

# PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

August/September 2021

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harms the economy**

**How to stay focused  
in a noisy office**

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from home or going  
back to the office?**

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the workplace: are  
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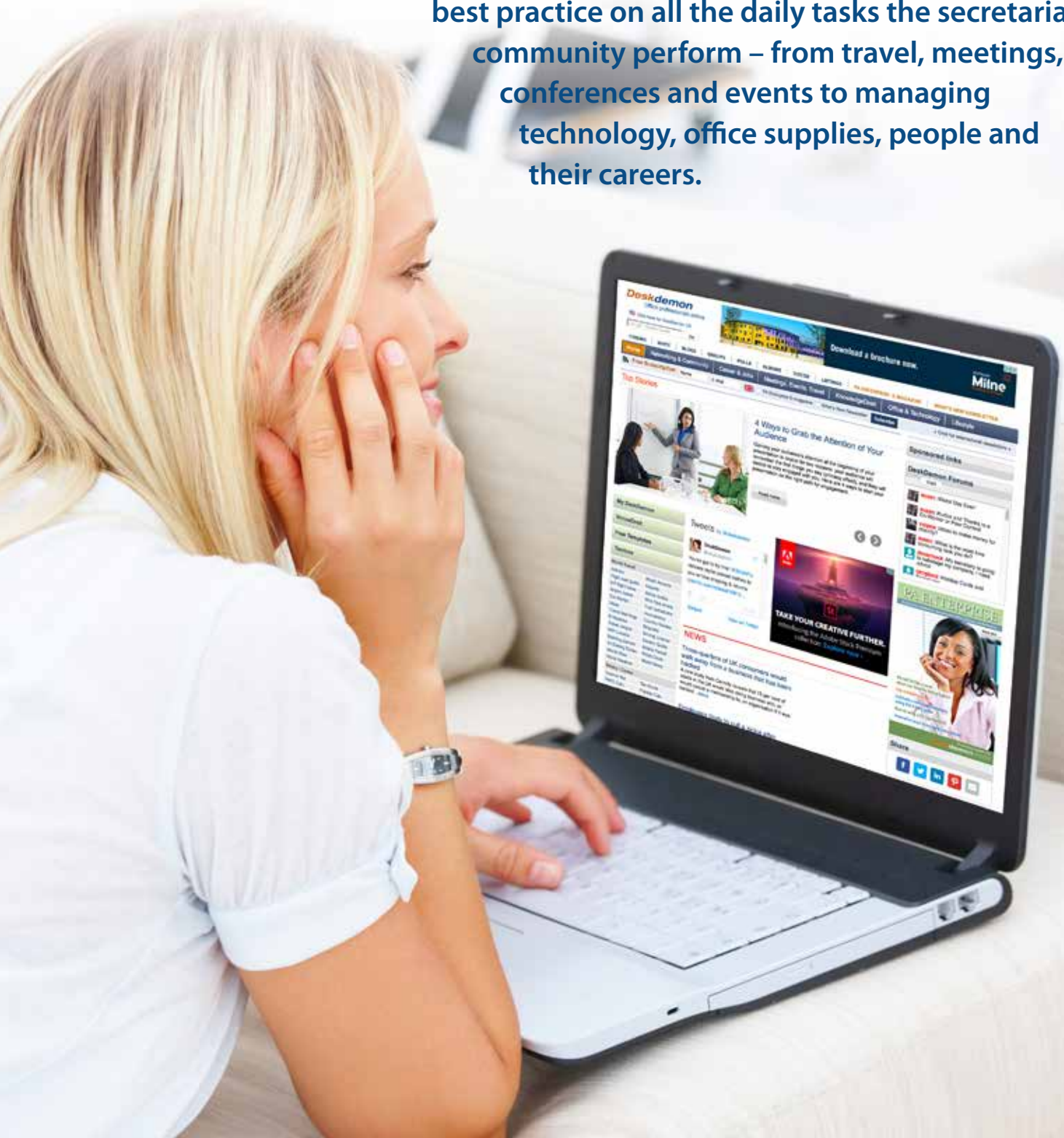
**Businesses urged  
to rethink food  
preparation and coffee  
free spaces by smell  
loss charity Abscent**

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## PA ENTERPRISE MAGAZINE

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# Take action now, or it will never change: gender pay gap harms the economy, business leaders warned

*'If we are going to make any progress, then we need full transparency about pay. If companies won't introduce it then we call upon the Government to enforce it'*

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Business leaders have been warned to "take action now" to close the gender pay gap, or prepare to see the economy suffer.

