

The paperless office

What can you see when you look at your office desk? Probably lots of things on it: books, brochures, files, notepads, newspapers, some pens, paper clips, documents, a stapler, a keyboard or a laptop, a printer perhaps? Not too tidy, is it?

But in many companies it's very important to have a tidy office. Some companies say that workers can't leave documents or paper on their desk at the end of the day. So employees put all the documents into filing cabinets or drawers. Experts say that a person who works at an untidy desk is not organized and spends about one-and-a-half hours a day looking for things. An organized worker always has a tidy workspace.

But is that true? Research shows that there are two types of worker. The first type is the "filer" – they receive a document and immediately file it. The second type is the "piler" – they have piles of paper on their desk. Who do you think can find things more quickly? The answer may surprise you.

Workers who file everything have a tidy desk, but they file too much. As a result their files and filing cabinets take a lot of space in the office and, moreover, there are so many files that it takes time to remember where a particular document is.

The "pilers" often have an untidy desk, but they aren't always disorganized. Some experts say that a busy desk helps "pilers" to think about current projects and makes it easy to find documents.

So next time you want to tidy your desk, stop and think. Perhaps an untidy one makes it easier to find things! ☺



Ex. 1 Find in the text the English equivalents of these words:

1. badania
2. bieżący
3. biurko
4. drukarka
5. klawiatura
6. notatnik
7. obszar roboczy
8. prospekt
9. segregować, układać
10. spinacze
11. sterta, stos
12. szafa na dokumenty
13. szuflada
14. teczka
15. uporządkowany
16. zszywacz

Ex. 2 Complete these expressions with missing prepositions (in, at, on etc.):

1. look _____ your desk
2. lots of things _____ it
3. _____ the end _____ the day
4. put documents _____ filing cabinets
5. work _____ an untidy desk
6. spend time looking _____ things

Grammar corner...

The text contains such pairs of words:

- *tidy – untidy*
- *organized – disorganized*

They are the so-called antonyms – words of opposite meaning. In English it is sometimes quite easy to create such opposite words. For this purpose we need some negative particles, the most important of which are: *un-, in-, im-, dis-, il-, ir-, non-*

Here are some more examples:

- *efficient – inefficient*
- *mature - immature*
- *possible – impossible*
- *legal – illegal*
- *regular – irregular*
- *fiction – non-fiction*

Some of the prefixes are used according to the rule of the first letter of the original word, e.g. *illegal*, *irregular*, *impossible* (words beginning with *p* almost always take *im-*) but others follow no rules or there are exceptions too.

Ex. 3 Make these words “negative” using the correct particles:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. ____approve | 6. ____logical | 11. ____reasonable |
| 2. ____charge | 7. ____loyal | 12. ____responsible |
| 3. ____happy | 8. ____moral | 13. ____safe |
| 4. ____legible | 9. ____perfect | 14. ____satisfied |
| 5. ____load | 10. ____profit | 15. ____secure |

GLOSSARY	
paperless	bez papieru
(office) desk	biurko
brochure	prospekt, broszura
file	teczka
notepad	notatnik
paper clip	spinacz (do papieru)
stapler	zszywacz
keyboard	klawiatura
printer	drukarka
tidy	uporządkowany
filing cabinet	szafa na dokumenty
drawer	szuflada
(dis)organized	(nie)zorganizowany
workspace	obszar roboczy
to file	segregować, układać
pile	sterta, stos
particular	konkretny
current	bieżący

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

1. research
2. current
3. (office) desk
4. printer
5. keyboard
6. notepad
7. workspace
8. brochure
9. to file
10. paper clips
11. pile
12. filing cabinet
13. drawer
14. file
15. tidy
16. stapler

Ex. 2

1. look at your desk
2. lots of things on it
3. at the end of the day
4. put documents into filing cabinets
5. work at an untidy desk
6. spend time looking for things

Ex. 3

1. disapprove
2. discharge
3. unhappy
4. illegible
5. unload
6. illogical
7. disloyal
8. immoral
9. imperfect
10. non-profit
11. unreasonable
12. irresponsible
13. unsafe
14. dissatisfied
15. insecure