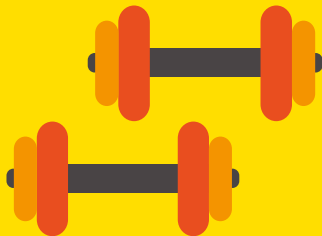
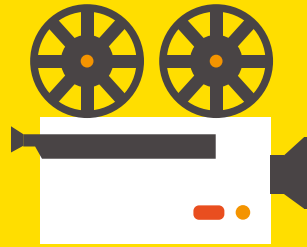
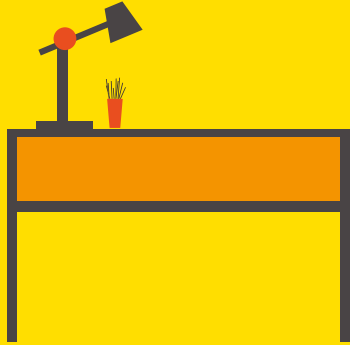


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I Can Do It All By Myself.



# by myself for .

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# HOW TO LIVE ALONE WITHOUT FEELING LONELY

Whether by choice or by circumstance, living alone has a lot of advantages. But perhaps one of the most subtle yet saddest disadvantages is sometimes feeling lonely. And though occasional feelings of loneliness are natural, why feel lonely when you don't have to? There are things you can do to create a home that repels loneliness when you live solo.

by *Adrienne Breaux*



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY © 3D MOLIER INTERNATIONAL - BETTER LOOKING REAL LIFE / IMAGE DESIGNED BY FREPIK

## Don't physically shut your home off from the world

This is the most important one in my opinion. I think you need to throw your curtains open every day. Let the light in. Open the door and say hello to your neighbors. Make your outdoor area (even if it's just a tiny balcony) not some dirt-building storage space, but a place you can sit in and observe the world. When you live alone, it can be easy to shut yourself into your own world. Which is fun sometimes, but can magnify any insecurities and regrets, making them seem bigger than they are. Opening yourself and your home up to the world helps keep things in perspective and reminds us all that even if we feel alone sometimes, we're not.

## Make daily rituals that underscore the joys of living alone

Love to dance in your skivvies to Beyonce every morning? Embarrassing if you've got roommates, totally cool if the only person to see your moves is yourself. Think about what it is that you LOVE about living alone and try to find ways to indulge in it every day. If it's walking around with a face mask that make you look like a horror movie character, go for it! If it's eating right out of the ice cream container, go for it (though for your diet's sake, perhaps in moderation).

## Try new things

It's hard to feel lonely when you're trying to master a new skill, practice a hobby or try out a new recipe. When it comes to keeping loneliness at bay, one of the best ways to do it is to occupy your time with things that feel enriching, creative and exciting.

## Know your loneliness triggers and how to fight them

One of the best things about living with someone in my opinion (either a roommate or a partner) is having someone to greet you when you get home and someone to talk about your day with. A little hard when you come home to empty rooms. So combat that by scheduling a call with a good friend. Or sending a text to your mom when you get home, asking her how her day went. It might be the lack of connection that bums you out about living alone sometimes, or it could be something else. Try to identify what it about living alone that sometimes makes you sad. To do so, try to think back about times you did feel lonely. Was it when you found yourself bored? Always have a hobby and some supplies around you can work on. Consider what it is that bugs you most about living alone and have ways to combat it.

## Pets are important

For those of you who consider pets people (like myself), having pets means you definitely don't live alone, because they are great companions to talk to. But for those whom a cat or dog is out of the question, don't forget about smaller more manageable pets like fish (in small bowls) or even just installing bird feeders near a window. It's that interaction with a live thing other than yourself that can definitely stave off loneliness.

## Entertain more often (or at all)

The best way to not feel lonely when you live alone? Fill up your home with people you like and find interesting on occasion. Remember that you don't have to have some formal dinner party — just inviting a few friends over to play board games is a great way to bring laughter and conversation into your home. ☺



# 22 TINY HABITS THAT COULD TOTALLY CHANGE YOUR LIFE

by Annie Mueller

Research, as well as common sense and personal experience, is showing us that small steps get us to far away places. The key is to consistently take those small steps in the same direction. Building a big, life-changing habit is difficult: it's hard to keep the willpower going long enough to see change.

But building a tiny habit? That's doable. The Fogg Method uses the effectiveness of tiny, specific habits to create big changes in behavior. Here are 22 tiny habits you could add into your life. They don't seem like much, but if you practice them regularly, they can change your energy level, your fitness, your relationships, your work, your community, and your environment... in big ways.

## Tiny Habits for Better Physical Health

**01** Drink a glass of water first thing in the morning. We often don't get enough water in our systems, and get so busy throughout the day that we don't think about stopping to replenish our supply. Or we replenish with soda or coffee or tea but not water. Trigger yourself by leaving a big glass out on the counter or table. Or do what I do, and get a big travel mug with a lid. At night, I fill it up with a lot of ice and a bit of water, and in the morning it's waiting for me: a nice, cool cup of water. Flush the toxins, kickstart your system, wake yourself up.

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**02** Park as far away as you can from the door. Fight the effects of a sedentary lifestyle by getting more steps into your day whenever you can. In fact, simple things like a longer stroll from the car to the door might be more effective than a vigorous work-out at counteracting the effects of long hours at a desk.

**03** Eat raw fruit or vegetables with every meal. Think: a green side salad, a slice of melon, some berries, a few carrot sticks and cucumber slices. Not only will you get more nutrients in, you will also be getting in more fiber and potentially helping your body lose weight, retain energy, and decrease hunger.

**04** Stand up and stretch every hour, on the hour. Trigger yourself with a beep on your phone or watch (do people still wear those?) or computer. Sitting for extended time periods is a bad idea for both your body and your brain. You need a mental and physical break, and it doesn't have to be a big deal. Just stop, when your on-the-hour beep sounds at you. Stand up where you are, reach over your head, take a deep breath, touch your toes, roll your shoulders.

**05** Carry a small bag of nuts or beef jerky everywhere you go. Something protein-rich will help stave off hunger as well as keeping you from getting to that ravenous point when you'll eat anything in sight, no matter what the calorie count is. Getting a little more protein in your diet can help boost your metabolism and build your muscle, as well.

## Tiny Habits for Better Mental Health

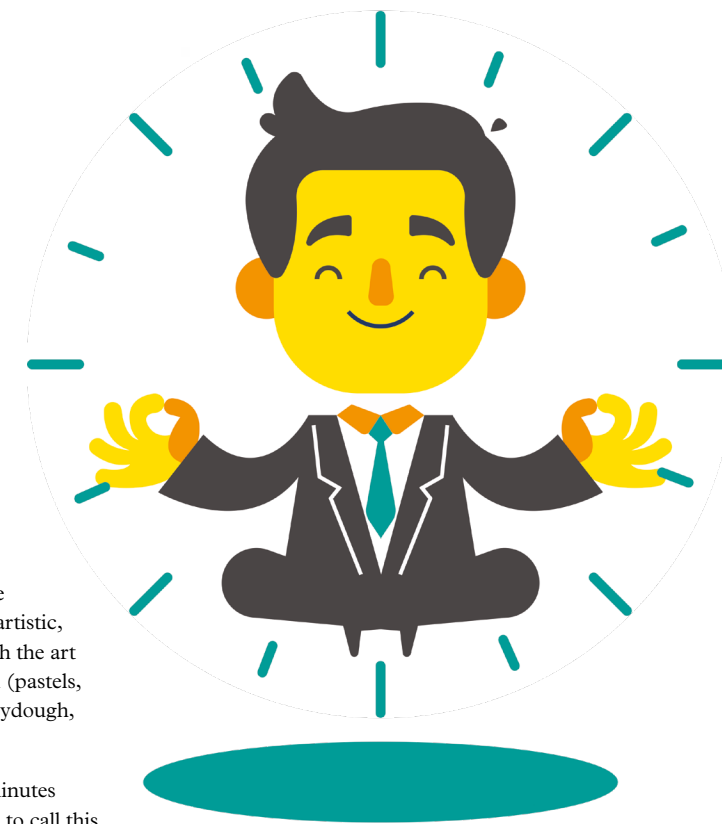
**01** Ask open-ended questions. Instead of throwing out questions just so you can insert your own opinion, ask bigger, better questions. Avoid asking questions that can be answered with a simple Yes or No. Try questions that start with "What do you think about...?" and "How would you...?" or "What is your experience with...?" Then listen to the answers with the attitude that you are here to learn. Having an open perspective and initiating deeper conversations will help you to relate with others, cultivate empathy, keep your own problems in perspective, make new friends, and learn new ways of approaching life. Imagine the wisdom you would gain in five or ten years if you just have one of these conversations every week.

**02** Keep a tray of art supplies out on your table/desk/shelf. Don't force or even expect yourself to clock in a certain number of minutes or productions. Just keep them out, in reach, so that when you feel like doodling around with something artistic, it is effortless. Bonus points: switch the art medium out every week or month (pastels, crayons, watercolors, ink, clay, playdough, carving knife & wood block).

**03** Sit in silence for a few minutes every day. We don't have to call this meditation, because that might be a little too intimidating. You don't have to sit cross-legged. You don't have to close your eyes. You don't have to be Zen-like in anyway. Your brain can be flying a hundred miles an hour, but don't say or do anything. Just sit, comfortably, and breathe for a few minutes.

**04** Jot down everything on your mind for a few minutes at the end of the day. This is a brain dump in the easiest way possible. It's not a big deal like a daily journal or to-do list or planner might feel. Keep a simple notebook by the bed, and give yourself a few minutes to pour out everything that's on your mind before you go to sleep. Don't edit. Let it all out, in any format, in any order. It doesn't have to make sense, even to you. Studies show that this type of writing can reduce anxiety and depression. Alternative: use a voice recorder and simply talk, in unedited stream-of-consciousness style, for a few minutes into your recorder.

**05** Repeat a personal mantra to yourself when you hit stress points. Make it something simple to remember that calms you and reminds you of the important things in life. This is a simple way to retrain your brain and tell it how to respond to stress. Instead of letting stressful points send you into a panicked mode, you pull out your mantra and tell your brain that it's going to be okay. A few of my favorites: This too shall pass. I am stronger than I think. I can learn what I need to learn when I need to learn it. I've handled worse than this. I am not alone. There is freedom here. When I take responsibility, I take power.



## Tiny Habits for Better Productivity and Work

**01** Pretend to be your hero. When you're faced with a challenging situation, an intimidating project, a new career leap, an important meeting, think about a hero in your industry or career. Then ask yourself what this person would do in your situation. How would she handle it? Would he be intimidated? Fearful? Or confident and calm? Now imagine yourself doing exactly what you think your would do. This helps to clarify what the right actions are for you by removing the self-doubt and negative self-talk that can bog you down in uncertainty.

**02** Do a 5-minute daily review at your desk at the end of the day. Before you leave work, or from your desk at home before you wrap things up for the day (or night!), take five minutes. Write down what you accomplished in a quick, bulleted list. Write down what you didn't accomplish that you had hoped to, and what stopped you. Don't beat yourself up for your failures, just notice, if you can, what caused you to get off track. And notice how much you did accomplish. This type of review is a way to help your brain focus on the positive (I did accomplish something today) and will help you to become more aware of the things that tend to derail you or distract you from productive work.



**03** Turn off all notifications for at least one long block of work time every day. Our brains are not adept at switching from one task to another. The single ding of an email notification or text, even if it's about something completely unimportant, can cause you to lose up to 40% of your work time. Is it really worth it? Maybe if you have infinite time at your disposal... But we all know that you don't. So do yourself and your career a favor, and silence all the dings and chirps for at least one long block of time (2 – 4 hours). Up to 40% of your work time. Is it really worth it? Maybe if you have infinite time at your disposal... But we all know that you don't. So do yourself and your career a favor, and silence all the dings and chirps for at least one long block

#### **Tiny Habits for Better Relationships**

**01** Call, text, or email one friend or family member a day. Staying in touch has never been easier, but it's all too easy to only connect with the people we see at work or the ones who just won't stop showing up in our Facebook feed. Reach out a little further than that to stay connected with the friends and family members you value. It only takes a few minutes to invest in a relationship, with the result that you have a strong network of people around you, both near and far.

**02** Write a thank you note every week. This can be an exercise solely for

you: write a thank-you note to someone who's passed on but impacted your life, and tell them all the things you wish you could say in person. Or write a note of thanks to someone who is or was part of your life and send it to that person. Cultivating gratitude helps to lessen the fear in your life. How much better would your life be if you had trained yourself to be appreciative instead of afraid?

**03** End your night with a word of thanks or encouragement. This is the kind of simple habit that can make or break a lifelong relationship. Before you roll over and go to sleep, let your significant other know you accept and value him or her. You don't have to be elaborate: "I love being with you," or "Thanks for being there for me," sends the right message. If you're not in a relationship, give yourself a word of thanks or encouragement. Sounds silly? Maybe. But it can help build your confidence and keep you from letting one bad day spiral into depression.

**04** Pause before you answer or respond to people. Train yourself to listen well, by giving yourself time to think up your response in that pause, not while the other person is talking. This not only shows that you value what the other person is saying (which communicates acceptance and respect) but it also gives you time to weigh your attitude and words. In a high-tension situation or stressful conversation, a simple five-second pause might be what keeps you from blowing up and ruining a relationship you value.

**05** Give yourself a time out. Life happens. You're going to hit points when you feel stressed, frustrated, angry, or impatient. That's okay, because if you can give yourself a time-out then you can keep things in perspective. You can't expect yourself to be a non-emotional robot, but you can train yourself to take a five-minute break from humanity when things are getting to you. Walk around the block, lock yourself in the bathroom, take a quick drive with the windows down and the music blaring. Find the "time out chair" that works for you, and use it.

#### **Tiny Habits for a Better Community and Environment**

**01** Take a short walk around the block with a trash bag and pick up litter. This weekly or daily ritual will help you to be more aware of how you treat your daily environment, and you never know the effect it can have on others. Sometimes just one person taking the time to make something better can spark others to take better care of things, as well.

