

DECOR

Home OFFICE

Do you dream of working from home but are too scared it will be difficult to set up a working space? Don't worry, this week KULI ROBERTS speaks to designer Ntaba Phili

WHETHER you're starting out on your own or just want to get away from the disrupting presence of colleagues, a home office is an economical and attractive option.

Durban-born Ntaba Phili, director and owner of NAP Designs, an interior architectural design company in Fourways, Johannesburg, has plenty of ideas on how to set up such a room.

"Designing a home office that's attractive and has an atmosphere you enjoy is vital, but one should never compromise on practicality," Phili says.

He believes the rationale behind setting up a practical and comfortable home office is that the happier you are in your environment, the more productive you will be.

Here are some of his tips:

SPACE

Choose the right space in your house by considering the size of your business and what you will be doing in its work area.

If space is a problem, you can use a screen in your dining room or



PRACTICAL ELEGANCE: Everything you need to work at home is close to hand in this practical and attractive home office

lounge to separate your working space from the rest.

If space is not a problem, make use of rooms around the home, such as a spare room, loft, cellar or the area under the stairs.

If you must meet people, spruce up your garden with chairs, a garden cottage or even a prefabricated office.

Make sure it's positioned on a quiet part of the property, far from a main road and preferably with its own entrance, so that it does not disturb your home life.

SITTING PRETTY

According to Phili, a comfortable chair is one of the most important buys for a home office.

"Never just use chairs from your house because you will not be using them for the same length of time and purpose," he says.

"Since you spend long hours in front of your computer, you should get a chair with good support because you do not want to develop neck and back problems."

Buy a proper office chair, preferably an ergonomically designed one, that will support your body, especially your back.

He recommends the Nexus mid-back from NAP, which costs between R1 000 and R1 500, depending on finish.



STYLISH DESIGNER: Ntaba Phili believes space utilisation should reflect who you are. Picture by Tlaai Khuale

WINDOW

According to Phili the hottest colours for any office at the moment are reds, though most people still choose muted tones because they give more light and create the illusion of space.

Do remember, even though you might be working from home, to make sure you separate the space you create for work from that you use in your private life – and express your personal tastes because this is your own space.

A TABLE OR DESK?

You need a stable work surface for your home office.

Whether you choose a desk, easily assembled systems that can fold away, a kitchen top or a pair of trestles with a wooden or glass top (even an old door will do), make sure you have a strong and spacious surface.





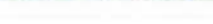
LIGHT

You need adequate and natural light, so use a room with at least one

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