

Where Is as Important as *Why, When, and What*

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Where? A home office? You bet! The solitary learner and solitary instructor need a place to learn or teach—a home office. The home office is a growth area of the 21st century—more are working from home, and many students are learning from home.

Just what constitutes a home office—is it the couch and 50-inch HDTV? Is it in the garage? Or, can it be my smartphone and the kitchen table. Well, none of these options are going to work, especially when most online courses are designed for the student to spend about 8 hours per week for each course they are taking at a distance. The home office, and home classroom should probably be a dedicated place—a place with “stuff.”

Here is a list of what seems to be the consensus of what should be in the home office—the Big 20, if you would.

1. A modern computer with monitor
2. Software—MS Office at a minimum
3. A desk
4. A chair
5. Lighting—ceiling and desktop
6. A high speed internet connection—a cable modem, for example

7. A wireless router
8. Telephone with speaker and cordless handset
9. Electrical outlets with surge protectors
10. An all-in-one printer (copier, printer, fax, scanner)
11. Back-up drive
12. Uninterruptable power supply
13. File cabinet
14. Storage
15. Fire-proof safe
16. Paper shredder
17. USB webcam with built-in microphone
18. HDTV connected to cable
19. Supplies
20. Bookshelves

What a list, and oops, we forgot the most important item—a room with doors that can be closed. The distractions in the home are too powerful to be ignored; closed doors keep cats, kids, noise, and the home part of the home office outside.

And finally, as Theodore Roosevelt said, “When you play, play hard; when you work, don’t play at all.” So, when in your home office, don’t play at all—or do the laundry.