**02** Stop and say hi to your neighbors. Make it a habit to do a little more than a nod or smile. It takes just a moment, whenever you see them out, to walk over and say hello. Create a friendlier community and help the people around you get plugged in, too. Some of my best friends are neighbors who were willing to lean over the fence and chat for a minute.

**03** Borrow before you buy for big purchases. It's not always possible, but why not try it? Save money and help the environment. Make it a habit to borrow first, try it out, and see if it's what you really need/want/must have. Then try to buy used before you buy new. Obviously this won't apply to every big purchase... but it will apply to a lot.

**04** Keep your bike out where you can see it. No, you don't have to use it... Just put it out there, in front of you, where you can eyeball it. Every day, when you run to the car and hop in. Wait, you don't have a bike? Hmmmm. Maybe call up a neighbor and see if you can borrow one. 🚲

If You Lose Your Wealth,  
You Have Lost Nothing;  
But If You Lose Your **Health,**  
You Have Lost **Everything**



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# HOW TO **CLEAN** YOUR HOUSE IN 20 MINUTES A DAY FOR 30 DAYS

by Sarah Rae Smith

When I first learned to clean my own place, I thought Saturday had to be an all day clean-a-thon. I didn't really have a concept of how to balance the work load during the week so weekends could be reserved for larger projects or even you know...fun! Now I clean in 20 minutes a day every day and things just seem to take care of themselves. Here's a glimpse at the schedule I use!

No one said you had to do everything at once and even when time seems short, if you can manage one task a day, things should start to work themselves out. Adjust this list as your family's needs require (those with more or less children might require doing certain activities more or less). If it's easier, take a blank calendar and fill it in accordingly so easier tasks are on days where your day is go, go, go and reserve the more difficult ones for days when things are a little lighter. Here are 5 tips to help make these 30 days a success:

## Dealing With What Comes Through The Door

Set up a small area by the front door to act as a "landing strip" for incoming items to your home. If you're a longtime reader this is nothing new to you. If this is the first time you've heard this phrase outside of reference to personal grooming habits, then make sure to check out Maxwell's Home Cure video on the topic.

## Do Your Dishes After Every Meal

This will help you stay on top of your kitchen instead of having it turn into a monster! No one really wants to do them (after all, you probably cooked dinner to boot). But waiting for another meal or until you have enough to fill the dishwasher just makes things feel overwhelming and easier to put off. The same goes for taking out trash as well. If you need to take the trash out, place it by the front door to go out in the morning or dispose of it that night so it's over and done with. Still having trouble? Try the one-cup method.

## Laundry

If you have a washer and dryer at home, do a little bit each day. Spread things out so you don't feel bogged down by 200 towels and stinky socks. If you take things to a laundromat, sort clothes as you go so things are easier to load into machines when you get there. Fold them before you come home so you aren't dumping baskets out on your sofa or bed and they can go straight into drawers and closets. Not feeling inspired? Treat yourself... to a new laundry basket. It's the little things.

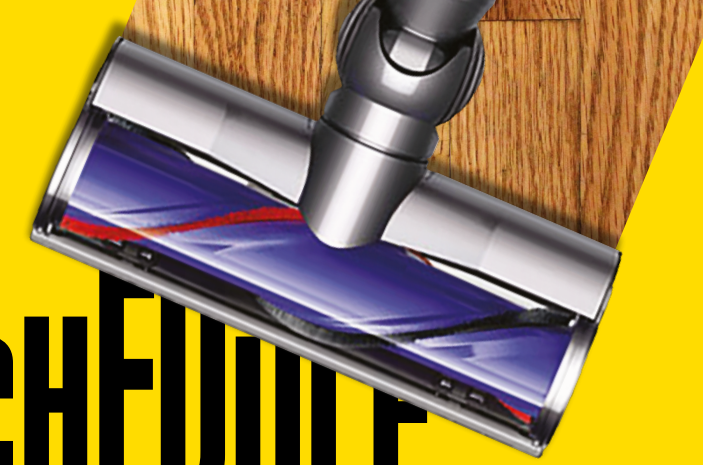
## Whistle While You Work

No one really enjoys cleaning, but singing, humming, whistling or turning up the stereo are all great options to keep the beat in your feet and have fun while working. Here are a few past posts on killer cleaning soundtracks.

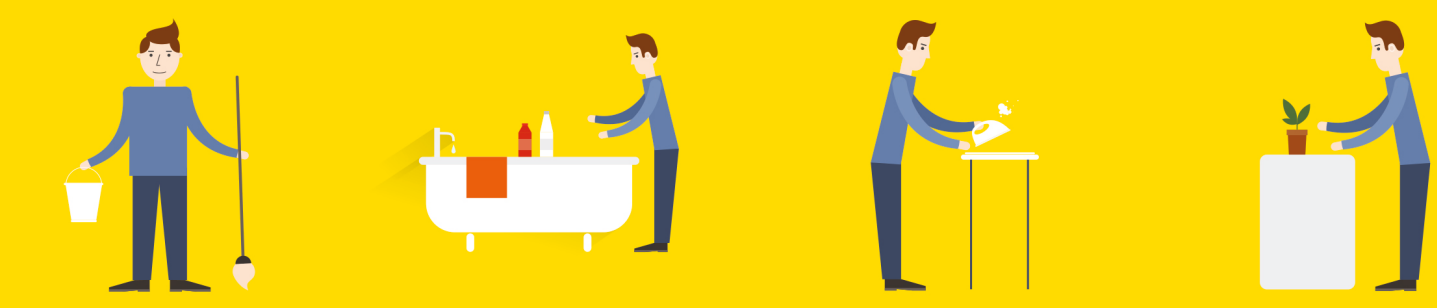
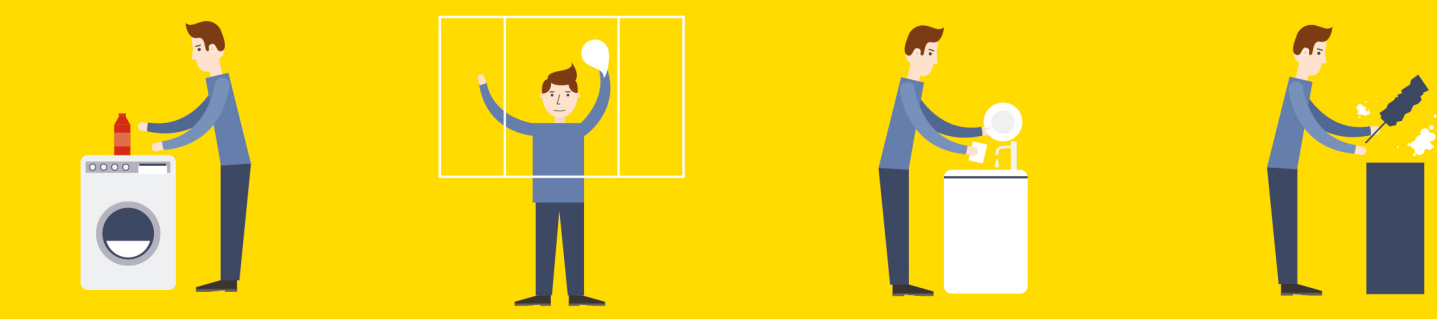
## Set a Timer

Most items on the list below should take no more than 20 minutes total. It's easy to rationalize 20 minutes, but it's also easy to get distracted by phone calls, emails, children and other projects that call your name as you tackle each chore. Set a timer for 5 or 10 minutes (which ever works best for you) and that way when it sounds you know exactly how much time you have left. If you find yourself off task it's easy to get back on track. 🕒

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# 30 DAYS SCHEDULE



<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>01</b> Surface clean living room and kitchen (pick up stray items, dust, sweep, vacuum)	<b>02</b> Clean bathrooms (toilets, showers, floors, walls, mirrors)	<b>03</b> Surface clean bedrooms (put away toys, clothes, dust)	<b>04</b> Surface clean "extra" rooms (basement, office, play room)
<b>05</b> Surface clean living room and kitchen	<b>06</b> Clean bathrooms	<b>07</b> Clean all interior windows (white vinegar and newspaper works great and is cheap!)	<b>08</b> Sweep and vacuum all floors in the house (don't forget stairs)	<b>09</b> Surface clean bedrooms	<b>10</b> Deep clean living room (mirrors, baseboards, dust artwork)	<b>11</b> Clean bathrooms
<b>12</b> Clean out closets (hang up clothes, mittens, jackets, hats)	<b>13</b> Surface clean "extra" rooms	<b>14</b> Deep clean bedrooms (organize drawers, check under bed, tidy closet, dust artwork, fans, lights, mop)	<b>15</b> Surface clean living room and kitchen	<b>16</b> Deep clean bathrooms (clean inside drawers, inside of trash cans, tops of mirrors, tile, mop)	<b>17</b> Clean all door knobs, phones, entertainment equipment (remote controls), switch plates, banisters and other things that are repeatedly touched.	<b>18</b> Clean out the refrigerator, take stock of food, organize pantry
<b>19</b> Clean entryway, sweep porch (if you have one), clean out car (because they're often our home away from home)	<b>20</b> Surface clean living room and kitchen	<b>21</b> Surface clean bathrooms	<b>22</b> Surface clean bedrooms	<b>23</b> Sweep and vacuum all floors in the house	<b>24</b> Clean linen closet, straighten towels, sheets or regular closet if not applicable	<b>25</b> Surface clean living room and kitchen
<b>26</b> Deep clean kitchen (scrub appliances, wash trash cans, base boards, wipe down and straighten cabinets)	<b>27</b> Surface clean bathrooms	<b>28</b> Surfaces clean bedrooms	<b>29</b> Clean one item you've been meaning to get to and haven't (deep clean your stove, wipe down all light fixtures, tackle a particularly unruly area)	<b>30</b> Sweep and vacuum all floors in the house		

CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE DESIGNED BY FREEPIK

# HERE ARE 20 EASY WAYS TO SAVE SOME MONEY EVERY DAY

by *Brittney Castro*



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**01** Make a weekly "money date." Commit to sitting down with your money once a week for a money date. During this time, update your budget, review your accounts and track your progress against your financial goals. Like any relationship, if you want your financial life to improve, you must spend time with your money.

**02** Plan out your meals for the week. Taking a few hours every weekend to grocery shop and meal plan for the week will definitely save you money, as dining out is the No. 1 expense for most households. By eating at home, you save money that would otherwise be spent on tax and tip—and you usually save calories, too.

**03** Cut out cable. Gasp! Cut out TV?! Never! But with services like Hulu, Netflix and Amazon Prime, you can now watch your favorite TV shows and movies for a fraction of the cost of cable TV. A study by market research firm NPD Group shows that cable bills will soon grow to an average of \$123 per month, or \$1,476 per year. By switching over to an online service or cutting out TV altogether, you can save that money for another financial goal—such as paying off debt, traveling or saving for a down payment on a home.

**04** Switch to an exercise pass program. If you love working out, an exercise pass program such as Class Pass is the way to go. By paying a membership fee of \$99 per month, you are welcome at many of the best studios in your area. And classes—like cycling, yoga, Pilates, barre, strength training, boot camp, dance and more—are unlimited. This beats having to pay for each studio's monthly membership or individual class fee, which can add up to hundreds of dollars a month.

**05** Host a potluck. The more friends you have, the more money you spend on lunch dates, birthday parties and gifts. Switch it up and, instead of meeting over a fancy dinner, host a potluck and have everyone bring his or her favorite dish. That way, you can save money you'd spend on restaurant extras, such as tax, tip and parking—and you'll usually have a more intimate meal together, too.

**06** Leverage lodging rental websites. Finding a place to stay while traveling is so convenient when you use a lodging rental website such as Airbnb, Travelmob or Housetrip. You can often find a place that has a kitchen (so you can cook meals at home to save money) at a rate that's comparable to hotels. You can even rent out your own place on sites such as Airbnb while you travel to make some extra



cash to pay for your own travel expenses. It's a win-win scenario.

**07** Make coffee at home. This one's not my favorite, as I absolutely love going to coffee shops and drinking delicious organic coffee. However, spending \$4 to \$5 on coffee every day definitely adds up. So try my approach and allow yourself a few days a week to buy coffee at cafés, and make it at home the rest of the time.

-Example-

Wait 48 hours before spending money on things that cost more than a certain amount. When you do, you will find that, most of the time, the item was more of a "want" than a "need." Plus, you'll save money and work toward being more mindful with your spending.

**09** Wait 48 hours before you click "buy." Since we can have anything we want these days with just the click of a button (there's that instant gratification again), you need to find a system to help buffer your impulse purchases.

**08** Work more. When you're working a lot, there's not much time left to shop and spend money. So stay busy and pursue a career you love.

**09** Wait 48 hours before you click "buy." Since we can have anything we want these days with just the click of a button (there's that instant gratification again), you need to find a system to help buffer your impulse purchases.

**10** Use blogs and Pinterest to learn DIY beauty treatments. Self-care is important—but going to spas and getting pedicures, massages, etc., can really add up. Allow yourself a certain amount to spend on these things; then use blogs and apps like Pinterest to find at-home beauty treatments to help you save money. Often you can find a DIY organic option using common household or kitchen products.

**11** Outsource online. Time is a commodity, and your time is precious and valuable. And these days, there are so many tasks you can outsource that will save you time and money. But how do you figure out if outsourcing something is worth the expense? A great thing to do is to actually calculate the cost of your time, which will help you figure out if you can pay someone to do something for less than your hourly rate. Here's an example: A monthly net income of \$3,000 divided by a total of 160 hours worked equals an hourly rate of \$16.75. Now that you know the value of your time, you can strategically outsource it using a service like Fiverr or Task Rabbit for a fraction of your own hourly rate.



**12** Get creative with gifts. Find creative ways to express your love to friends and family members with free, lower-cost or handmade birthday and holiday gifts. After all, a handwritten note explaining why you love someone can be more sentimental than some expensive gift he or she may never even use. Most people will appreciate the thought behind your gifts more than anything, so don't be afraid to save money and find free ways to celebrate birthdays and holidays.

