



HEALTH TIP: Pumpkin soup is a powerhouse of Vitamin A which helps improve your vision



Since broccoli is rich in fibre, it can help get rid of toxins through the digestive tract

Office spaces have a new address

Covid has made it mandatory that we have an office space at home and Bengalureans are buying up office furniture



Minimalist arrangement

Neha Arora N, founder and hospitality interior designer at Neha Arora N Design Studio, says that since one is cooped up indoors for long hours, biophilic décor (to connect the indoors with outdoors) will help people adapt to the situation. "Allow natural sunlight to stream in, keep potted, succulent plants and water fountains near the workspace and add nature-inspired artwork. If budget allows, using floral, earthy or rainforest-patterned wallpapers and upholstery will help one feel refreshed and energised," she says, adding that in a small house, you can change your living room arrangement to accommodate a tiny desk or create a DIY corner workstation – a simple shelf on a wall with a barstool – that can turn into a sitting/standing work desk.

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Work-from-Home is the new normal and whether you are a student or a professional, the office has shifted home. If the dining table seemed adequate in the first weeks of the lockdown, not anymore. Long hours in front of the screen has meant that one has been looking for chairs with lumbar support, work stations, lights and other office furniture to make work-from-home more comfortable.

Priyasha Singh, who started her online MBA classes with ISB Hyderabad in June, says, "I knew

this arrangement is here to stay for a while and so I decided to invest in good furniture. I always wanted a high-backed chair because it keeps your spine erect even when you are sitting in front of the laptop." She got herself a brightly-coloured chair along with an ottoman.

Similarly, Monika Manchanda, chief culinary officer, AltLife, recently purchased a wooden table and chair and placed them in her living room. "It somehow looks like a mini office space now," she says.

People are now realising that there is more to furniture than just aesthetic value. "In a short span of time, because of the pandemic, homes had to serve multiple functions simultaneously – work stations, recreational hubs, relaxing corners, and so on. This gave con-

sumers an opportunity to assess the ambience of their home and customise it to their taste. Covid has accelerated the spread of customisation and functional furniture," says Navin Khanna, Director, BoConcept India.

"While there are fancy chairs available in the market, the best of the lot and easily available ones are Leap chairs and Saddle stools," says Shezan Bhojani, CEO and co-founder, Design Cafe, adding that the Leap chair has a lumbar support feature that supports the lower back and a Saddle stool improves your posture over time and also keeps the blood flow in check. "Designs or solutions that can support both work and leisure are gaining popularity," he says.

Karun Mathew, co-founder and Director of Magari, a furniture store, says general furniture sales and enquiries started increasing during the lockdown. "While people are interested in redoing their homes, these decisions take a long time to materialise. Things are picking up," he adds. Bhojani also says they had experienced a downfall in terms of business in April and May. "There was an approximately 60 per cent decline during the initial phase of the lockdown. However, sales for home interiors have recovered significantly since June. As of July, business has recovered to almost 70 per cent of the pre-lockdown numbers," he says.

Apart from WFH-related furniture, Deena Rodrigues, owner of Chairs and Company, says custom sofas, beds, dining tables, outdoor and balcony furniture as well as interior styling services have been quite popular recently. "We have sold a lot of accessories like lights, mirrors and wall art this month. Changing your light fixtures or adding a mirror can be a cost-effective way of changing the look of a room," says Rodrigues.

Amazon India has also seen an increase in sale of office and bedroom furniture, mattresses, recliners and bean bags. "We will continue to work with sellers and add more selection of furniture to help customers get what they need in the safety of their homes," says an Amazon India spokesperson.