Campaigners urged caution after new research revealed that female directors at the UK's biggest companies are still being paid a fraction of the amount of their male colleagues.

On average, the pay for a FTSA 100 female director is £237,000 – just over a quarter of the £875,900 paid to their male counterparts, analysis by the New Street Consulting Group found.

The figures indicate that the gender pay gap is far worse at blue-chip companies and in the overall population.

Female directors are paid 73% less, compared to women in the broader jobs market who are paid 15% less than men in the same roles.

"Unless we take action now, things will never change," says international leadership trainer and executive career coach Hira Ali. "Male allies need to be transparent with female colleagues about the pay you are getting for the same position. In this way, female colleagues have a better idea of how to negotiate.

"Organisations need to stop asking what the previous salary was and then offer a salary bracket instead so they know what the offer is. If they don't know, they won't negotiate.

"Women are getting short-changed. And it has to stop."

Alison Henderson, policy and research manager at the Fawcett Society, a charity campaigning for gender equality and women's rights, said that the "disappointing figures" reflected that, despite progress made on pay gap reporting by the Government in recent years, it was "still thriving in the boardroom of some of our country's most influential companies".

"There are not enough women in top roles and those who have made it are all too often paid less than men," she said.

"We need to see more women in positions of power and we need organisations to take decisive action where they have persistent pay gaps.

"It isn't enough just to report data, employers must publish action plans showing how they will tackle their pay gap and then do just that.

"McKinsey data shows that closing the gender pay gap is not only good for individuals and businesses, it will also benefit our economy to the tune of £150bn."

Dr Wanda Wyporska, the executive director of The Equality Trust, called on the Government to enforce full pay transparency at top companies.

She said it was a "global disgrace" that women are



still paid less than men – even when they are at the “top of their game”.

“It’s even more insulting, when we think about how women have balanced care and home schooling this year and suffered higher rates of redundancies and job losses,” Dr Wyporska said.

“If we are going to make any progress, then we need full transparency about pay. If companies won’t introduce it then we call upon the Government to enforce this.”

By Jenn Selby [inews.co.uk](https://www.inews.co.uk)

# Give UK workers four more bank holidays a year, says TUC

*Workers in England and Wales are being fobbed off with a “stingy” number of bank holidays, say trades unions.*



They get eight public holidays a year, which is four fewer than the EU average and half the number in Japan.

The umbrella body for unions, the TUC, is calling for a new public holiday between September and Christmas.

It would be “a great way to thank working Britain for getting us through these tough times,” TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady said.

“The August Bank Holiday will be a welcome break for everyone working hard to get us through the pandemic - especially those on the front line,” said Ms O’Grady.

“But after August, there’s no national holiday until Christmas. And that’s because the number of holidays we get is so stingy compared to other nations.”

The TUC says all UK workers should get at least 12 public holidays and is calling for a wider debate on the issue.

“It’s time for a national conversation - when should our new holidays be? What might they celebrate?” added Ms O’Grady.

“An autumn holiday to break the long stretch to Christmas would be a good start.”

## Nine things you might not know about bank holidays

Everyone loves a long weekend. An extra 24 hours to switch off, watch three-part specials on the telly, supervise a slow roast or, if you're lucky, a barbecue whilst hiding under a golf umbrella.

But who invented these extra days off? Why are they called bank holidays? And why are there not one, but two, in May? Read on for some surprising facts.

### 1. The August bank holiday wasn't always late

This August bank holiday was initially introduced as a way to give us all a chance to make the most of the summer. But it didn't always fall on the last Monday of the month. Up until 1971 it always took place on the first Monday of August. It was eventually moved as it clashed with the traditional two week shut down that many companies went through in the summer.

### 2. We used to have 33 of them

Up until 1834 there were 33 public holidays in the U.K., consisting of saint's days and religious festivals. But some spoil sport considered this to be excessive, so in 1834 the number was reduced to just four.

### 3. Yes, we have a banker to thank for them

It was liberal politician and banker Sir John Lubbock who authored the Bank Holidays Act of 1871, which made these four public holidays official.

### 4. They used to be called St Lubbock's Days

For a while some called the first bank holidays "St Lubbock's Days" after the banker Sir John Lubbock. Funnily enough that didn't stick. It was rumoured that Sir John Lubbock was so keen on cricket he chose the bank holiday dates to fall on the days when village matches were played in his home county! True or not, the masses were ecstatic with the holidays.