**“THE TRUTH IS, THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SAVE MONEY. FIND THE WAYS THAT WORK FOR YOU, AND SLOWLY START INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIES INTO YOUR LIFE.”**

**13** Choose quality over quantity. This can apply to food, clothes, electronics and much more. Although it's tempting to choose the more budget-friendly version of an item, sometimes choosing quality over quantity will save you more in the long run. Save up your money and get the best-quality product you can afford, and leverage the cost-per-wear philosophy with more expensive clothing and shoes. This applies to food, too: Buying quality organic food can nourish you in ways that fill you up more than the prepackaged, processed stuff and potentially save you money on health-care expenses in the future, since you're taking good care of yourself. Find a balance that is right for you and choose quality whenever you can.

**14** Deal with your emotions. Excessive spending is often a way to avoid feeling certain emotions. If you check in with yourself before you go on a major spending spree, you may be able to identify if you're feeling bored, lonely or stressed and are therefore spending money as a means to avoid the underlying emotion. Check in with yourself before you buy, and be mindful with your spending.

**15** Stop trying to keep up with the Kardashians. It's hard to keep your blinders on and not compare your financial life to that of others, especially celebrities. However, it is really important to be clear about what matters most to you and make sure you build a financial plan that supports that vision. This will keep you moving toward your financial goals and stop you from spending money on things you don't need, to impress people you don't like.

**16** Read a personal finance book. When you learn about personal finance, you'll learn even more strategies to help you save money for your goals in life. Knowledge is power, and the more you know, the more you can save.

**17** Balance your “FOMO/YOLO” mindset. With social media controlling our lives like never before, people often fall victim to the “fear of missing out” phenomenon and instead go overboard with a “you only live once” mentality. While it is important to live in the present and soak up each precious moment of life, make sure you balance that out by saving for your financial future, too. Without checks and balances in place, you can find yourself saying yes to everything and spending more money than you have—all due to the fear of missing out.

**18** Map out your financial goals. Be very specific with your financial goals. For example, saying, “I want to save for a home down payment” is not enough. You need to map out how much you need, by when and what you need to save every month in order to reach the goal. When you know what your targets are, you're more likely to stay the course and continue saving for them for the long term.

**19** Keep your eye on the prize. Staying focused on your goals takes discipline and determination. Saving can be easy and exciting at first, but after a while you may lose that initial motivation and start to find other things you can spend that money on. To avoid veering off course, check in with your goals regularly and keep your eye on the prize.

**20** Track your progress. Americans save only 5.5 percent of their money compared to the 20 percent that personal finance indicates you should put away. But instead of feeling ashamed about your lack of savings, just start by saving something. ☺



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# KNOW

You can make the most of your saving.



It's Time To Get Rid Of Money Leaks

Your Virtual Wallet comes with a Growth account which is for your long-term savings. Get rewarded with higher yield relationship interest rates on your balances in your Growth account, when you meet certain requirements depending on the type of Virtual Wallet you have.



# INTERIOR DESIGN SUGGESTION FOR SPACE SAVING



Emily Krutz' Studio  
IMAGE BY FRANKE CHUNG



IMAGE BY NIKOLE HERRIOTT  
& MICHAEL GRAYDON FOR CUP OF JO  
Kay's Colorful Downtown Studio  
IMAGE BY LIANA HAYLES NEWTON



1907 Pennsylvania Schoolhouse  
IMAGE BY COUNTRY LIVING  
Shell's Renovated Lofty Studio  
IMAGE BY PABLO ENRIQUEZ



Jillian's Snug And Serene Studio  
IMAGE BY ALEXIS BURYK



Shell's Renovated Lofty Studio  
IMAGE BY PABLO ENRIQUEZ



Lauren's Happy, Inspired Studio  
IMAGE BY LAUREN'S HAPPY, INSPIRED STUDIO  
Fanis' Scandinavian Modern Studio  
IMAGE BY LIANA HAYLES NEWTON



# 9 SMART DESIGN IDEAS FOR YOUR STUDIO APARTMENT

Though there are some downsides to living in a studio apartment not having as much space for your stuff, feeling like you're living in your bedroom it can be a cozy and fun living experience, too. Stick to these design tricks when decorating a studio apartment and you'll love studio living.



by *Adrienne Breaux*

## 1. Enclose your bed

Don't have a bedroom but do have a closet you can fit a bed into? Or is there a way to drape curtains around your bed to create a private bed nook? Anything you can do to set your bed apart from the rest of your studio apartment will make the whole space feel less like you're living in just one room, a bedroom you also eat and live in!

## 2. Hang things

Don't let wall and ceiling space go to waste. Use your walls to add hooks or pegs so you can hang functional items as well as decor. And use your ceiling to hang things like pot racks or storage netting to gain even more storage space.

## 3. Use big furniture

Don't necessarily shy away from big furniture. Though you might feel like you have to go small because you have a small studio, a lot of small furniture sprinkled around might make your studio feel cluttered and too busy. Whereas a few smart, larger pieces could make your studio feel even bigger and airier.

## 4. Lighten and brighten

Though small dark spaces can look dramatic, when in doubt, always work to lighten and brighten your small studio. Making it brighter will make it feel bigger. So clean windows and take away any items that might be obscuring natural light. Lighten with paint colors and materials choices. Add light where it's needed.

## 5. Use see-through things

It's a fun designer trick. If you have the need for a table or chairs but don't want it to feel like a table or chairs are cluttering your space, find see-through furniture! Furniture made with clear materials can give you the function you need without the visual bulk.

## 6. Raise your bed

Even beds on the smaller side still take up a lot of floor space. Get double the use out of that space by raising your bed for extra storage. You can do it simply by adding risers that give you a few more inches of under-bed storage, or if you're handy, you can build a loft area (with landlord permission, of course) that can add usable space under your bed to add to your studio apartment's square footage.

## 7. Use mirrors

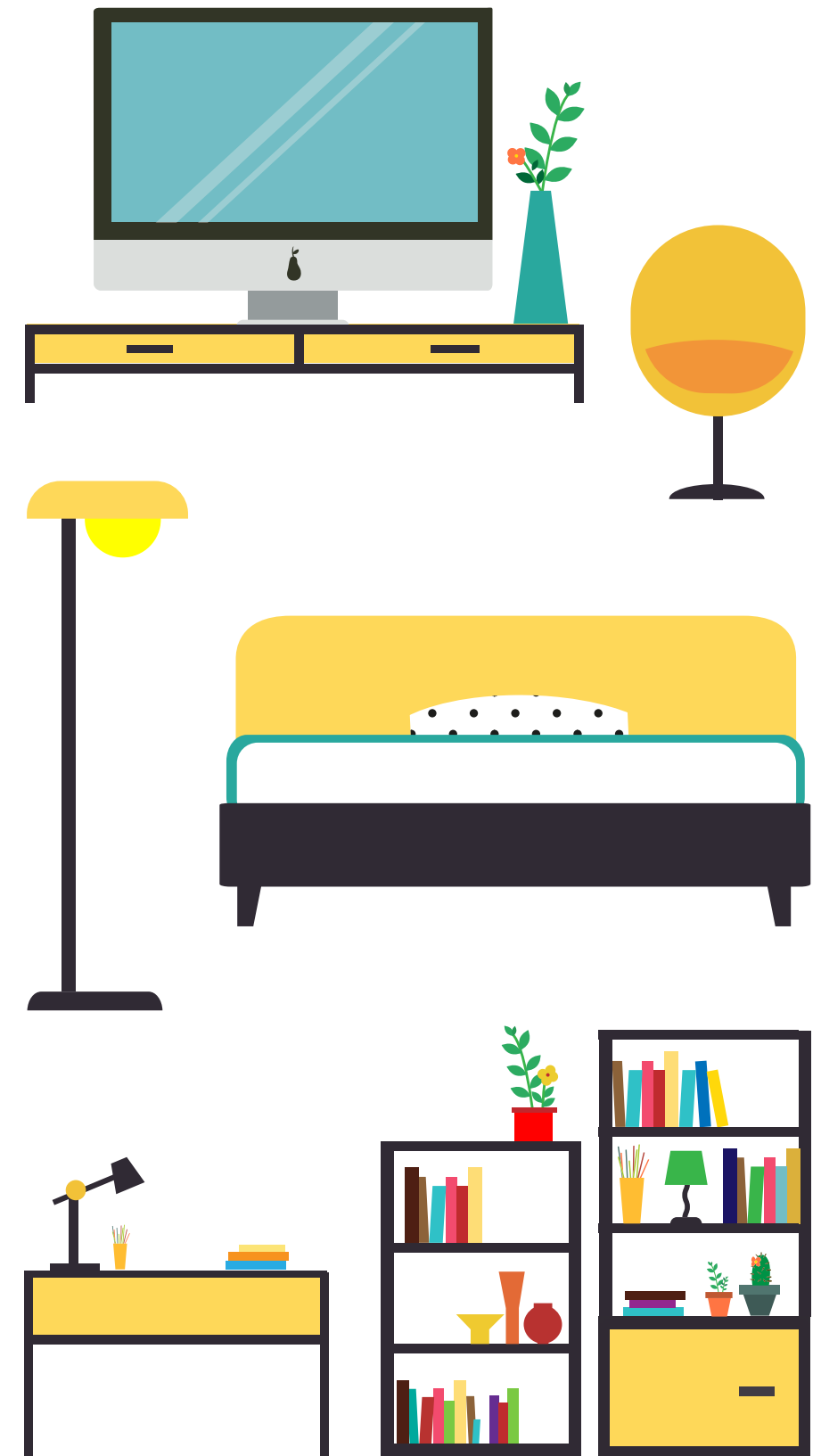
Use mirrors on the walls or leaning on the floor to reflect natural light and bounce it around a small space, making it feel larger. But also consider choosing mirrored furniture, as well. Not only will it also reflect light, like clear furniture, mirrored furniture helps cut down on the feeling of bulky furniture.

## 8. Divide wisely

Sometimes dividers in a studio can make a studio seem choppy, cluttered and claustrophobic. If you do feel like you need some division between your living areas, go for dividers that let light through or that are perhaps not super high. This can help hint at a visual division without feeling too closed off.

## 9. Make storage look invisible

To avoid making your studio apartment feel like a closet and to cut down on it feeling cluttered, work on camouflaging your storage in the space. You can do that by using double duty furniture that looks like something else (like a trunk for a coffee table or ottomans with hidden storage inside) or by painting or buying storage in the same color as your walls so that it blends into your studio apartment, not dominates it. ☺



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY TIFFANY / IMAGE DESIGNED BY FREEPIK

# CREATE A YOUTUBE CHANNEL

by Will Hayward



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE DESIGNED BY FREEPIK

“YOU CAN USE YOUR SMARTPHONE OR CAMERA IF YOU HAVE ONE. DON'T GO CRAZY TRYING TO INVEST IN FANCY EQUIPMENT STRAIGHT AWAY.”

## How To Build Your Own Successful Youtube Channel By A Teen Internet Sensation

**01** Come up with all your potential ideas and write them down.

**02** Pick the idea that stands out the most and makes you most excited. He added: “Don't worry if you don't fully go with that on your channel. “On my channel I have four different stages and yours will evolve and develop.”

**03** You need to start filming videos with whatever you already have.

**04** Be consistent upload two videos a week, every week, for example. Huw said: “I aim to upload a new video every Thursday. So it is like a TV channel and that makes people come back.”

**05** Comment and reply to other channels in your niche as possible and comment,” said Huw. “This is because people will see your name in the comment section and if your name continues to crop up they are more likely to click on your channel. “If anyone comments on your videos make sure you reply because you want to build a bond with your audience.”

**06** Use attention, grabbing titles and descriptions. Huw said: “My most viewed video is called Ten Terrific Tomato , Grabbing Tips so it grabs people's attention. Don't use click bait – people hate click bait.”

A teenager who took the internet by storm posting videos of his gardening tips has shared his advice on how to become a successful YouTuber. When he was just 12 green fingered Huw, from Aberystwyth , started a gardening channel dedicated to his favourite hobby of growing vegetables. In six years he has moved from a squeaky-voiced youth giving his thoughts on potatoes to an 18 year old expert with more than 60,000 subscribers. He has more than 300 videos, 40,000 Face book likes, and has millions of people watching his gardening advice.

**07** Start collaborating with other channels in your niche. But Huw added: “Make sure they are a similar size because if you only have 20 subscribers and the other has a million I doubt they will take you seriously when you ask them.”

**08** Create a Facebook page. Huw added: “The most important thing when it comes to Facebook is that it loves video and loves photo. I did a video on Facebook which was 60 seconds back in December and so far it has six million views.”

**09** Focus on quality not quantity. “YouTube will rank your uploads based on how long people watch your videos for. Be consistent with your uploads.”

**10** Be original and don't copy. Huw said: “This is the most important. You want to be doing things on your channel that no-one else is doing, or at least better than what other people are doing. People don't like copycats.”

Huw Richards has had millions of people view his videos

2,123,456 views

👍 62K 🗨️ 438 ➡️ SHARE ⚙️ ⋮



# TAKE UP PHOTOGRAPHY

## Three Steps For Approaching Photography As A Hobby

Recently, I gave you a look inside the bag of a hobby

photographer on a budget, and after reading all the comments on that post, I got to thinking about a topic that doesn't really get all that much attention. There are technical posts that detail things like getting sharper images and even plenty of advice on going pro, but what I have not found in my search, is any solid advice on how to approach photography as a hobby. Sure you'll need to learn the technical stuff in order to make quality photos, but there's more to approaching this craft than just learning, you have to have the right mindset going in.

### STEP1

#### Learn to experiment

One of the best parts of being classified as a hobbyist is you don't have anyone paying you to take their photos which means you can take your photos. You can experiment with different styles of photography like HDR, light painting, black and white. You can photograph people or landscapes. I've always believed that the best way to learn how something works is to just get out and start using it. After you've played around with a camera a bit and done some own experimentation – the tutorials, guidebooks, and even the camera's manual will make more sense, allowing you to learn even more. Take action today. One of the best ways to force yourself to experiment is by joining various communities. Digital Photography School runs a weekly challenge in which you are given a theme to photograph for the week and share your result in the comments of the week's post. It's fun and really can get you thinking about new ideas.

