

**You be the judge: should my partner use a co-working space so I can have our flat to myself?**

## Level 1: Elementary

### 1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- Do you, or anyone you know, work from home?
- What do you think are the good and bad things about working from home?
- Do you think it's easy to live and work with the same person? Why or why not?

### 2 Key words

a. Use the words and phrases in bold in the article and match them to the definitions below.

1. the things you do regularly at the same time \_\_\_\_\_
2. making you feel angry \_\_\_\_\_
3. an office where different people work together, but for different companies \_\_\_\_\_
4. spending time with other people and having fun \_\_\_\_\_
5. the ability to do what you want \_\_\_\_\_
6. tries not to do something or stay away from something \_\_\_\_\_
7. being away from someone or something \_\_\_\_\_
8. people who live together in the same flat or apartment \_\_\_\_\_

b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity.

1. The new manager was good at \_\_\_\_\_ and quickly made friends with everyone in the office.
2. Living with \_\_\_\_\_ can be fun, but sometimes you need to talk about things like cleaning.
3. I like having the \_\_\_\_\_ to choose my own working hours.
4. Our team uses a large \_\_\_\_\_ in the centre of the city.
5. Sam \_\_\_\_\_ driving before 9am because the traffic is really bad.

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6. It's very \_\_\_\_\_ when people talk during a film at the cinema.
7. It's good to have some \_\_\_\_\_ between your work and your home life.
8. What's your daily morning \_\_\_\_\_ like? What time do you wake up?

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Interviews by Georgina Lawton

07 August, 2025

#### The prosecution: Claire

- 1 Before Xavier moved into my flat, I said we could live together, but that he needed to find somewhere else to work. I asked him to do this to help us have a good relationship.
- 2 My job is 90 per cent phone calls, so Xavier had to leave. Luckily, we are good **flatmates**, but I like to have different spaces for work, sleep and **socialising**. Xavier doesn't think like that. He can get up, start work and then leave the house.
- 3 It took Xavier a while to find a **co-working space**. Before that, he was hanging around at home, and it was **annoying**.
- 4 I like to talk about things that come up, but Xavier **avoids** things. But I think it's important to stick to a **routine**. It's important to have **separation** as a couple.

#### The defence: Xavier

- 5 I've never been to a co-working space; I always worked at home. I work better that way. I wake up, have a coffee and start work. I like starting early and finishing by 2 or 3pm, and having my own place to work.
- 6 Claire starts at 1pm, so I thought: great, I'll work in our flat until she needs the office, and pop into a co-working space sometimes. But then, after about 10 days, she said it wasn't working, that she wanted me to work outside of the flat all the time.
- 7 Claire said she wanted her space in the mornings. She doesn't talk much, but I am a morning person. I didn't like having to find a co-working space. I needed to work out what I liked and what I wanted out of one.
- 8 In some ways, working at the co-working space makes our lives more interesting, because I come home with news about my day. But sometimes I wish I had a bit more **freedom** to be in the flat because it's my home, too.

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### 3 Comprehension check

a. Read the statements below and choose who has said the opinions.

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. I work better when I can stay at home and not go to an office.           | Claire / Xavier |
| 2. When there's a problem, I like to discuss it.                            | Claire / Xavier |
| 3. I prefer to start work early in the morning and finish by the afternoon. | Claire / Xavier |
| 4. It's important for couples to have separate spaces during work time.     | Claire / Xavier |
| 5. Sometimes I feel unhappy that I can't work from home more often.         | Claire / Xavier |

### 4 Key language

a. Find the phrasal verbs below in the article. Then match them to the correct definitions.

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. hanging around | a. visit a place quickly and briefly                |
| 2. moved into     | b. went to live in a place, often with other people |
| 3. pop into       | c. understand; realise                              |
| 4. stick to       | d. staying in a place without any purpose           |
| 5. work out       | e. continue to follow a plan or decision            |

b. Complete each sentence with a phrasal verb from the previous activity.

1. I usually \_\_\_\_\_ the supermarket on my way home from work.
2. After university, my brother \_\_\_\_\_ his girlfriend's flat.
3. It took me some time to \_\_\_\_\_ how to use the new washing machine.
4. It can be difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ a study timetable.
5. I often see teenagers \_\_\_\_\_ the shopping centre in the evenings.

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### 5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions.

- Do you think Claire was right? Should Xavier work outside the flat? Why?
- Do you live with other people? What rules do you have in your home?

### 6 In your own words

- Go to the original article on The Guardian website and read the comments that people have posted about the dilemma between Claire and Xavier. Then write your own comment. Remember to give your personal opinion and offer any suitable advice that you think might help the couple solve the problem.
- Share your comments with your classmates. Decide whose advice you think is the most useful.