### 5. The place in the world with the most public holidays?

The country with the highest number of public holidays is India, with a whopping 21 days! In comparison, England and Wales only have eight public holidays in total: New Year, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, late May bank holiday, August bank holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

### 6. We almost have the least amount of public holidays in the world

The only country with fewer public holidays than us is Mexico, coming in with just seven days. ¡Ay, caramba!

### 7. May Day bank holiday was almost moved to October

In 2011 parliament debated replacing the May Day bank holiday with a different holiday in October. This would have spread out the bank holidays a bit more evenly throughout the year. These plans were scrapped.

### 8. There is a second bank holiday in May originally because of Whit Monday

The second bank holiday in the month of May exists because it used to be held on the day-off in the Christian calendar after Whit Sunday or Pentecost. Whit Sunday always falls seven Sundays past Easter Sunday. Since 1971 however, this bank holiday has always been held on the last Monday of the month.

### 9. The second May bank holiday wasn't officially named

When the second bank holiday in May was moved to the last Monday in May back in 1971, it was never given an official name. Unlike the May Day bank holiday, or the August bank holiday, this holiday tends to either be called the Spring bank holiday or the Late May bank holiday. Whatever you call it, it's a good opportunity to take some away from your normal routine.

# Returning to the workplace? Here's how to stay focused in a noisy office

*With some offices set to reopen as restrictions ease, more of us may soon be working from somewhere other than the kitchen table. While a return to the office may sound thrilling for some, this isn't going to be the case for everyone.*

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A 2020 poll from YouGov found that most workers want to continue to work from home in some capacity after restrictions lift. But with news that some firms have requested staff to return to the office from September (in some form or another), office life will be on the horizon for at least some of us.

For many people, a return to the office may also mean a return to shared workspaces, which may take a bit of adjustment after so long working at home. This may be particularly the case if your at home office has been fairly quiet.

Shared working spaces can mean more interruptions and noise to contend with. And this can increase feelings of stress and frustration. Research, for example, shows that when we get interrupted and have to unexpectedly suspend what we're doing to complete a separate activity – such as have an impromptu meeting with a colleague – our memory for the original task can decay. This can make it harder to pick up where we left off when we resume working.

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Interruptions also increase the chance of errors and omissions creeping in to our work. This can result in inaccuracies or more time needed to rectify those mistakes.

Studies show that we don't even have to stop and





attend to the distraction in the environment for it to impair our performance. Even when trying to block out background sound, mental disruption still arises. Simple tasks such as mental arithmetic are impaired by acoustically varying sounds – such as speech and music – as they clash with our brain’s ability to process information in a certain order.

Similarly, tasks that involve understanding the meaning of language, such as reading and writing, are more impaired by sounds that contain language – such as speech and music with lyrics – due to a clash of processing semantic information. So while it may feel lovely to be back surrounded with your colleagues again, it might initially be a little harder to get your head down if lots of conversations are going on around you.

While ignoring interruptions or background

sound altogether isn’t always possible, research shows there are things you can do to help to keep disturbances to a minimum.

### Prepare your space

Background sound can reduce performance on some tasks by up to 50%, so it’s worth thinking about what might help to keep this to a minimum.

If you really need to concentrate on a task, think about swapping desks or moving to a quieter area. If this isn’t possible, then noise-cancelling headphones may help block out background noise. If nothing else, wearing headphones sends a message to co-workers that you are less open to conversation and therefore less likely to be interrupted.

*Continued* ►



### Plan for interruptions

If you do need to break off, or get pulled away, try to find a natural pause in your work. Research shows that dealing with interruptions between tasks is less disruptive than stopping what you are doing in the moment and trying to pick it up again later. You might want to quickly note down key points that were foremost in your mind, or leave the mouse cursor on the position reached in an article. These cues can help you to pick up where you left off. Even just pausing to make a mental note of what you were about to do next, can be beneficial when you come to resume.

### Consider music (depending what you're doing)

Research shows that it's easier to work in quieter spaces, but some people feel that listening to music can be beneficial. Research has shown, for example, that if your task is design-based – such as product design or architecture – and if the task you are working on requires you to mentally

rotate objects, then listening to your favourite music before you start can improve your performance for a short period of time.

But for tasks that involve remembering things in order or understanding the meaning of text – such as mental arithmetic and reading and writing – your brain will process background music as distraction. It doesn't matter if it's music you like or dislike, or even whether the music is loud or quiet – studies show that you will be more prone to making errors.

Ultimately, heading back to the workplace is going to mean an adjustment period and some level of compromise when it comes to noise levels and interruptions. But, with many companies taking a flexible approach to remote and office working, hopefully you'll be able to find a balance (and noise level) that suits you wherever you are.

[theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com)

# Should I be working from home or going back to the office?

*People in England are no longer being asked to work from home. Instead the Prime Minister Boris Johnson is recommending a “gradual return to work”.*

---

However, in the rest of the UK, people are still being advised to keep working at home where possible. Why does the government want people back at work in England?

Employers in England were able to start planning for staff who have been able to work from home during the pandemic to return to the workplace after Covid restrictions were lifted on 19 July.

The government wants to help companies which have struggled during lockdown, such as those in city centres which rely on office staff.

It's also keen to cut the cost of paying furloughed staff by encouraging businesses to reopen.

- The new rules in Scotland, Wales and the rest of the UK

*Continued* ►





- Fewest people on furlough since pandemic began
- Empty shop numbers rise as Covid continues to bite

### What are the work-from-home rules around the rest of the UK?

Most of the Covid restrictions in Scotland were lifted on 9 August as the country moved beyond the level zero rules which had been in place since 19 July.

Physical distancing rules and the limits on gatherings have been removed, and all venues are allowed to reopen.

However, the Scottish government is continuing to advise people to work from home where possible as part of a “gradual approach” to returning to offices.

Most Covid restrictions in Wales were lifted on

7 August. Limits on meeting others have been removed, and all businesses can reopen.

However, individual businesses - including offices and places open to the public such as pubs and restaurants - must carry out Covid risk assessments, and minimise the risk of coronavirus exposure to staff or customers, or face enforcement action.

The Welsh government is also still advising that people should continue to work from home wherever possible.

Northern Ireland’s guidance to work from home where possible remains in place for now.

### Can I ask to keep working from home?

You can ask, but your employer doesn’t have to agree.

However, the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) - which represents HR

professionals - says there could be much greater freedom and flexibility in how, when and where people work in future.

“People generally want a mix of workplace and home working, and the possibility of more choice in their working routines, meaning hybrid working can provide an effective balance for many workers.”

The CIPD adds that the lifting of Covid restrictions “shouldn’t signal a mass return to workplaces,” and “it should be down to individual organisations, consulting with their people, to agree working arrangements”.

### What does my employer have to do to keep me safe?

Despite the removal of Covid restrictions in England, businesses still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business.

The government’s Working Safely guidance still recommends that employers carry out health-and-safety risk assessments, and take reasonable steps to minimise the risks identified.

Some businesses may choose to keep some of the measures they previously had in place, such as:

- Minimising unnecessary visitors
- Ensuring social distancing
- Frequent cleaning
- Extra hand washing facilities
- One-way systems to minimise contact
- Using back-to-back or side-to-side working (rather than face-to-face)
- Staggering start/end times

The legal requirement to wear a face covering in England has ended. But government guidance says it “expects and recommends” the continued wearing of masks in crowded areas such as public transport.

Masks remain compulsory on public transport and in certain other circumstances in Scotland,

Wales and Northern Ireland.

Regular lateral flow testing for Covid is already widespread in many sectors, and anyone in England or Scotland can also order tests directly.

There’s more detailed guidance for specific industries including construction, hospitality and manufacturing.

Similar advice is available for employers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

If employees feel unsafe, they can contact their local authority, Citizens Advice or the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The HSE has carried more than 200,000 inspections to check companies are following Covid rules, and can force firms to take action if not.

The CIPD says that employers should continue to ensure they have the necessary measures in place to give confidence to workers that their workplace is safe.

“This can include changes to desk spaces, shift patterns to help workers avoid busy times on public transport and use of one-way systems to reduce staff contact while the risk of infection remains,” it says.

### What are my rights if I am in a vulnerable group?

Previous advice that millions of “clinically extremely vulnerable” people should shield, has now ended.

Many continue to work from home, but if your job cannot be done remotely, your employer can ask you to return to the workplace.

However, they still have a responsibility to keep you safe, so you should raise any specific concerns you have about going back.

In addition, if you are disabled, your employer has an extra responsibility to make and pay for “reasonable adjustments”.

BBC news

# Businesses urged to rethink food preparation and coffee free spaces by smell loss charity Abscent

*Wake up but don't smell the coffee! As workers prepare to return to shared offices, the UK's leading smell loss charity, AbScent, warns that employers must take loss of sense of smell and taste seriously and plan for its impact on the workplace.*

More than 3.85 million people in the UK are currently affected by smell loss, which manifests primarily in two forms: Anosmia is the inability to smell or taste to varying degrees of severity; and parosmia which distorts sense of smell so that innocuous items may smell foul e.g. coffee smells like sewage, and people may smell things that are not there e.g. cigarettes.