### STEP2

#### Get out of your bubble

Join a community and share your work. There's no shame in asking others for help, but it can be a bit scary to do so, especially when you've hit a personal breakthrough and are afraid someone might tear your photograph apart. Making friends both through the virtual worlds of social media and internet forums, and the real world photography club that meets in the basement of your local town hall is a great way to gain support and keep the motivation flowing. Take action today. DPS has a huge forum with thousands of people sharing and critiquing each other's photography daily. Google+ and Facebook also offer groups specific to various genres of photography. If all else fails you could always start your own website and start sharing your work on a regular basis there or find a local club that will give you a more real world experience. The key is to get yourself out of the bubble.

### STEP3

#### Invest in yourself

Whether you're photographing pets or at the zoo or on vacation, or in your backyard. The more you're willing to invest the more it will show in your work. Yes, this still about photography as a hobby, but it's an expensive hobby and not just at the wallet, but in time as well so be prepared to invest both if you want to succeed. I'm not saying you need to buy pro gear, an entry level camera and kit lens can take you far and get you some great photographs it may be all you ever need in terms of camera gear. But don't forget about the accessories – tripods, filters and software are all part of the package as well. Make sure you're not only investing money into your hobby though, invest time. Quality gear and software will not fix a lack of experience, so get out and start taking photographs by following step one. Stay motivated by sharing your work and asking for critique by following step two. Then, as finances and time allow, invest both into improvement and you'll have a winning recipe for success. 📸



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Photo is the only thing will remain constant



### PowerShot G1 X Mark III

- 24.2 Megapixel\* CMOS (APS-C) Sensor.
- 3x Zoom Lens (24–72mm<sup>^</sup>) with Optical Image Stabilizer.
- Dual Pixel CMOS AF with Phase-detection.
- DIGIC 7 Image Processor, ISO 100–25600.
- Built-in EVF with Touch and Drag AF.
- 3.0-inch Vari-angle Touchscreen LCD.\*
- Continuous Shooting at up to 7.0 fps (up to 9.0 fps with One Shot AF).
- Panoramic Shot Mode.
- Full HD 60p.
- Optional Waterproof Case and Lens Hood.



# 5 SENSATIONAL TOURS FOR SOLO TRAVELERS

Put your mind at ease. We provide solo travelers with a few options to help them choose the best tour company to suit their needs for an amazing outdoors and adventure trip.

by Valerie Conners & Ben Breslerman

## Travel agency Discover the Top Tours

Are you thinking of taking a tour alone, but you're afraid of being the only solo traveler in your tour group? Don't fret. The number of solo travelers of all ages embarking on outdoors and adventure tours has skyrocketed in recent years. Many tour companies now offer a variety of perks to accommodate this growing trend, reducing or, in some cases, entirely eliminating steep "single supplement" fees that have traditionally accompanied solo bookings. Discover the top tours for single travelers offered by companies that delve into a region's culture while maintaining a friendly, small-group setting.

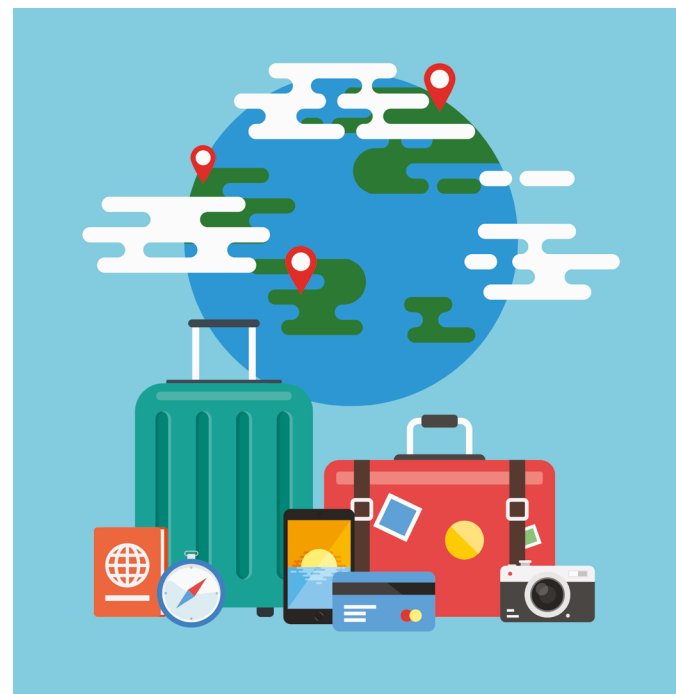
### For Independent Travelers: Intrepid travel

Keeping tour group sizes to no more than 10 people, exploring off the beaten path destinations and having the freedom to chase down unexpected experiences as they pop up along the road such as the philosophy behind Intrepid Travel. This company attracts adventurous souls seeking tours led by guides based out of offices in 22 countries, as well as local travel operators in countries where Intrepid does not have offices. Intrepid tours take travelers to far-flung destinations around the world. Some of its most popular trips include Peru, Thailand, Kenya and Italy, with options offered in a variety of tour styles, from budget-friendly "Basix" (1- to 2-star hotel accommodations) and standard "Original" tours (2- to 3-star lodgings) to "Comfort" level trips, which feature higher-end accommodations.

### For Budget-Conscious Travelers: Overseas adventure travel

Budget-conscious solo travelers would be wise to investigate Overseas Adventure Travel's offerings for singles, which include a number of money-saving deals to exotic destinations, including India, Botswana and Burma. Single travelers face no single supplements on any of OAT's Land Adventures (land-based tours with groups of 10 to 16 travelers) or Small Ship Adventures (boat tours of 16 to 25 travelers), all of which are led by certified guides who are residents of the region you'll be exploring. There's the Travel Companions program as well, which allows travelers to create a profile in a private online community. You can

virtually meet fellow travelers with similar interests, allowing you to make friends before you've even embarked on your adventure.



### For hard-core, authentic journeys: G adventures

For more than 20 years, G Adventures has offered all sorts of trips for solo travelers, from physically challenging tours, such as a hard-core, 10-day trekking adventure up Mont Blanc in Switzerland, to less demanding ones, such as a 22-day Mayan adventure tour through Guatemala, Belize and Mexico, where you'll travel by bus, van and boat. G Adventures' tours are also best for solo travelers seeking the most authentic experience possible in a given destination; the company offers true local experiences, from authentic accommodations (sleeping in a tented desert camp in Morocco) to local transportation (4x4 vehicles in Africa) to off the beaten path experiences (touring orchards on foot in a rural agriturismo area in Tuscany, Italy). Taste-Bud Satisfaction, Secret Food Tours. Discover your favorite city in a way that is sure to tease, then sufficiently satisfy your taste buds. From European treasures like London, Barcelona and Paris (yes, it's still amazing even if you're on a solo mission) across the pond to the states' most food-savvy cities of New York, New Orleans and San Francisco, Secret Food Tours now has 12 of the world's most charming cities in their arsenal. On your tour, you'll poke your head into the best bakeries, butchers, cheese shops and more that the city has to offer. Your guide will explain the history and origin of the food, while grabbing the appropriate amounts to share with the group. Once you've hit all the hot spots, the tour culminates in an epic feast that the foodie in you will never forget.

### For Solo-Traveler-Specific Tour: Exodus

Exodus shows travelers some of the best ways to explore a city or region, whether it's cycling along Croatia's Dalmatian Coast, taking small expedition ships through the world's polar regions, or experiencing the northern lights from an igloo. Travelers, in turn, get to dive into a destination's culture, food and lifestyle in a unique way during tours led by local guides trained in Exodus' leader program. The company designates one or two departure dates for a given tour as "solo departures," which are recommended for clients traveling alone. This approach attracts a high number of solo travelers to tour together. Dozens of itineraries are designated as solo departures (marked by an "S" on the company's website), including trips such as climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, cycling through Vietnam, touring Peru's Inca Trail and Amazon rain forest, and walking Italy's Amalfi Coast.

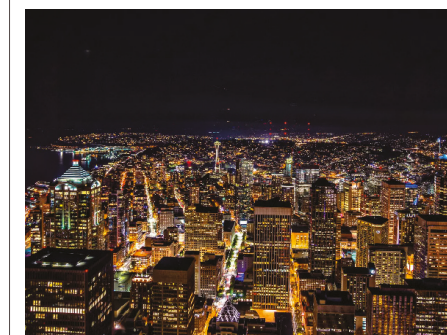
### For Well-Heeled Single Travelers: Abercrombie & Kent

Iconic luxury outfitter Abercrombie & Kent offers small-group travel, granting more intimate access to local culture. Solo travelers might be hesitant to book with a high-end company because of the higher costs, but Abercrombie & Kent grants generous discounts on single supplements for select departures on a variety of tours. On more than 40 departures for trips to places such as China, Tanzania and Turkey, the company reduces a tour's single supplement by as much as 75 percent or waives it entirely, which can save hundreds or thousands of dollars. Unlike some tour companies that place solo travelers with roommates, single travelers on Abercrombie & Kent tours will always be granted single accommodations at hotels throughout their itinerary. 📍

## The Best Places to Travel Solo

### Seattle

Thanks to the omnipresence of the Seattle's coffee culture, a solo diner (or drinker) is commonplace in Seattle. Plus, the proliferation of cafes means there's a rest stop around every corner in between visits to Pike Place Market, the Space Needle, or the funky EMP Museum. The compact downtown area made it easy for me to zip between sights, restaurants, and shopping on foot—and anything that was slightly farther was accessible by the easy-to-use Link light rail, which just expanded to stations in Capitol Hill and the University of Washington this month.



### Barcelona, Spain

Barcelona is an extremely walkable city, and you're unlikely to get lost as long as you have a map of some kind. In the city, you can window shop along Las Ramblas, stroll down the beach boardwalk, and or wander through the Gaudi-designed Park Güell. And the dining options are great for a solo traveler too you can eat al fresco at waterfront paella restaurants or opt for a counter seat at one of the city's many incredible tapas bars.



### Salzburg, Austria

With the Hohensalzburg castle atop the hill and the Salzach River running through town, the storybook allure of Mozart's hometown is as inviting as it is charming. After recreating The Sound of Music by visiting the Mirabell Gardens and Nonnberg Abbey, relax with a coffee on the terrace of Cafe Tomaselli or a pint in the 1,400-seat outdoor garden of Austria's biggest biergarten, Augustiner Bräu which means you can pack way more into a day.



### Dubrovnik, Croatia

The rise in Croatian tourism has improved the ease of travel, and the country's low crime rate heightens the appeal. One look at the oceanfront medieval city of Dubrovnik, preserved by 6,365 feet of pristine walls, and all my worries vanished. The cobblestone streets guided me through artisanal shops and local eats, while a walk along the wall itself offered spectacular bird's eye views of the Adriatic coastline. Other great solo activities : there's a beach just a few minutes away from Old Town, with plenty of kayak and snorkeling tours offered along the way.

# 5 TIPS FOR AVOIDING BED BUGS WITH SECOND HAND FURNITURE

by Sara Elliott

Remember the good old days when you could visit a few neighborhood garage sales on Saturday morning and score a treasure or two without damaging your budget? Today, the bargains are still out there, but who knows what you might bring home hidden inside that gently used bedside table. From movie theaters to upscale hotels, bed bugs are everywhere. If you believe the news reports and you probably should we're living through a bedbug invasion.

Today's super bed bugs are blood suckers extraordinaire, too. They're resistant to many of the eradication methods exterminators rely on, which means their numbers are continuing to grow. What's a garage sale shopper to do? Give up bargain hunting completely? Unthinkable! Let's look at five things you can do to leave bed bugs in the dust but still score safe furniture bargains. Bed bugs can hide in narrow cracks and seams. They're tough to spot and even

tougher to get rid of once you bring them home. It's hard enough to check for bed bugs in items that seem relatively clean and safe, so avoid scavenging furniture finds from iffy sources like Dumpsters and alleys. This may sound like a no brainer, but every week you'll hear some home improvement maven on television bragging about a spectacular home décor item she found abandoned somewhere. For the time being, if an object looks destined for the city

dump leave it alone. We know this is bad news, but upholstered furniture can be a paradise for bed bugs. Once inside, they can be impossible to detect. If the person donating or selling the furniture cleaned or vacuumed it without realizing bed bugs were present, the superficial signs and clues of bed bug activity may be absent, too. Steam cleaning won't eradicate bedbugs from upholstered furniture. The extreme heat necessary to kill the bugs and their eggs doesn't

penetrate into the padding of upholstered pieces deeply enough to do the job. There are over-the-counter pesticides that claim to kill bed bugs, but even they may not be up to the task of adequately permeating upholstered furniture. Even if you do try chemical warfare,

you'll be left with the problem of dead bugs inside the furniture and a lingering chemical residue you won't be able to wash out completely. The choices here aren't encouraging. If you think you were born under a lucky star and

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**“REMEMBER, YOUR TARGET IS AT LEAST 110 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT FOR THREE HOURS OR MORE”**

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still want to risk buying second hand upholstered items, check them thoroughly for signs of bed bugs (more on that in the next couple of pages), and look for items people don't sleep on or near. Bedbugs typically stay close to locations where people sleep. They're more likely to hang out near a bed or couch used for sleeping or napping than they are to inhabit an upholstered dining chair or bar stool. There are no guarantees, though, so this is one big instance where the buyer (you) should definitely beware. If you're willing to play the odds when buying used furnishings, choose hard surfaces like solid wood and plastic to soft or porous surfaces like leather, fabric, pressed wood or cardboard. Bed bugs have been known to hide in books and inside the pleats and seams on lampshades. They've also been found hiding inside lamps, fans and electronics like clocks. Hard, cleanable surfaces with few (if any) crevices or seams are the least risky bets. Think bookshelves, nightstands, tables and dressers. Inspect all potential purchases thoroughly, and clean them before introducing them to your interior spaces. We have some inspection suggestions on the next page. Bed bugs are hard to identify, but they aren't invisible. They leave signs you can sometimes detect

if you're careful and observant. If you find an item from a reputable seller you think is worth serious consideration, grab a magnifying glass and flashlight and look for these telltale signs of bed bug activity: Bed bugs deposit small black spots after feeding. You can sometimes see groups of pinpoint spots on hard and soft surfaces. Fabrics may also show reddish streaks or smears. Since bed bugs spend a lot of time hiding, check the backs and undersides of tables, shelves, headboards and other furnishings for live bugs or molted skins (discarded bed bug exoskeletons). Bedbugs often hide inside furniture joints, seams, creases, cracks and voids. You can sometimes also find them or their eggs in screw holes, nail holes and small louvered vents. Shine a flashlight into narrow openings and inspect them with a magnifying glass. You may even catch a bed bug scurrying away from the light. If you're interested in a painted furniture piece, check for bed bugs hiding under any loose paint. Yes, they can hide behind peeling, soft or uneven painted surfaces as well

as behind wallpaper. Bed bugs sometimes gather behind the paper backing on framed prints, too. These are just a few places bed bugs hide. There are many, many more. Bed bugs can shelter inside hollow towel racks and curtain rods as well as in small appliances. They can burrow into plush toys. They can conceal themselves in clothing, bedding, curtains, rugs, shoes, handbags and just about anything else you can imagine.

