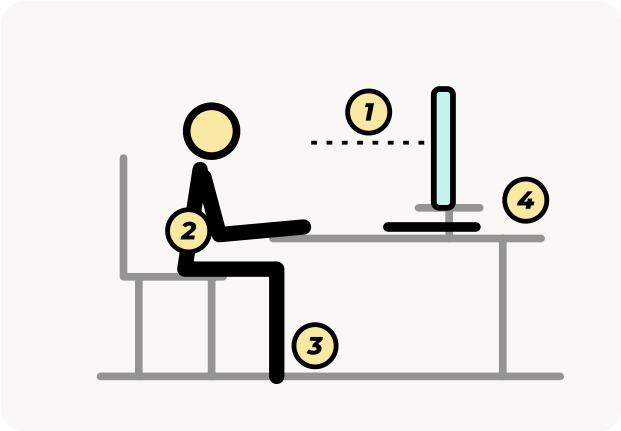
Stop if anything hurts beyond normal effort. If you have an injury or a health condition, check with your doctor or physio before starting.

Set the room up so moving is the easy option.

Willpower runs out by Wednesday. A room that nudges you lasts all year. Ten minutes on this checklist does more than a month of good intentions.

The desk

1. Top of the screen at about eye level, an arm's length away.
2. Elbows by your sides, bent at about a right angle when you type.
3. Feet flat on the floor or on a footrest.
4. Laptop on a stand, with a separate keyboard and mouse.



The room

- [ ] A second spot to work standing: a bench or a shelf.
- [ ] Headphones within reach, so any call can be a walking call.
- [ ] Shoes by the door, for the 2.30 ten.
- [ ] A small water glass, not a bottle.
- [ ] Clear floor beside the desk for the strength routine.

The calendar

- [ ] A repeating 30-minute timer during desk hours.
- [ ] A ten-minute block at 2.30pm every working day.
- [ ] Two ten-minute strength blocks a week.
- [ ] Meetings set to 25 and 50 minutes. The gap is your break.
- [ ] One call a week marked as a walking call.

If you share the house. Tell the people you live with what the timer is for. It's easier to keep a habit that someone else is expecting, and they may well join you for the walk.

PUT TOGETHER

What a workday looks like.

A sample day for someone at a desk from 8.30 to 5, with three hours of calls. Nothing is added to the calendar. The yellow dots are the moves.

8.15 **A lap of the block before you open the laptop**
The commute you no longer have, ten minutes of it.

8.30 **Deep work, sitting**
Timer on. Up for two minutes at 9.00 and 9.30.

10.00 **Team update, on your feet or pedalling**
You're listening. Thirty minutes of easy movement.

10.30 **Email and admin**
Two-minute breaks on the half hour.

12.30 **Lunch, away from the desk**
Then a ten-minute walk before you sit back down.

1.30 **Phone call, walking**
Headphones in. Twenty minutes around the yard or the street.

2.30 **The 2.30 ten**
Outside if you can. Back before the dip.

2.40 **Easy work through the dip**
Expenses, inbox, planning tomorrow.

3.50 **Strength routine (Tuesday and Thursday)**
Ten minutes beside the desk, straight after the 3pm meeting.

4.00 **Last block of work**
Breaks on the half hour, as before.

5.00 **Laptop closed**

The tally. 10 minutes before work, 30 on the update, 10 after lunch, 20 on the phone, 10 at 2.30 and about 26 in two-minute breaks. That is **106 minutes of movement** in a normal working day, and 116 on a strength day.

The five-day starter plan.

One new thing a day, and each day keeps the ones before it. Print this page and tick as you go.

DAY	THE ONE NEW THING	
Monday	**Set the 30-minute timer.** Every time it goes during desk hours, stand and move for two minutes. Count your breaks today: _____	☐
Tuesday	**Move through one call.** Pick a call where you mostly listen and take it walking, standing or pedalling. Which one: _____	☐
Wednesday	**The 2.30 ten.** Ten minutes of easy movement at 2.30pm, outdoors if you can. Notice how 3pm feels.	☐
Thursday	**The ten-minute strength routine.** Two rounds of the five moves on page 7, straight after a meeting.	☐
Friday	**Fix the room.** Work through the checklist on page 8, and set next week's calendar blocks before you log off.	☐

On Friday afternoon, three questions

Which of the five was easiest to keep?

_____

Which one made the biggest difference to how the day felt?

_____

Which one will you drop, and what would make it easier?

_____

From week two

Keep the ones that suited your work, and add a second strength day. Then add the piece this playbook can't give you: a longer walk, ride or swim on two or three days, at an effort that gets you breathing harder. That is what takes you to the 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate activity in the guidelines.[1]

TOOLS, HONESTLY

What helps, free to furniture.

Everything in this guide works with what you own today. Some tools make it easier to keep going, in this order.

TOOL	*COST*	*WHAT IT'S GOOD FOR*
A timer and headphones	Free	Breaks and walking calls. Start here, whatever else you buy.
A laptop stand and a bench	Low	A standing spot for reading and calls. Standing still is a change of position, not movement.
A standing desk	Medium	Changing position through the day without leaving your screens.
A desk bike	Higher	Moving while you work, for hours at a time: calls, reading, email. The option that turns idea two into a default.



Where we come in

We make the last one. The **BikeDesk Pro** is an exercise bike and a height-adjustable desk built as one unit, whisper-quiet so calls carry on as normal. The **BikeDesk OG** is the compact bike that slides under a standing or height-adjustable desk you already own.

Free shipping in Australia and a 2-year warranty. See both at **bikedesk.com.au**.

Sources

1. Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care. Physical activity and exercise guidelines for all Australians: for adults (18 to 64 years). health.gov.au
2. Fair Work Ombudsman. Annual leave. fairwork.gov.au
3. World Health Organization. Physical activity fact sheet, 2024 (31% of adults insufficiently active in 2022). who.int
4. Ekelund U et al. Does physical activity attenuate, or even eliminate, the detrimental association of sitting time with mortality? The Lancet. 2016;388:1302-1310.
5. Dunstan DW et al. Breaking up prolonged sitting reduces postprandial glucose and insulin responses. Diabetes Care. 2012;35(5):976-983.
6. Monk TH. The post-lunch dip in performance. Clinics in Sports Medicine. 2005;24(2):e15-e23.

General information, not medical advice. If you have a health condition or an injury, talk to your doctor first.