Chrissi Kelly, Founder, AbScent, said; "We've all worked in offices where we smell people heating lunches in the microwave, or strong vats of wafting coffee. For the millions of people with parosmia this is going to be unbearable and nauseating. Hot drinks, hot food, and snacks prepared in a microwave may well smell like rotting meat, urine, or faeces to someone with parosmia. This is a distortion of olfactory perception and can be unbearable to the person experiencing it. When foods are hot or heating, the perception of the odour is greater than at room temperature. Thus tea kitchens and food preparation areas can be great sources of distress for parosmics. For those experiencing smell problems, there can be disastrous repercussions for mental health, happiness, and relationships."

But she adds; "Businesses can help their employees by preparing to support people with anosmia and parosmia by taking simple and straightforward steps." Here is a guide to the 5 things that businesses can do to support people in an office environment.



## 1. Coffee Free Spaces

Coffee is the most reported problem that parosmics experience with people smelling coffee as rotten meat, sulphur or faeces. Hot coffee is the worst offender and the smell is worse than the taste. Some people can tolerate a cold brew coffee from the fridge. We advise creating dedicated 'Coffee Free Spaces' where no hot coffee is brewed or consumed.

## 2. Move microwaves into kitchens / closed areas

Nothing could be worse for a parosmic than an environment where people are openly heating food. Whether it is leftovers or ready meals the wafting smells of an office microwave will be horrific for someone suffering with parosmia.

People report a generic smell associated with the microwave which often triggers nausea. It is also frequently reported to smell like urine. Even something we consider delicious like heating popcorn will have the same awful smell and nausea triggers. We recommend removing microwaves from shared workspaces and placing them in enclosed rooms. People with parosmia should ideally be seated far away from, or if possible on another floor from food production.



### 3. Open Dialogue and communication

You should create an open dialogue with your employees and let them know that you understand the seriousness of smell and taste loss. Persisting problems can be associated with Long Covid, or can continue on their own when a person is otherwise completely fit and healthy. Acknowledge that person's experience and support them by creating a food free environment for them to work in. Include your HR team and make it known that you support people with smell loss.

### 4. Identifying and supporting jobs that require smell

Many jobs require a specific use of the sense of smell and in these cases employers should be aware of any safety issues which might prevent a person carrying out their duties. Jobs that require smell in day-to-day function include; Plumber, carer, emergency response, fire service, Chefs, food service, wine industry and many others – some of which may not be obvious.

### 5. Smell Training and support

Some people may not have sought help or even recognise / articulate their problems. AbScent has

a huge number of free resources, recommended by the NHS, to help people deal with everyday life. Businesses are encouraged to share these with their workforces. Some people's sense of smell will return on its own, and some people can be helped with Smell Training. Smell Training is proven to improve sense of smell and is clinically developed to exercise the olfactory process. AbScent's smell training kits are available in three varieties, and can be exported to the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. 100% of proceeds directly support the work of the charity.

Smell loss includes a broad range of conditions including anosmia (total loss of smell), hyposmia (partial loss of smell), parosmia (distortion of smell) , and phantosmia (phantom smells). AbScent has an unrivalled resource of trusted information delivered by a distinguished advisory board and working with the latest scientific and clinical evidence. AbScent advocates to increase understanding and raise awareness of the conditions and their impacts supporting research into smell conditions.

**For hints and tips about how smell training please visit [abscent.org/learn-us/how-smell-train](https://abscent.org/learn-us/how-smell-train).**

**[abscent.org](https://abscent.org)**

# E10 fuel has officially hit UK petrol pumps

*The new E10 fuel may now be available at a petrol pump near you. Great news for the environment, but is it good for your motor?*



The new fuel – known as E10 – aims to cut CO2 emissions by over 750,000 tonnes per year. This is equal to taking 350,000 cars off the road.

The cleaner petrol is part of the plan to reach the carbon neutral goal by 2050.

But the new fuel may not be compatible with older models and could potentially cause damage.

So what is E10? And is it compatible with your car?

## What is E10?

E10 uses a higher amount of ethanol than regular petrol.

Now, petrol contains up to 5% ethanol – known as E5. This will increase to 10%, hence the name E10.

The higher ethanol content means E10 is cleaner than regular petrol. It should have a big impact on bringing down carbon emissions.

The UK is late to the E10 party though. Countries such as Belgium, Finland, France and Germany are already using this fuel.