After you invest in a second hand piece of furniture, consider heat treating it in a dark plastic bag to be sure it doesn't harbor bed bugs or their eggs. If that's not feasible given the size of the object, place it in quarantine in an empty bathtub. Bed bugs can't escape up the slippery sides of tubs, so they'll be contained and easier to detect. Barring all other options, keep new

acquisitions away from sleeping areas and inspect them periodically for bedbug activity like spots, exoskeletons and eggs.



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY EDUARD MILITARU / IMAGE DESIGNED BY SANGYUP KIM

IMAGE BY MATTHEW HENRY

# WORK AND THE LONELINESS EPIDEMIC

BY VIVEK MURTHY

Reducing isolation at work is good for business.





On August 24, 1992, in the early hours of the morning, my family and I stepped out of our temporary shelter to find our city and our lives forever changed. We had spent the past several hours huddled together as Hurricane Andrew battered our South Florida neighborhood with torrential rain and winds near 170 miles per hour. We saw pieces of homes strewn across the landscape, power lines flung about like pieces of string, and sea creatures stranded in trees, having been blown far inland by the storm. Like thousands of others, we survived the storm and the many dark days that followed because of the kindness of strangers who brought food, water, and comfort. Hurricane Andrew forged a deep sense of connection and community in South Florida as the nation rallied around us and as we supported each other. But slowly, as normal life resumed, the distance between people returned. We went back to our homes, our work, our schools, and our lives, and once again we grew apart. Looking today at so many other places around the world ravaged by disasters of all kinds, I think about how often tragedy brings us together and how fleeting that connection often is. There is good reason to be concerned about social connection in our current world. Loneliness is a growing health epidemic. We live in the most technologically connected age in the history of civilization, yet rates of loneliness have doubled since the 1980s. Today, **over 40% of adults** in America report feeling lonely, and

research suggests that the real number may well be higher. Additionally, the number of people who report having a close confidante in their lives has been declining over the past few decades. In the workplace, many employees and **half of CEOs** report feeling lonely in their roles. During my tenure as U.S. surgeon general, I

## “MANY EMPLOYEES AND HALF OF CEOS REPORT FEELING LONELY IN THEIR ROLES”

saw firsthand how loneliness affected people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds across the country. I met middle and high school students in urban and rural areas who turned to violence, drugs, and gangs to ease the pain of their loneliness. I sat with mothers and fathers who had lost sons and daughters to drug overdoses and were struggling to cope alone because of the unfortunate stigma surrounding addiction. And I met factory workers, doctors, small business owners, and teachers who described feeling alone in their work and on the verge of burn out. During my years caring for

patients, the most common pathology I saw was not heart disease or diabetes; it was loneliness. The elderly man who came to our hospital every few weeks seeking relief from chronic pain was also looking for human connection: He was lonely. The middle-aged woman battling advanced HIV who had no one to call to inform that she was sick: She was lonely too. I found that loneliness was often in the background of clinical illness, contributing to disease and making it harder for patients to cope and heal. This may not surprise you. Chances are, you or someone you know has been struggling with loneliness. And that can be a serious problem. Loneliness and weak social connections are associated with a reduction in lifespan similar to that caused by smoking **15 cigarettes a day** and even greater than that associated with obesity. But we haven't focused nearly as much effort on strengthening connections between people as we have on curbing tobacco use or obesity. Loneliness is also associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, depression, and anxiety. At work, loneliness **reduces task performance**, limits creativity, and impairs other aspects of executive function such as reasoning and decision making. For our health and our work, it is imperative that we address the loneliness epidemic quickly. Once we understand the profound human and economic costs of loneliness, we must determine whose responsibility it is to address the problem. The government and health care system have important roles to play in helping us understand the impact of loneliness, identifying who is affected, and determining which interventions work. But to truly solve loneliness requires the engagement of institutions where people spend the bulk of their time: families, schools, social organizations, and the workplace. Companies in particular have the power to drive change at a societal level not only by strengthening connections among employees, partners, and clients but also by serving as an innovation hub that can inspire other organizations to address loneliness.

### THE ROOTS OF LONELINESS

Loneliness is the subjective feeling of having inadequate social connections. Why has this feeling increased over past decades? Partly because people are more geographically mobile and are thus more likely to be living apart from friends and family. Indeed, more people report living alone today than at any time since the census began collecting this data. In the workplace, new models of working — such as telecommuting and

some on-demand “gig economy” contracting arrangements — have created flexibility but often reduce the opportunities for in-person interaction and relationships. And even working at an office doesn't guarantee meaningful connections: People sit in an office full of coworkers, even in open-plan workspaces, but everyone is staring at a computer or attending task-oriented meetings where opportunities to connect on a human level are scarce. Happy hours, coffee breaks, and team-building exercises are designed to build connections between colleagues, but do they really help people develop deep relationships? On average, we spend more waking hours with our coworkers than we do with our families. But do they know what we really care about? Do they understand our values? Do they share in our triumphs and pains? These aren't just rhetorical questions; from a biological perspective, we evolved to be social creatures. Long ago, our ability to build relationships of trust and cooperation helped increase our chances of having a stable food supply and more consistent protection from predators. Over thousands of years, the value of social connection has become baked into our nervous system such that the absence of such a protective force creates a stress state in the body. Loneliness causes stress, and long-term or chronic stress leads to more frequent elevations of a key stress hormone, cortisol. It is also linked to higher levels of inflammation in the body. This in turn damages blood vessels and other tissues, increasing the risk of heart disease, diabetes, joint disease, depression, obesity, and premature death. Chronic stress can also hijack your brain's prefrontal cortex, which governs decision making, planning, emotional regulation, analysis, and abstract thinking. This isn't just bad for our health; it's also bad for business. Researchers for Gallup found that having **strong social connections** at work makes employees more likely to be engaged with their jobs and produce higher-quality work, and less likely to fall sick or be injured. Without strong social connections, these gains become losses. Connection can also help indirectly by enhancing self-esteem and self-efficacy while also shifting our experience toward positive emotions — all of which can buffer an individual during stressful situations and have positive effects on health. Indeed, studies have found that companies whose workers feel they have high-stress jobs have markedly higher health care expenditures than their



“SOLVING LONELINESS REQUIRES THE HELP OF INSTITUTIONS WHERE PEOPLE SPEND THE BULK OF THEIR TIME”

counterparts with low-stress employees. Our understanding of biology, psychology, and the workplace calls for companies to make fostering social connections a strategic priority. A more connected workforce is more likely to enjoy greater fulfillment, productivity, and engagement while being more protected against illness, disability, and burnout.

## “COMPANIES HAVE THE POWER TO ADDRESS THE LONELINESS EPIDEMIC QUICKLY”

### Forging connections at work

My experience has been that people bring the most to their work when they feel connected to the mission and the people around them. While I was at the Surgeon General's Office, our staff grew quickly as we sought to build a team that could address an array of pressing public health issues. Although team members got along well, it soon became clear that we didn't fully recognize the rich life experience that each person brought to the team. We had a decorated Army nurse, a woman who had spent years providing medical care to prison inmates, an accomplished pianist and preacher, an Olympic-level runner, and several team members who had struggled with addiction in their family. Even though we were operating with the formality and hierarchy of a uniformed service, my team was hungry to know more about each other. To bring us

closer, we developed “Inside Scoop,” an exercise in which team members were asked to share something about themselves through pictures for five minutes during weekly staff meetings. Presenting was an opportunity for each of us to share more of who we were; listening was an opportunity to recognize our colleagues in the way they wished to be seen. The impact was immediate. These sessions quickly became many people's favorite time of the week, and they were more enthusiastic about participating at staff meetings. People felt more valued by the team after seeing their colleagues' genuine reactions to their stories. Team members who had traditionally been quiet during discussions began speaking up. Many began taking on tasks outside their traditional roles. They appeared less stressed at work. And most of them told me how much more connected they felt to their colleagues and the mission they served. I remember one Inside Scoop from a team member who had proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps. I expected him to talk about his experiences in the military. Instead, he spoke about the complex relationship he had had with his father and how he could see his father's spirit living on in the musical talent of his grandchildren. He described his mother as his hero and shared how remembering her in the face of a challenge would transform his doubts into strength. As he spoke, his eyes glistened. I felt a deep connection to him in that moment and was inspired by his honesty and compelled to reflect on my own relationships. Even though we were close before, my relationship with him became even stronger after that day. I share what my office did not as the antidote to loneliness but as proof that small steps can make a difference. And because small actions like this one are vital to improving our health and the health of our economy.



“LONELINESS SHORTENS LIFESPANS IN A WAY SIMILAR TO SMOKING 15 CIGARETTES A DAY”

CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT – IMAGE BY HARVARD BUSINESS / IMAGE BY NIGEL TADYANEHONDO

EVALUATE THE CURRENT STATE OF CONNECTIONS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

MAKE STRENGTHENING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY KHARA WOODS / IMAGE BY LINKEDIN SALES NAVIGATOR

### Creating connection

We know that if we are to prioritize our health and the health of our companies, the workplace is one of the most important places to cultivate social connections. And while it may seem easy enough to organize a team-building event, grab a cup of coffee with a colleague, or chat with people around the water cooler about Game of Thrones, real connection requires creating an environment that embraces the unique identities and experiences of employees inside and outside the workplace. Here are five deliberate steps that can help build healthy and productive relationships: Evaluate the current state of connections in your workplace. Strong social connections are not simply about the number of friends and family members one has; it's the quality of those connections that matters more. You can be surrounded by many people and have thousands of connections on LinkedIn or Facebook and still be lonely. Conversely, you can have just a handful of people with whom you interact and feel very connected. To assess the quality of the relationships at your organization, here are some questions to consider: Do employees feel that their colleagues genuinely value and care for them? Do they believe their institution has a culture that supports giving and receiving kindness? Would they characterize their relationships with colleagues as being driven more by love or by fear? Build understanding of high-quality relationships. Strong social

connections are characterized by meaningful shared experiences and mutually beneficial two-way relationships, where both individuals give and receive. High-quality relationships must be grounded in love and informed by kindness, compassion, and generosity. There is a tendency to look at such positive emotions as "soft" and even as a liability that distorts judgment and impairs tough decision making. But research increasingly shows that positive emotions enhance performance and resilience. Be clear with employees and colleagues about the types of relationships you want to see at work and what types of actions, like generosity, foster those relationships. Make strengthening social connections a strategic priority in your organization. Designing and modeling a culture that supports connection is more important than any single program. It will require buy-in and engagement from all levels of the organization, particularly leadership. Having senior members of an organization invest in building strong connections with other team members can set a powerful example, especially when leaders are willing to demonstrate that vulnerability can be a source of strength, not weakness. Ask yourself if the current culture and policies in your institution support the development of trusted relationships. Encourage coworkers to reach out and help others — and accept help when it is offered. Although it may seem counterintuitive to assist others when you are feeling lonely, extending help to others and allowing yourself to receive help builds a connection that is mutually affirming. Late one night during my residency training, I was managing a busy intensive care unit when one of my colleagues stopped and offered to help with a sudden influx of critically ill patients. Because of his generosity, we were able to rapidly place specialized catheters in patients with bloodstream infections and get them life-saving antibiotics quickly. We worked together for only an hour that night, but the connection we built lasted years. Giving and receiving help freely is one of the most tangible ways we experience our connections with each other. Create opportunities to learn about your colleagues' personal lives. The likelihood that authentic social connections will develop is greater when people feel understood and appreciated as individuals with full lives — as mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, individuals with passions outside of work, concerned citizens and community members. Everyone in an organization has the power to create spaces

for sharing, whether it is in a formal gathering or an informal conversation over lunch.

### Healing one another

When I think of loneliness, I think about the first day of my internal medicine residency program. A faculty member advised us to call the people we love and tell them that they wouldn't be hearing from us much over the next year. As medical students, we'd heard about the trials of residency training: the unforgiving hours, the grueling intensity, and the crushing isolation. That morning, the idea of stepping away from our most trusted social relationships felt unnerving. Despite my initial fears about loneliness, those three years ended up being the best of my life. The hours and intensity were just as billed, if not even more so. As predicted, it was very difficult to stay in touch with friends. But in time I developed rich and fulfilling relationships with my colleagues in the hospital. Coming to work came to feel like spending time with friends. There were plenty of difficult moments when our emotional, intellectual, and physical reserves were tested — navigating a difficult end-of-life conversation, trying to find an elusive source of infection in a critically ill patient, or simply fighting back our own exhaustion — but my bonds with my colleagues softened the blows and saved me from plenty of others. Those bonds enabled me to do more, give more, appreciate more, and be a better doctor to thousands of patients. Today, years later, I wonder if these relationships provided deeper healing: if they made me not just a better doctor but a better colleague and leader, too. The world is suffering from an epidemic of loneliness. If we cannot rebuild strong, authentic social connections, we will continue to splinter apart in the workplace and in society. Instead of coming together to take on the great challenges before us, we will retreat to our corners, angry, sick, and alone. We must take action now to build the connections that are the foundation of strong companies and strong communities and that ensure greater health and well-being for all of us. ☺



IN 1840, EDGAR ALLAN POE DESCRIBED THE 'MAD ENERGY' OF AN AGEING MAN WHO ROVED THE STREETS OF LONDON FROM DUSK TILL DAWN. HIS EXCRUCIATING DESPAIR COULD BE TEMPORARILY RELIEVED ONLY BY IMMERSING HIMSELF IN A TUMULTUOUS THROG OF CITY-DWELLERS. 'HE REFUSES TO BE ALONE,' POE WROTE. HE 'IS THE TYPE AND THE

GENIUS OF DEEP CRIME ...  
THE MAN OF THE CROWD.'

