

# Bringing Nature into The Workplace Toolkit

We know getting out in nature is good for our mental health. But what do you do when you spend the majority of the day behind your computer?

There are some small changes you can make to bring more nature into your workplace, whether you are working from home or not!

**Get**  
**Back**   
**to Nature**



...this short  
guide will give  
you tips  
to help you  
connect with  
nature in the  
workplace.

# Let there be light!

Promoting the use of natural light in the workplace has been found to have a positive impact on employees job performance and satisfaction.



## The benefits

- Improves sleep by an average of 45 minutes.
- Reduces the risk of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which can impact sickness absence.
- Increases concentration and creativity.
- Improved productivity and performance.
- Reduced stress levels.

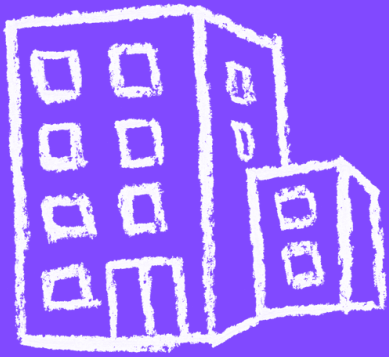
## Ideas

- Positioning desks near windows and opening blinds provides access to sunlight.
- Add skylights or larger windows.
- Increase the amount of mirrors in a room.
- Use lighter colours paint colours.

## Alternatives

While we all crave natural light, not every office has windows, here are some alternatives:

- Use softer LED lighting
- Glass partitions to increase exposure to lighting
- Have open spaces
- Use different types of lighting i.e. pendants, scones, table and floor lamps



# Introduce plants into the office

## Get some houseplants

Research suggests that indoor plants help to rid the air of common toxins and indoor pollutants.

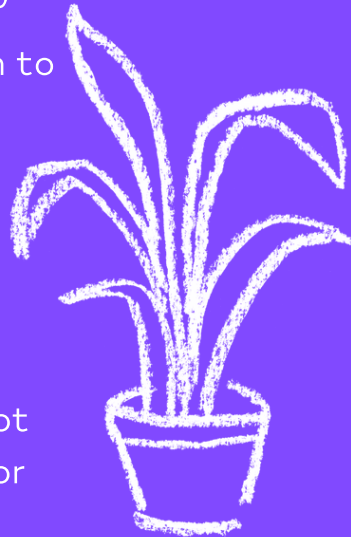
Plantlife in the workplace can improve concentration levels and reduce mental fatigue by 38%.

Indoor plants add colour and liveliness to your space, improving productivity.

Having plants inside has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety.

Research suggests that plants can reduce sickness absence levels by up to 50%.

Shared office plants can bring staff together and are a great gift, why not give a colleague the gift of a plant for their desk?



## Easy to care for plants

Many plants are forgiving enough to survive less-than-ideal growing conditions.

- Spider plants can be put up high.
- Succulents, cactus or bamboo are great desk plants.
- Fresh flowers if rotated out frequently, will bring colour to your work space.

## It's ok to fake it!

If living plants won't make it, you can fake it.

Fake plants have come a long way, it is often difficult to tell the difference.

We suggest living plants wherever possible but, if you have dark corners or harsh/hot areas in your workplace, swapping your plant life for some fake ones is perfectly ok!

# Explore Nature-Inspired Décor

Workplaces need basic office infrastructure for staff to work their best. But it doesn't have to be plastic or boring!

## Natural Materials

**Using natural materials is a way of bringing nature inside...**

Natural materials like wood and stone can help mimic the outdoors.

Wood, has natural imperfections which makes each piece unique and beautiful promoting creativity.

Laminate flooring offers the appearance and warmth of wood making an office welcoming.



## Think Colour

**Colours can have a huge impact on our mood...**

Research has shown natural colours such as yellow, green, blue and brown have a positive impact on productivity and creativity

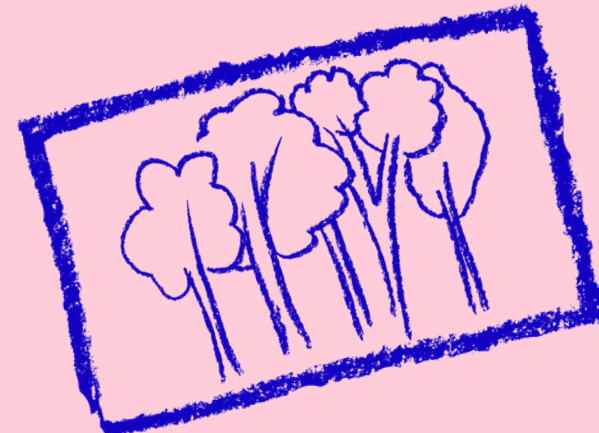
Office colours are a simple change, which can make a big effect on employee wellbeing and reducing absenteeism.

For offices that don't have windows, wallpaper or murals with a forest or ocean print can be used to give staff eye breaks if they can't actually see the outside during a work day.

## Other Decor ideas

Take pictures of your places in nature.

- Use them as backgrounds for your phone and computer screen.
- Print them out and frame them on your walls
- Add to the above by making it a theme on your desk for instance, seashells, pinecones, rocks etc.



# The 5 senses and nature in the workplace

We experience the world through our senses, here are some ways we can connect with nature through them even in the workplace.

## 1.Touch

Touch is a great way to ground ourselves when feeling stressed, having natural objects on our desks that remind us of nature such as pinecones are great for this.

## 2.Smell

Our sense of smell is connected to our memories and can help us relax, scented candles or incense can remind us of a afternoon at the beach or walk in the forest. If candles are too strong a scent try using natural woods.

## 3.Taste

Like our sense of smell, taste is also connected to our memories and can be used to ground us, eating vegetables, nuts and fruit can remind us of nature, the bonus is it's also healthy for you!

## 4.Sound



Listening to natural sounds, like recordings or apps that play birdsong, wind, ocean waves or rainfall sounds can help our concentration and productivity.

## 5.Sight

Being able to see nature or colours that remind us of nature has a positive impact on our wellbeing. Try decorating your desk with houseplants or images of your favourite nature spots.

If these examples don't work for you. Don't blame yourself, we all connect with nature in different ways. Find what works best for you!