## What is Ethanol?

Ethanol is an alcohol-based fuel. It's made by the fermentation of different plants, like sugarcane and grains.



Ethanol is classed as “Partially atmospherically carbon-neutral”. This means that the carbon produced by using the fuel is balanced out in some way.

In this case, the plants that make ethanol absorb carbon dioxide. This balances the carbon dioxide produced by cars when they use it.

### Why are we switching to E10?

Transport represents 24% of emissions, so the pressure is on for the government to find clean alternatives.

Grant Shapps believes that the new fuel will play a part in reducing carbon emissions. He comments:

“We’re going further and faster than ever to cut emissions from our roads, cleaning up our air as we accelerate towards a zero-emission transport future.

“Although more and more motorists are driving electric vehicles, there are steps we can take to reduce emissions from the millions of vehicles already on our roads.

“The small switch to E10 petrol will help drivers across the country reduce the environmental impact of every journey, as we build back greener.”

### Will E10 affect my car?

The path to a carbon neutral UK never did run smooth. It’s thought that a number of vehicles, like cars made in the early 2000s and classic cars, may not be compatible with E10.

These vehicles will continue using E5, which will still be used in premium or ‘super’ grade fuel.

If you put E10 in a non-compatible car it should still run. But problems with the seals, plastics, and metals could develop over time.

It’s unclear as to whether you’d be

able to claim on your car insurance for this, so it’s worth speaking to your insurer about what you’re covered for.

Some have also said they have had trouble starting their vehicle when using E10. People think this is because it’s less stable.

You can check if your vehicle is compatible with E10 fuel using the E10 compatibility checker.

### Will E10 be more expensive than normal petrol?

Early forecasts in 2019 suggested that the cost of E10 wouldn’t exceed the current price of fuel by more than 1p per litre.

Motorists with cars that aren’t compatible will be able to use premium fuel brands – but at premium prices.

In 2019, Financial Secretary to the Treasury Jesse Norman commented:

“This government is ambitiously seeking to reduce the UK’s reliance on imported fossil fuels and cut carbon emissions from transport. But drivers of older vehicles should not be hit hard in the pocket as a result.”

The government has suggested a reduction in vehicle excise duty to compensate for older models having to use premium fuel.

For more information on the introduction of E10, visit [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK).



# Payslip checker – your payslips explained

*Money might not always equal happiness, but an accurate payslip does...  
If you've recently moved to a new job, it's essential to check that any deductions (such as tax and insurance) are being paid properly on your behalf. Otherwise, you could be left with a very disappointing payslip.*

## What is a payslip?

A payslip is a summary of your earnings and deductions issued by your employer on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis – depending on how often you get paid.

What is a payroll number?

A payroll number is how the payroll department at your company distinguish between each employee. Your payroll number will usually be found on your payslip.

## Understanding your payslip

Your payslip can include a range of information which could vary from company to company, but there are five things it must always display.

These are:

- **Gross pay** – this is your full pay before any tax or National Insurance has been taken off, including any bonuses and commission.
- **Variable deductions** – this refers to the deductions that could change each payday, and will show the amount that's being paid. It includes tax and National Insurance.
- **Fixed deductions** – these are the deductions which don't change from payday to payday. An employer doesn't have to give details of what these deductions are for, as long as they give a separate statement with these details at least

once a year. It could include union dues.

- **The total amount of take-home pay** – the amount displayed is after all deductions have been taken off.
- **The amount and method for any part payment of wage** – this could refer to separate figures of a cash payment and the balance credited to a bank account.

## What else will you see on your payslip?

The format of your payslip will vary from company to company, and what's included will depend on your individual earnings, benefits, and deductions.

Here are eight additional pieces of information you may spot on yours, and what they mean:

**Your payroll number** – Some companies use payroll numbers to identify individuals on their payroll.

**The tax period** – The number here represents the tax period for that payslip. For example, if you are paid monthly, this would translate as: 01 = April and 12 = March.