BY JENNIFER STITT

**BEFORE YOU CAN BE  
WITH OTHERS,  
FIRST LEARN TO BE  
ALONE**

BEFORE YOU CAN BE WITH OTHERS,  
FIRST LEARN TO BE ALONE

## WE BECOME LONELY IN OUR SOLITUDE?

In 1840, Edgar Allan Poe described the ‘mad energy’ of an ageing man who roved the streets of London from dusk till dawn. His excruciating despair could be temporarily relieved only by immersing himself in a tumultuous throng of city-dwellers. ‘He refuses to be alone,’ Poe wrote. He ‘is the type and the genius of deep crime ... He is the man of the crowd.’ Like many poets and philosophers through the ages, Poe stressed the significance of solitude. It was ‘such a great misfortune’, he thought, to lose the capacity to be alone with oneself, to get caught up in the crowd, to surrender one’s singularity to mind-numbing conformity. Two decades later, the idea of solitude captured Ralph Waldo Emerson’s imagination in a slightly different way: quoting Pythagoras, he wrote: ‘In the morning, – solitude; ... that nature may speak to the imagination, as she does never in company.’ Emerson encouraged the wisest teachers to press upon their pupils the importance of ‘periods and habits of solitude’, habits that made ‘serious and abstracted thought’ possible. In the 20th century, the idea of solitude formed the centre of Hannah

Arendt’s thought. A German-Jewish émigré who fled Nazism and found refuge in the United States, Arendt spent much of her life studying the relationship between the individual and the polis. For her, freedom was tethered to both the private sphere – the *vita contemplativa* and the public, political sphere the *vita activa*. She understood that freedom entailed more than the human capacity to act spontaneously and creatively in public. It also entailed the capacity to think and to judge in private, where solitude empowers the individual to contemplate her actions and develop her conscience, to escape the cacophony of the crowd to finally hear herself think. In 1961, *The New Yorker* commissioned Arendt to cover the trial of Adolf Eichmann, a Nazi SS officer who helped to orchestrate the Holocaust. How could anyone, she wanted to know, perpetrate such evil? Surely only a wicked sociopath could participate in the Shoah. But Arendt was surprised by Eichmann’s lack of imagination, his consummate conventionality. She argued that while Eichmann’s actions were evil, Eichmann himself – the person – ‘was quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic

nor monstrous. There was no sign in him of firm ideological convictions.’ She attributed his immorality – his capacity, even his eagerness, to commit crimes – to his ‘thoughtlessness’. It was his inability to stop and think that permitted Eichmann to participate in mass murder. Just as Poe suspected that something sinister lurked deep within the man of the crowd, Arendt recognised that: ‘A person who does not know that silent intercourse (in which we examine what we say and what we do) will not mind contradicting himself, and this means he will never be either able or willing to account for what he says or does; nor will he mind committing any crime, since he can count on its being forgotten the next moment.’ Eichmann had shunned Socratic self-reflection. He had failed to return home to himself, to a state of solitude. He had discarded the *vita contemplativa*, and thus he had failed to embark upon the essential question-and-answering process that would have allowed him to examine the meaning of things, to distinguish between fact and fiction, truth and falsehood, good and evil. ‘It is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong,’ Arendt wrote, ‘because you can remain the friend of

CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT – IMAGE BY PASCAL SWIER / IMAGE BY PATRICAJUJOLIN

the sufferer; who would want to be the friend of and have to live together with a murderer? Not even another murderer.’ It is not that unthinking men are monsters, that the sad sleepwalkers of the world would sooner commit murder than face themselves in solitude. What Eichmann showed Arendt was that society could function freely and democratically only if it were made up of individuals engaged in the thinking activity – an activity that required solitude. Arendt believed that ‘living together with others begins with living together with oneself’. But what if, we might ask, we become lonely in our solitude? Isn’t there some danger that we will become isolated individuals, cut off from the pleasures of friendship? Philosophers have long made a careful, and important, distinction between solitude and loneliness. In *The Republic* (c380 BCE), Plato proffered a parable in which Socrates celebrates the solitary philosopher. In the allegory of the cave, the philosopher escapes from the darkness of an underground den – and from the company of other humans – into the sunlight of contemplative thought. Alone but not lonely, the philosopher becomes attuned to her inner

self and the world. In solitude, the soundless dialogue ‘which the soul holds with herself’ finally becomes audible. Echoing Plato, Arendt observed: ‘Thinking, existentially speaking, is a solitary but not a lonely business; solitude is that human situation in which I keep myself company. Loneliness comes about ... when I am one and without company’ but desire it and cannot find it. In solitude, Arendt never longed for companionship or craved camaraderie because she was never truly alone. Her inner self was a friend with whom she could carry on a conversation, that silent voice who posed the vital Socratic question: ‘What do you mean when you say ...?’ The self, Arendt declared, ‘is the only one from whom you can never get away – except by ceasing to think.’ Arendt’s warning is well worth remembering in our own time. In our hyper-connected world, a world in which we can communicate constantly and instantly over the internet, we rarely remember to carve out spaces for solitary contemplation. We check our email hundreds of times per day; we shoot off thousands of text messages per month; we obsessively thumb through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram,

aching to connect at all hours with close and casual acquaintances alike. We search for friends of friends, ex-lovers, people we barely know, people we have no business knowing. We crave constant companionship. But, Arendt reminds us, if we lose our capacity for solitude, our ability to be alone with ourselves, then we lose our very ability to think. We risk getting caught up in the crowd. We risk being ‘swept away’, as she put it, ‘by what everybody else does and believes in’ no longer able, in the cage of thoughtless conformity, to distinguish ‘right from wrong, beautiful from ugly’ Solitude is not only a state of mind essential to the development of an individual’s consciousness and conscience but also a practice that prepares one for participation in social and political life. Before we can keep company with others, we must learn to keep company with ourselves. ●

‘A PERSON WHO DOES NOT KNOW THAT SILENT INTERCOURSE WILL NOT MIND CONTRADICTING HIMSELF, AND THIS MEANS HE WILL NEVER BE EITHER ABLE OR WILLING TO ACCOUNT FOR WHAT HE SAYS OR DOES; NOR WILL HE MIND COMMITTING ANY CRIME, SINCE HE CAN COUNT ON ITS BEING FORGOTTEN THE NEXT MOMENT.’

# HOW **ART** HELPED ME SEE THE BEAUTY IN

BY OLIVIA LAING

THE LONELY CITY  
EXPLORES THE  
CONNECTION BETWEEN  
ISOLATION AND  
CREATIVITY. IN THIS EXTRACT  
SHE EXAMINES ITS ROLE IN THE  
WORK OF EDWARD HOPPER, ANDY  
WARHOL AND OTHERS, AND SUGGESTS  
WE SHOULD ALL BE A LITTLE LESS  
FRIGHTENED OF BEING ALONE...

# LONELINESS

The background is a painting of a bar scene. At the top, a dark sign reads 'PHILLIES' in gold letters. To the left of the sign, a small sign says 'Only 5¢'. The bar is lit with a warm, yellowish light. Several people are visible: a man in a blue suit and hat stands with his back to the viewer; a man in a blue suit sits at the bar; a woman in a red top sits next to him; and a man in a white uniform and cap sits at the bar. In the background, there are two large silver water dispensers. The floor is dark with some light reflections.

Imagine standing by a window at night, on the sixth or 17th or 43rd floor of a building. The city reveals itself as a set of cells, a hundred thousand windows, some darkened and some flooded with green or white or golden light. Inside, strangers swim to and fro, attending to the business of their private hours. You can see them, but you can't reach them, and so this commonplace urban phenomenon, available in any city of the world on any night, conveys to even the most social a tremor of loneliness, its uneasy combination of separation and exposure.

You can be lonely anywhere, but there is a particular flavour to the loneliness that comes from living in a city, surrounded by millions of people. One might think this state was antithetical to urban living, to the massed presence of other human beings, and yet mere physical proximity is not enough to dispel a sense of internal isolation. It's possible – easy, even – to feel desolate and unfrequented in oneself while living cheek by jowl with others. Cities can be lonely places, and in admitting this we see that loneliness doesn't necessarily require physical solitude, but rather an absence or paucity of connection, closeness, kinship: an inability to find as much intimacy as is desired. I know what that feels like. I've been a citizen of loneliness. I've done my time in empty rooms.

A few years back I moved to New York, drifting through a succession of sublet apartments. A new relationship had abruptly turned to dust and though I had friends in the city I was paralysed by loneliness. The feelings I had were so raw and overwhelming I often wished I could find a way of losing myself altogether

until the intensity diminished.

The revelation of loneliness, the omnipresent, unanswerable feeling that I was in a state of lack, that I didn't have what people were supposed to, and that this was down to some grave and no doubt externally unmistakable failing in my person: all this had quickened lately, the unwelcome consequence of being so summarily dismissed. I don't suppose it was unrelated, either, to the fact that I was keeling towards the midpoint of my 30s, an age at which female aloneness is no longer socially sanctioned and carries with it a persistent whiff of strangeness, deviance and failure.

The experience was acutely painful, and yet as the months wore by I became weirdly fascinated by it. Loneliness, Dennis Wilson once sang, is a very special place, and I started to wonder if he might be right, if there wasn't more to it than meets the eye – if, in fact, loneliness didn't drive one to consider some of the larger questions of what it is to be alive.

There were things that burned away at me, not only as a private individual, but also as a citizen of our century, our pixelated age. What does it mean to be lonely? How do we live, if we're not intimately engaged with another human being? How do we connect with other people? Is sex a cure for loneliness, and if it is, what happens if our body or sexuality is considered deviant or damaged, if we are ill or unblessed with beauty?

I was by no means the only person who'd puzzled over these questions. All kinds of writers, artists, film-makers and songwriters have explored the subject of loneliness, attempting to gain purchase on it, to tackle the issues that it provokes. But I was at the time

beginning to fall in love with images, to find a solace in them I didn't find elsewhere, and so I conducted the majority of my investigations within the visual realm. I sought out artists who seemed to articulate or be troubled by loneliness, particularly as it manifests in cities. The obvious place to start was with Edward Hopper, that rangy, taciturn man. Born at the tail end of the 19th century, he spent his working life documenting life in the electrically uneasy metropolis. Though he was often resistant to the notion that loneliness was his metier, his central theme, his scenes of men and women in deserted cafes, offices and hotel lobbies remain signature images of urban isolation.

## “OUR MOST POIGNANT, CEASELESSLY REPLICATED ROMANTIC IMAGE OF AMERICAN LONELINESS”.

Hopper's people are often alone, or in fraught, uncommunicative groupings of twos and threes, fastened into poses that seem indicative of distress. But this isn't the only reason his work is so deeply associated with loneliness. He

also succeeds in capturing something of how it feels, by way of the strange construction of his city layouts.

Take Nighthawks, which the novelist Joyce Carol Oates once described as “our most poignant, ceaselessly replicated romantic image of American loneliness”. It shows a diner at night: an urban aquarium, a glass cell. Inside, in their livid yellow prison, are four figures. A spivvy couple, a counter-boy in a white uniform, and a man sitting with his back to the window, the open crescent of his jacket pocket the darkest point on the canvas. No one is talking. No one is looking at anyone else. Is the diner a refuge for the isolated, a place of succour, or does it serve to illustrate the disconnection that proliferates in cities? The painting's brilliance derives from its instability, its refusal to commit.

I'd been looking at it on laptop screens for years before I finally saw it in person, at the Whitney one sweltering October afternoon. The colour hit me first. Green walls, green shadows falling in spikes and diamonds on the green sidewalk. There is no shade in existence that more powerfully communicates urban alienation than this noxious pallid green, which only came into being with the advent of electricity, and which is inextricably associated with the nocturnal city of glass towers, empty illuminated offices and neon signs.

But it was the window that really stopped me in my tracks: a bubble of glass that separated the diner from the street, curving sinuously back against itself. It was impossible to gaze through into the luminous interior without experiencing a swift apprehension of loneliness, of how it might feel to be shut out, standing alone in the cooling air.

Glass is a persistent symbol of loneliness, and for good reason. Almost as soon as I arrived in the city, I had the sense that I was trapped behind glass. I couldn't reach out or make contact, and at the same time I felt dangerously exposed, vulnerable to judgment, particularly in situations where being alone felt awkward or wrong, where I was surrounded by couples or groups. This is what Hopper replicates with his strange architectural configurations: the way a feeling of separation, of being walled off or penned in, combines with near-unbearable exposure. “I probably am a lonely one,” he once told an interviewer, and his paintings radiate an empathic understanding of what that's like. You might think this would make his work distressing, but on the contrary I found it eased the burden of my own feelings. Someone else had grappled with loneliness, and had found beauty, even value in it.