**Your tax code** – This indicates the rate you're taxed at.

**Your National Insurance (NI) number** – Your NI number confirms that you're eligible for work in the UK.

123456	Mr John Smith	Pay Day 01/01/2016			
Company Name Ltd	Tax Week 12	CNPAYROLL			
<b>Earnings</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Deductions</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Basic Pay			2,008.33	Tax (code 4321A)	233.33
				NI (category A)	169.40
				Pension	50.00
				Student Loan Plan X	10.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>Earnings</b>	<b>2,008.33</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Deductions 442.73</b>
<b>Running Totals</b>			<b>Amount Paid</b>		
<b>Tax Year to Date</b>		<b>Accumulations</b>		Earnings	2,500.00
Gross Pay	25,000.00	Basic Pay	25,000.00	Deductions	452.73
Taxable Pay	14,000.00	Era Pension FL	50.00	Net Pay	1,620.60
Tax	2,799.96			B/Forward	
<b>This Employment</b>				Amount Paid	1,620.60
Gross Pay	25,000.00			C/forward	
Taxable Pay	14,000.00			Payment method	BACS
Tax	2,799.96			<b>Employer's Contributions</b>	
Employer's NI	169.40			NI (category A)	100
Employer's NI	169.40			<b>Annual Salary</b> 25,000.00	
<b>Previous Employment</b>				<b>NI Number</b> AB 12 34 56 C	
Taxable Pay				<b>Amount Paid</b> 1,620.60	
Tax					

**Expenses** – If you're owed any expenses (e.g. travel costs or company lunches), these will be displayed here.

**Pensions** – If you're paying towards a workplace pension that your company has set up or arranged access to, the amount you're contributing will be shown.

**Student loan** – If you're making student loan repayments, this will be shown on your payslip.

**Workplace benefits** – If you get health insurance or have a company car through an employment scheme, these will be listed on your wage slip.

## Your payslip explained

Does your payslip contain lots of confusing lingo? Fear not – here's some answers to commonly

asked payslip questions, to help you figure out what those words and figures really mean:

- **What's a tax code?** This code tells your employer what rate you should be taxed at. To find out how much income you can earn in a year before you need to pay tax, simply add a zero to the number shown. For example, Tax code 1000L means you can earn £10,000 a year before paying any Income Tax. The most common letter is L, which just means your tax rate is at the standard rate.
- **What is total gross pay?** Your gross pay is what you've earned before any deductions have been taken off.
- **What is total net pay?** Your net pay is what you actually receive into your bank account once all the deductions have been taken off.

- **What is the meaning of year-to-date (YTD) in a salary slip?** This describes how much you've earned so far this year.
- **What does payment method mean on a payslip?** Most employers will pay your earnings directly into your bank account. This is done through a system called Banker's Automated Clearing Services, or BACS for short – which is what you'll normally see on your payslip.

## UK payslip abbreviations

### **BACS – Bankers Automated Clearing Services**

A payment scheme that processes financial transactions electronically.

### **BA/BP – Bereavement Allowance/Bereavement Payment**

A weekly allowance given to widowers or surviving civil partners.

### **CHB – Child Benefit**

An allowance given to parents with children under 16.

### **CTC – Child Tax Credits**

An allowance given to parents with children under 16.

### **ET – Earnings Threshold**

The amount you can earn before being required to pay tax.

### **HMRC – Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs**

The department of government responsible for tax collection.

### **LEL – Lower Earnings Limit**

The amount you can earn before being required to pay National Insurance.

### **NIC – National Insurance Contributions**

A sum deducted from your salary, in addition to tax.

### **PAYE – Pay As You Earn**

A tax deduction taken from HMRC.

### **PILON – Payment in Lieu of Notice**

A compensation payment that covers the notice

period of an employee who has been terminated/told not to work their notice.

### **PP – Personal Pension**

Payments made to a pension provider.

### **SAP – Statutory Adoption Pay**

An allowance given to people during the leave they take to adopt a child.

### **SEE – Small Earnings Exception**

An exemption of Class Two National Insurance contributions, given to self-employed people who's profits are less than £5,725 a year.

### **SMP – Statutory Maternity Pay**

An allowance of 39 weeks, given to female employees during the leave they take before and after having a child.

### **SPP – Statutory Paternity Pay**

An allowance of 2 weeks, given to male employees during the leave they take before and after having a child.

### **SSP – Statutory Sick Pay**

Pay given to employees who have been absent from work due to illness.

### **TY – Tax Year**

The year in which tax is calculated, starting 6th April in the UK.

### **VAT – Value Added Tax**

Value based tax added to goods and services.

## How can I check my payslip?

Is something not quite adding up?

Don't be afraid to question anything that doesn't look right on your payslip by getting in touch with your HR or Payroll department.

It's also a good idea to check your payslips regularly. Not only does this make sure no mistakes slip through, it also ensures that what your payslip says tallies with the amount that has been paid into your bank account.

By Tom Bunkham [Reed.co.uk](http://Reed.co.uk)

# Emotional Abuse in the workplace: are you working for an abusive boss?

*It can be challenging to understand the line between a healthy relationship with your supervisor and an unhealthy, abusive one that leads to a dysfunctional work environment. Once you can identify the signs, however, it can become much easier to feed the positive supervisory relationships and put an end to those that only serve to hurt and cut you down, both as a worker and as an individual.*

Here are several sure-fire signs that you are dealing with an emotionally abusive supervisor or boss.

## 1. Your Boss Treats You With Disgust

A boss can be tough, hold you to high standards, and even have a cold personality. But if she consistently treats you with disdain or disgust, while keeping you around at the company, she might be emotionally abusive. A boss should never cause you to feel deep personal shame or guilt.

I once had a boss who would shake her finger in the faces of employees and tell them that they should be ashamed when they erred on small tasks.

Sure, sometimes we mess up at work. But if a boss becomes angry at you and deals with that anger by being excessively cold, nonverbal, or even using hostile sarcasm, she is being ineffective and only encouraging you to question yourself.

## 2. Your Boss Gossips a Lot

Gossip happens in most workplaces, unfortunately. But your supervisor should not be the ringleader of the gossip.

Be wary of bosses who talk to their employees about colleagues, or openly and regularly criticize

employees in front of others.

My abusive boss would constantly criticize my coworkers when we were in one-on-one meetings, which made me feel good about myself...until I realized that she probably said terrible things about me when she met with others. This is Mean Girl behavior, and you don't have to deal with it.

## 3. Your Boss Micromanages You

A manager is there to manage, but what about micromanaging? That can actually be a form of over-control and emotional abuse.

If you feel your boss excessively micromanaging you even though she purportedly trusts you, take a step back. Do you deserve to be watched at all times? Have you been messing up lately, or does she just want you to feel on edge about your tasks? Where has the trust broken down?

When you look closely, it may become clear that the issue doesn't lie within your work, but with her refusal to express trust. The more on edge you are, the more control she has.

## 4. Your Boss Makes You Question Yourself

One major moment that led to my realization of my own emotionally abusive relationship

*Continued* ►

with my boss was when she began to name-call and tell me who she thought I was. Even when I handed in my resignation, I was told what type of person I was, and how I wouldn't be a good fit for my next job.

No one should tell you who you are—except you. Even bosses who give you “good names” could be twisting your thoughts and feelings so that you stay at the company longer than you'd like. If a boss makes you question your personal choices, talents, and self-worth? They are not your friend. They are emotionally abusing you.

### 5. Your Boss Gaslights You

One of the surest signs of abuse is gaslighting. This occurs when you bring up a past incident or current problem and the other person makes you feel like you are crazy, or as if you made up the incident altogether

If you come to your boss with a perception, a feeling, a reaction, or anything else, it is their job to listen, even if they decide not to have an active response. Where the scene turns to emotional abuse is if your boss responds with “That never happened,” “No one else has ever noticed that,” or “Are you sure that happened?”

In any relationship, this tactic can be used to get the “complainer” to question herself and, ultimately, to shut up. This a tactic that only a toxic boss will use often.

### 6. Your Boss Doesn't Accept Any Responsibility

Sometimes you might attempt to calmly address your boss's communication style through a one-on-one discussion. This is a natural and healthy option, but you may find that your supervisor doesn't react in a positive way.

They might hold you responsible for their actions and feelings, reminding you of all your past mistakes. They could refuse to acknowledge any part they play in the workplace dynamic. An

emotionally abusive individual will do anything in their power to put you or others in the position of the villain.

Where you see miscommunication and frustration, they might envision a scenario of people who are out to get them or trying to twist the conversation into blame. So, they blame others. If you've tried (sometimes multiple times) to have this conversation with your boss and it hasn't gone well, it could be time to find a new office—ideally a less toxic work environment.

### 7. Your Boss Messes With Your Head

When you finally decide you've had enough of your boss's emotionally abusive behavior and attempt to call them on it, or even simply ask questions, they might become overly apologetic or even sticky-sweet and complimentary. This is classic behavior.

Try to leave your abusive partner, and they will suddenly turn on the charm. This can be especially disturbing and make exiting such relationships one of the hardest things you will ever do. However, since you know what their behavior will probably be, you can prepare for it.

Set your game face and your story. Find a way to say, firmly, “Thank you, but goodbye.” Take the opportunity to leave on your own terms. Don't let her compliment you into staying, or shame you into sticking around just a few more weeks. When you're done, you're done. When you leave, an emotionally abusive boss can no longer control you, shame you, make you question yourself or hurt you.

Jobs are important, but toxic leaders that cause you to feel depressed, anxious, unsafe, or ashamed are never, ever worth your time.

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