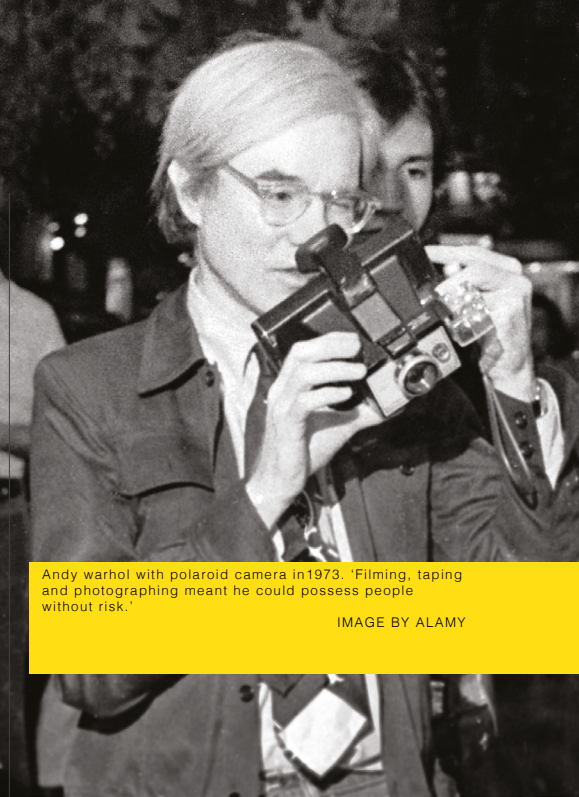
Loneliness doesn't only affect the solitary. It can also prey on people who have what seem like highly populated lives. This is the case with Andy Warhol, who was almost never without a glittering entourage and yet whose work is surprisingly eloquent on isolation and problems of attachment, issues he struggled with lifelong.

Warhol's art patrols the space between people, conducting a grand philosophical investigation into closeness and distance, intimacy and estrangement. Like many lonely people, he was an inveterate hoarder, making and surrounding himself with objects, barriers against the demands of human intimacy. Terrified of physical contact, he rarely left the house without an armoury of cameras and tape recorders, using them to broker and buffer interactions: behaviour that has light to shed on how wedeploy technology in our own century of so-called connectivity.

Even as a little boy, Warhol was notable for his skill at drawing and his painful shyness: a pale, slightly otherworldly child, who fantasised about renaming himself Andy Morningstar. His parents were Ruthenian immigrants, and he was passionately close to his mother, particularly when at the age of seven he contracted rheumatic fever, followed by St Vitus's Dance, an alarming disorder characterised by involuntary movements of the limbs.

This spell of social withdrawal left its mark, as did the experience of being betrayed by his own body. As an adult, Warhol was hampered by an absolute belief in his own physical abhorrence: his bulbous nose and receding hair; his strikingly white skin, covered in liver-coloured blotches. What he most wanted was to be desired by one of the beautiful boys on whom he developed serial crushes, a

## “A HOPELESS BORN LOSER, THE LONELIEST, MOST FRIENDLESS PERSON I'D EVER MET IN MY LIFE”.



Andy Warhol with Polaroid camera in 1973. "Filming, taping and photographing meant he could possess people without risk."

IMAGE BY ALAMY

breed exemplified by the poised and wickedly glamorous Truman Capote who described his suitor cruelly as “a hopeless born loser, the loneliest, most friendless person I'd ever met in my life”.

In the 1960s, just as he was making a name for himself as a Pop artist, Warhol found a novel way of handling his problems with intimacy. He bought a television at Macy's: an RCA 19-inch black-and-white set. Able to conjure or dismiss company at the touch of a button, he found he cared much less about getting close to other people, a process he'd found so hurtful in the past.

It was the beginning of a passionate affair with machines. Over the years, he fell for a range of devices, from the stationary 16mm Bolex on which he recorded the Screen Tests of the 1960s to the Polaroid camera that was his permanent companion at parties in the 1980s. Part of the appeal was undoubtedly having something to hide behind in public. Acting as servant or companion to the machine was another route to invisibility, a mask-cum-prop like his wig and glasses.

But Warhol also used machines to buffer his interactions with other people. Filming, taping and photographing meant he could possess people without risk: a strategy of enormous appeal to the lonely, who fear rejection almost as intensely as they desire intimacy.

In this, as in so many things, he was the herald of our own era. His attachment prefigures our rapturous, narcissistic fixation with phones and computers; the enormous devolution of our emotional and practical lives to technological



An untitled detail from in the realms of the unreal by Henry Darger, an outsider artist whose life and work have been debated by historians since his death in 1973.

IMAGE BY MONGREL MEDIA

apparatuses of one kind or another. I understood exactly why he called his tape recorder his wife. I would have been lost without my MacBook, which promised to bring connection and in the meantime filled the vacuum left by love.

Loneliness can wed people to machines, and it can also drive them away from the world. The lonely disappear in plain sight, retreating into their apartments because of sickness or bereavement, mental illness or the persistent, unbearable burden of shyness, of not knowing how to impress themselves into society.

If anyone can be said to have worked from this place, it's the outsider artist and hospital janitor Henry Darger, who was born in Chicago in 1892. Darger's life illuminates the social forces that produce isolation and the way the imagination can work to resist it.

For decades Darger lived alone in a boarding house room crammed with hoarded rubbish. In 1972 he became ill and was moved unwillingly to a Catholic mission. When his room was cleared, it was discovered to contain hundreds of paintings, of almost supernatural radiance. These baffling, beautiful collages were populated by soldiers and naked little girls with penises. Some had charming, fairytale elements: clouds with faces and winged creatures sporting in the sky. Others showed exquisitely staged and coloured scenes of mass torture, complete with delicately painted pools of scarlet blood. Together, they described a coherent otherworld: the Realms of the Unreal, site of a devastating civil war between forces of good and evil.

Since his death, theories about Darger have proliferated, put forward by an impassioned chorus of art historians, academics and psychologists. These voices are by no means convergent, but speaking they have established Darger as an outsider artist nonpareil: untutored, compulsive and almost certainly mentally ill. Over the years, he's been posthumously diagnosed with autism and schizophrenia and declared a paedophile or serial killer, an accusation that has proved enduring despite an absolute lack of evidence. It seemed to me that this second act of Darger's life compounded the isolation of the first. The things he made have served as lightning rods for other people's fears and fantasies about isolation. But what this pathologising elides is the damage wreaked on individuals like Darger by society: the role that structures such as families, schools and jobs play in any person's experience of isolation.

Like many lonely people, Darger's childhood was full of shattered attachments and broken

ties. His mother died when he was four. His father was too ill to care for him, and so he was sent to the Illinois Asylum for Feeble Minded Children, where extreme violence was common. After escaping, he worked in the city's hospitals, where he spent nearly six decades rolling bandages and sweeping floors. Intelligent and talented, he was deprived of both love and an education, and in his entire life had only one friend.

“MY RAGE IS REALLY ABOUT THE FACT THAT WHEN I WAS TOLD THAT I’D CONTRACTED THIS VIRUS IT DIDN’T TAKE ME LONG TO REALISE THAT I’D CONTRACTED A DISEASED SOCIETY AS WELL.”

He built the world of the Realms out of almost nothing, against extraordinary odds. I realised this most forcibly when I visited the recreation of his room in a Chicago museum. It was packed with art materials: pencil stubs made usable by being jammed into syringes; piles of children's paints and crayons; broken elastic bands mended with tape. In all his life, Darger's income never exceeded \$3,000 a year, and yet he had accumulated these resources, painstakingly gathered from among the discards, the leavings of the city. Why did he spend his life creating a universe of such violence and beauty? There is a theory that loneliness stems from a profound sense of disintegration, caused by just the kind of broken childhood Darger suffered. It's a longing not just for love, but for integration, for wholeness. Now look again at Darger's pictures: the unleashed forces of good and evil brought painstakingly together, into a single field, a single frame. Insane? I don't think so. It's the work of someone absolutely alone, struggling with all their

might to make sense of suffering and disorder. You can show what loneliness looks like, and you can also take up arms against it, making things that serve explicitly as communication devices against censorship and alienation.

This was the driving motivation of David Wojnarowicz, a still under-known American artist and writer, whose courageous, extraordinary body of work did more than anything to release me from the feeling that in my solitude I was shamefully alone.

Like Darger, Wojnarowicz had a brutal childhood. As a small boy in the 1950s, he and his two siblings were kidnapped by their father, an abusive alcoholic who took them to live in the suburbs of New Jersey. The Universe of the Neatly Clipped Lawn, David called it – a place where physical and psychic violence against women and children could be carried out without repercussions.

By 15, he was turning \$10 tricks in Times Square, and by 17 had left home entirely. He almost starved during his homeless years. Sometimes he was raped or drugged by the men who offered him money; sometimes he stayed in welfare hotels and derelict buildings, or with a group of transvestites by the Hudson River.

In 1973, he prised himself off the streets, though the legacy of shame and isolation never fully dispersed. He came out as gay, and felt immediately lighter, albeit acutely aware of the weight of antagonism stacked against him, the

hatred lurking everywhere for a man who loved men and was not ashamed of the fact.

It was in this period that he began to make art. Photographs of a man in a paper mask of Arthur Rimbaud, wandering the meat markets and bus stations of New York. Lurid, intricate paintings that look like maps of some mythic realm. A film of a drag queen walking slowly into a lake; graffiti of burning houses and choking cows. Within a handful of years he became one of the stars of the 1980s East Village art scene, alongside Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring and Nan Goldin.

What happened to him? Aids happened. In 1988 he was diagnosed with Aids, then a death sentence. His first reaction was intense loneliness, combined with absolute rage against the bigoted politicians who blocked funding and education, the public figures who called for people with Aids to be tattooed with their infection status or quarantined on islands.

Stigmatisation: the cruel process by which society works to exclude people considered undesirable, whether because of race or poverty or illness or a thousand other factors.

Stigmatisation is yet another driver of loneliness, reducing a person from a human being to the bearer of something polluting or repulsive. Wojnarowicz's response was to fight back, to resist the silencing and shaming he'd suffered from lifelong; and to do it not alone but in the company of others. In the plague years, he became involved with Act Up, a direct

action group that fused art and resistance into an astonishingly potent force. There isn't much to find inspiring about the Aids crisis, except the way that it was combated not by people contracting into couples or family groupings, but by communal direct action. Wojnarowicz's work had always been political.

Even before Aids, he'd dealt with sexuality and difference: with what it's like to live in a world that despises you, to be subject every single day to hatred and contempt, enacted not just by individuals but by the supposedly protective structures of society itself. Aids confirmed his suspicions. As he put it in his searing memoir, *Close to the Knives*: “My rage is really about the fact that when I was told that I'd contracted this virus it didn't take me long to realise that I'd contracted a diseased society as well.”

Act Up's work undoubtedly drove improved treatment for people with Aids, but combination therapy came too late for Wojnarowicz. He died in 1992, at the age of 37, leaving behind a body of work of radical honesty.

“I want to make somebody feel less alienated that's the most meaningful thing to me,” he once said. “We can all affect each other, by being open enough to make each other feel less alienated.”

That statement summed up precisely what his art meant to me. Nothing in my years of loneliness touched me as deeply as

Wojnarowicz's openness: his willingness to admit to failure or grief; to acknowledge desire, anger, pain; to be emotionally alive. His honesty was in itself a cure for loneliness, dissolving the sense of difference that comes when one believes one's feelings or desires to be uniquely shameful. How had he responded to the sources of isolation in his own life? By speaking the truth, by making art, by building community, by engaging in political action, by refusing to be invisible.

The artists I encountered in the lonely city helped me not just to understand loneliness, but also to see the potential beauty in it, the way it drives creativity of all kinds. These days, I don't think the cure for loneliness is meeting someone, not necessarily. I think it's about two things: learning how to befriend yourself and understanding that many of the things that seem to afflict us as individuals are in fact a result of larger forces of stigma and exclusion, which can and should be resisted. There is a gentrification that's happening to cities, and there's a gentrification that's happening to the emotions too, with a



similarly homogenising, whitening, deadening effect. Amid the glossiness of late capitalism, we are fed the notion that all difficult feelings – depression, anxiety, loneliness, rage – are simply a consequence of unsettled chemistry, a problem to be fixed, rather than a response to structural injustice or, on the other hand, to the native texture of embodiment, of doing time, as David Wojnarowicz memorably put it, in a rented body, with all the attendant grief and frustration that entails.

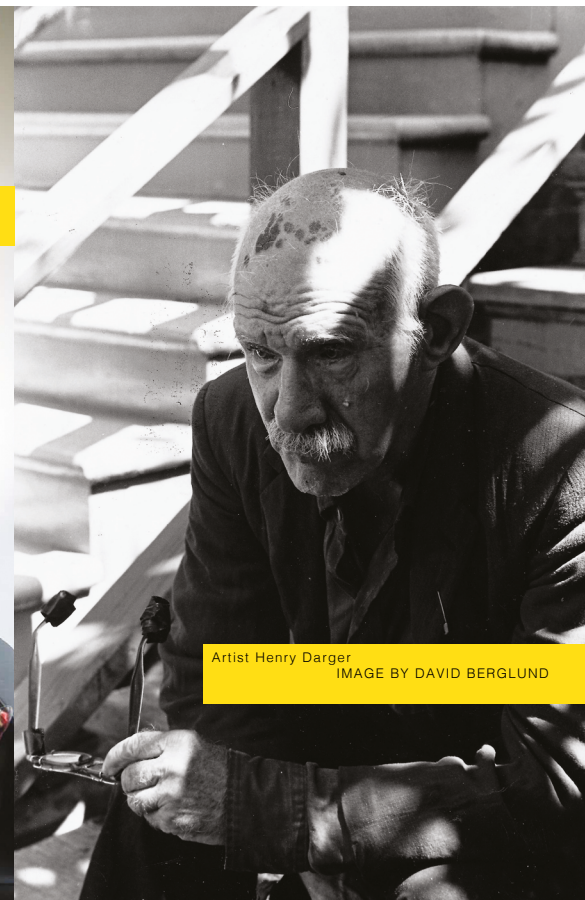
So much of the pain of loneliness is to do with concealment, with being compelled to hide vulnerability, to tuck ugliness away, to cover up wounds as if they are literally repulsive. But why hide? What's so shameful about wanting, about desire, about having failed to achieve satisfaction, about experiencing unhappiness? Why this need constantly to inhabit peak states, or to be comfortably sealed inside a unit of two, turned inward from the world at large? I have been lonely, and no doubt I will be lonely again. There isn't any shame in that. Loneliness is a special place, I'm certain of it: adrift from the larger continent of human experience, but intrinsic to the very act of being alive. ☺

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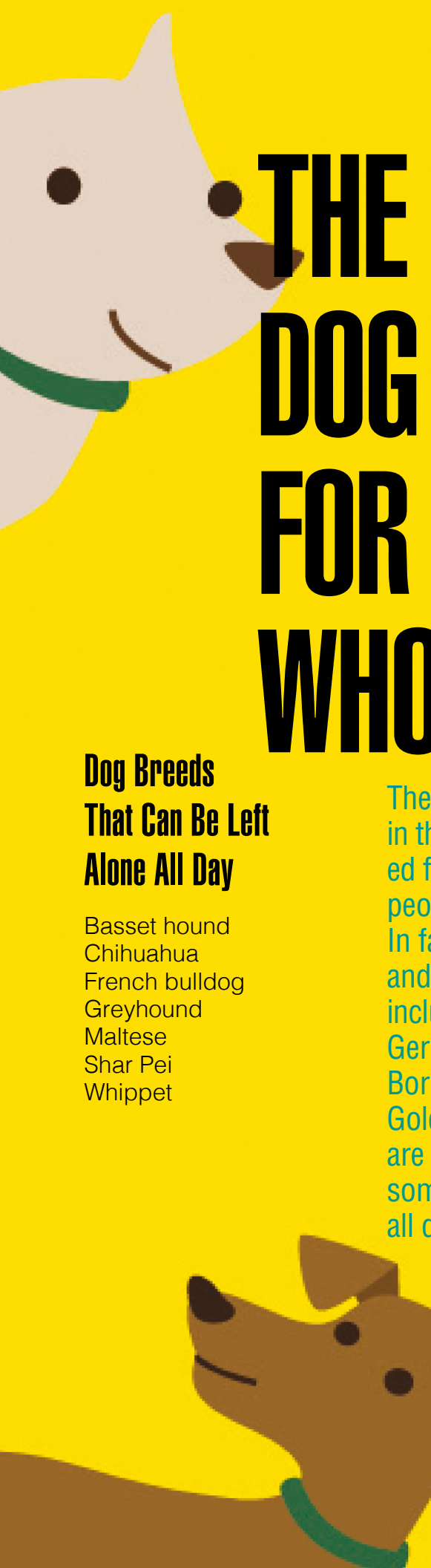
CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT – IMAGE BY AARON ANG



Olivia laing photographed IMAGE BY MIKE SIM



Artist Henry Darger IMAGE BY DAVID BERGLUND



# THE SEVEN BEST DOG BREEDS FOR SOMEONE WHO WORKS ALL DAY



by Sara Elliott

## Dog Breeds That Can Be Left Alone All Day

- Basset hound
- Chihuahua
- French bulldog
- Greyhound
- Maltese
- Shar Pei
- Whippet

The most popular dog in the world is unsuited for most of the people in the world. In fact, most working and hunting dogs including Labradors, German shepherds, Border Collies, and Golden Retrievers—are not suited for someone who works all day.

Despite this fact, most people continue to make unwise decisions about the breed of dog they choose for pets. In the end, this can result in unhappy dog owners and dogs suffering a horrible life confined to crates or given up to animal shelters, because active breeds are not suited for the life they are forced to endure. If you work all day but choose to share your life with a dog, you need to choose the breed carefully and be willing to make some sacrifices. When your friends at work invite you out for a beer at the end of the day, say no. Someone is waiting for you at home. That someone waiting is a social animal who needs your attention. Dogs are pack animals and need company; they do not do well if they are left alone in a crate day and night. Some dog breeds need more social interaction and exercise than others. If you select the right breed from the beginning, your dog will be perfectly content walking around your home, drinking water, and looking out the window to see the birds. He will not create trouble looking for stimulation, and you will not need to resort to using a small cell he cannot turn around in. Choose the dog you want carefully and provide him activities, and he will be fine, even if you have to work. During the day, your dog will:

### Sleep

This will take up most of his time. The average dog sleeps for about 14 hours a day (including at night), but young dogs and seniors sleep even more. Dogs will also sleep more during the day if taken for exercise first thing in the morning.

### Eat

While water should always be left out for the dog, not all owners choose to leave food available—free-choice feeding can lead to many problems, including obesity. A better idea is leaving several toys filled with snacks (like peanut butter) stashed throughout the house. When the dog is bored, he can walk around and search for the snacks.

Explore the house: There might be new smells in the kitchen, other animals running through the yard, or familiar objects to be found in slightly different settings. If your dog is lucky enough to have a doggy door, he can sit outside and watch the birds or listen to the sounds of traffic.

Interactive toys filled with dog treats give dogs a great excuse to play during the day. When a second or third dog is in the household, there is even more cause for fun.

Not all breeds are suited to this, and some will be more likely to wake up and guard at any suspicious sound. Others, like the whippet, may wake up and hide. The most popular dog in the world is unsuited for most of the people in the world. In fact, most working and hunting dogs—including Labradors, German shepherds, Border Collies, and Golden Retrievers—are not suited for someone who works all day. Despite this fact, most people continue to make unwise decisions about the breed of dog they choose for pets. In the end, this can result in unhappy dog owners and dogs suffering a horrible life confined to crates or given up to animal shelters, because active breeds are not suited for the life they are forced to endure. If you work all day but choose to share your life with a dog, you need to choose the

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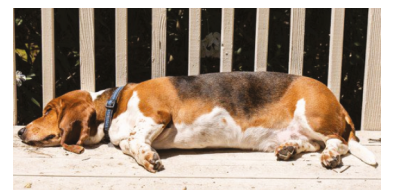
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### Basset Hound

The Basset Hound is a good low-energy breed. It's one of the best medium-sized dog breeds for an apartment. They love to walk around and use their noses but have relatively low activity levels during much of the day. If you decide to get a basset and have to go to work, your dog will probably spend most of the day sleeping. Like many dogs, Bassets do have some medical issues. You need to keep their ears clean, brush them daily to control shedding, and control their diet closely so that they do not become obese. Bassets may be short but they are big dogs. Despite their size, they might also choose to curl up on your lap in the evening.



### Chihuahua

If you want a tiny dog but have to work, the Chihuahua is a great choice. They will do okay if left alone much of the day. Many of them weigh less than three kilos (about seven pounds). They do have a reputation for aggression, which possibly derives from their size. Not many people worry about being bit by a Chihuahua, so some dogs suffer from teasing and “small dog syndrome.” Socialize your Chihuahua and be sure to treat him gently. They are also prone to quite a few medical problems. Besides luxating patella, they need their teeth brushed every day to prevent dental disease. Like the Basset, you have to be on top of their food and exercise because they are prone to obesity.



by myself 47

“A BASSET HOUND WILL BE PERFECTLY HAPPY TO NAP IN THE SUN UNTIL YOU COME BACK HOME”

CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE DESIGNED BY FREEPIK / IMAGE BY OSCAR DAVILA





### French Bulldog

All dogs need your company as soon as you get home. The main consideration for dogs who will be left at home is how active they will be during the day. The French Bulldog is one of those dogs who needs your company, but is not built for going out for a long runs—with nothing better to do, your Frenchie might choose to take a nap. Frenchies have short faces, which makes it difficult for them to breathe and run if it is hot and humid. They are great around the house though, and are one of the best small breeds with kids. Keep in mind that French bulldogs have health problems because of their short faces and large eyes. They do not bark much, however, so they are ideal for an apartment with neighbors likely to complain about the noise.

### Greyhound

Work every day, but still looking for a large dog? The greyhound is a great choice. They are one of the best dogs for apartment life since they are couch potatoes and spend most of their time sleeping. Since most greyhounds available for adoption are retired racing dogs, they are already used to being crated up to 20 hours a day and will likely have no trouble being left alone during the day. However, even if he's used to it, I do not recommend you confine your dog in a crate all day. Teach him the habits of the house and allow him to enjoy your home. When you do come home at the end of the day, plan on spending some time walking your dog or letting him run off leash at your local dog park. You both will be happier.

“WITH NOTHING BETTER TO DO, YOUR FRENCHIE MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE A NAP”

### Maltese

This little slacker is willing to sleep most of the day on the back of the sofa, waiting for his family to come home. A Maltese is not likely to tear up your house out of boredom, and is not going to require long walks like some

breeds. However, he will enjoy your company and also will need to be groomed carefully each evening, since the long hair will mat if not combed. If you are not willing to do so, take your dog to the groomer for a “puppy cut” (a short, even haircut) and just brush him when he is resting on your lap each evening. If you already have a cat and are looking for a dog to keep her company during the day, the Maltese is a great choice.

### Shar Pei

A low-energy dog suited for someone who works all day does not have to be run-of-the-mill. The Shar Pei, one of the most unusual dog breeds, is perfect for an owner who works all day. The Shar Pei is a medium-sized dog from China. They were the common man's hunting and fighting dog, but are not very active. Shar Peis do need to be well socialized, but are considered to be good family pets and guard dogs. However, keep in mind that because only a few were imported, they are interbred and have several health problems.

### Whippet

This medium-sized dog is ideal for an apartment, since he is relatively clean and spends a great deal of time sleeping. Like his larger cousin, the greyhound, he needs a soft place, so he will probably take over a couch or easy chair. Whippets also are more withdrawing than greyhounds and will avoid any intruders. And, like many dog breeds, he will need to be exercised each evening so that he can burn off his energy walking. Better yet, get two. They can play together between naps.

All dogs are social animals, and, no matter how tired you are at the end of the day, all dogs need a walk. Some dogs need a lot more than a walk around the block, and I have not included them on this list. There are no sled dogs, no herding breeds, and especially no curious dogs that are likely to investigate all of your cabinets when home alone.

Do not listen to those people who will tell you to get a cat or bird instead of a dog! There are a lot of great dogs out there, and you can be happy if you choose carefully. Be sure to consider adopting an older dog of the correct breed through your local shelter or petfinder.com. Little puppies need a lot of time, and older dogs tend to sleep more. If you do get a dog from a shelter, make sure he is one of the breeds on this list. If someone at the shelter tells you that a herding or retrieving breed will be fine for you, do not listen. You do not want to end up with a “Marley” that will tear down your drywall in a fit of separation anxiety. Most of those dogs end up dead while still young.

If you have decided to bring home a new dog to share your life, be sure not to buy a cute little puppy from a pet shop. You will be supporting a puppy mill, and besides having to deal with puppy energy and houstraining problems (which you may not have time to deal with) your new puppy will likely have behavioral problems and not be a good match for your lifestyle. 🐾



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY FRANTISEK KREJCI / IMAGE BY CATH / IMAGE BY VICKY

## Furbo



wating for you.....



### FURDO DOG CAMERA

- 160° (diagonal) LIVE STREAMING HD VIDEO
- 1080p HD camera
- 160° (diagonal) wide-angle lens
- 4X digital zoom
- Infrared LED night vision
- 2-WAY AUDIO
- High quality microphone
- Built-in speaker
- Customized snack call

# SIMPLE AND EASY RECIPES

## One Pan Orecchiette Pasta



Prep 15 m  
Cook 25 m  
Ready In 40 m

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 1/2 cups low-sodium chicken broth, divided, or as needed
- 1 1/4 cups orecchiette pasta, or more to taste
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped arugula, or to taste
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, or to taste
- 1/2 onion, diced salt to taste
- 8 ounces spicy Italian sausages, casings removed

Heat olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium heat. Cook and stir onion with a pinch of salt in hot oil until onion is soft and golden, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir sausage into onions; cook and stir until sausage is broken up and browned, 5 to 7 minutes.

Pour 1 1/2 cups chicken broth into sausage mixture and bring to a boil while scraping the browned bits of food off of the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Add orecchiette pasta; cook and stir pasta in hot broth, adding remaining broth when liquid is absorbed, until pasta is cooked through and most of the broth is absorbed, about 15 minutes.

Stir arugula into pasta-sausage mixture until arugula wilts. Ladle pasta into bowls and dust with Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese.

**Tip**  
Aluminum foil helps keep food moist, ensures it cooks evenly, keeps leftovers fresh, and makes clean-up easy.



CLOCK WISE FROM TOP LEFT - IMAGE BY CHEF JOHN / IMAGE BY NICK ENGLISH



## Strawberry breakfast bowl

Prep 5 m Cook 10 m Ready In 15 m



- 1/4 cup oat bran
- 2 Tbsp oat flour
- 2 Tbsp buckwheat groats
- 1 Tbsp ground flaxseed
- 1/2 tsp baking powder pinch salt
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2 Tbsp unsweetened apple sauce
- 1/4 cup almond milk
- 1/2 cup fresh strawberries, diced

Mix together the oat bran, oat flour, buckwheat groats, flaxseed, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.

Stir in the vanilla, applesauce, and almond milk until all the dry ingredients are incorporated. Gently fold in the diced strawberries.

Spray a microwave safe baking dish or ramekin, and pour batter into dish.

Heat for 1 minute and 30 seconds, or until the top is set.

Let cool for 2-3 minutes.

Prep 2 m Cook 5 m Ready In 7 m



## Macaroni and Cheese

- 1/2 cup macaroni or shell pasta
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Combine the pasta, water, and salt in a microwave safe bowl.

Microwave the pasta for 2 minutes.

Continue microwaving in 2-minute intervals until the pasta is cooked. Stir between each interval and continue microwaving until the pasta is soft and cooked through. This should take 4 to 8 minutes total, depending on your microwave strength. If the pasta absorbs all the water before the pasta is cooked, add another 2 tablespoons of water.

**Tip**  
During the initial few minutes of cooking the pasta, the water can sometimes bubble up and get very foamy in some microwaves. Use a deeper bowl than you might otherwise think you'd need, or just stop the microwave and stir the pasta if you see this happening.

- 1/4 cup milk, any percent
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup shredded cheese, like cheddar cheese, Monterey Jack, or provolone

Stir the milk and cheese into the pasta. Use oven mitts or a kitchen towel to remove the bowl from the microwave. Stir in the milk, cheese.

Microwave in 30-second intervals to melt the cheese: Microwave on high power for 30 seconds, and stir. Continue microwaving in 30-second intervals, stirring between each interval, until the cheese has melted and forms a creamy sauce. This should take 1 to 1 1/2 minutes total. For a creamier sauce, add an extra tablespoon or two of milk and cheese.



