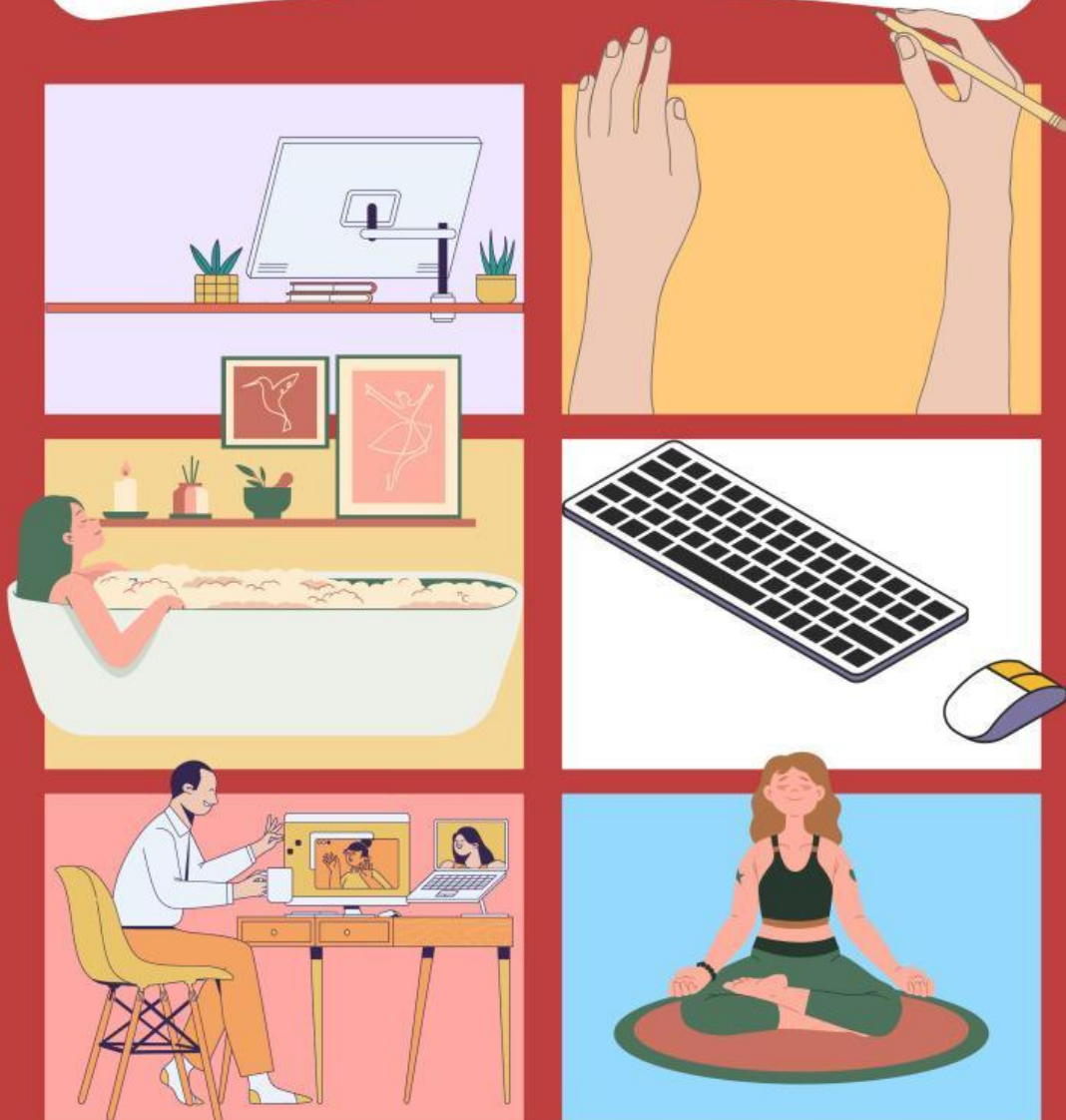


# WORK-LIFE BALANCE

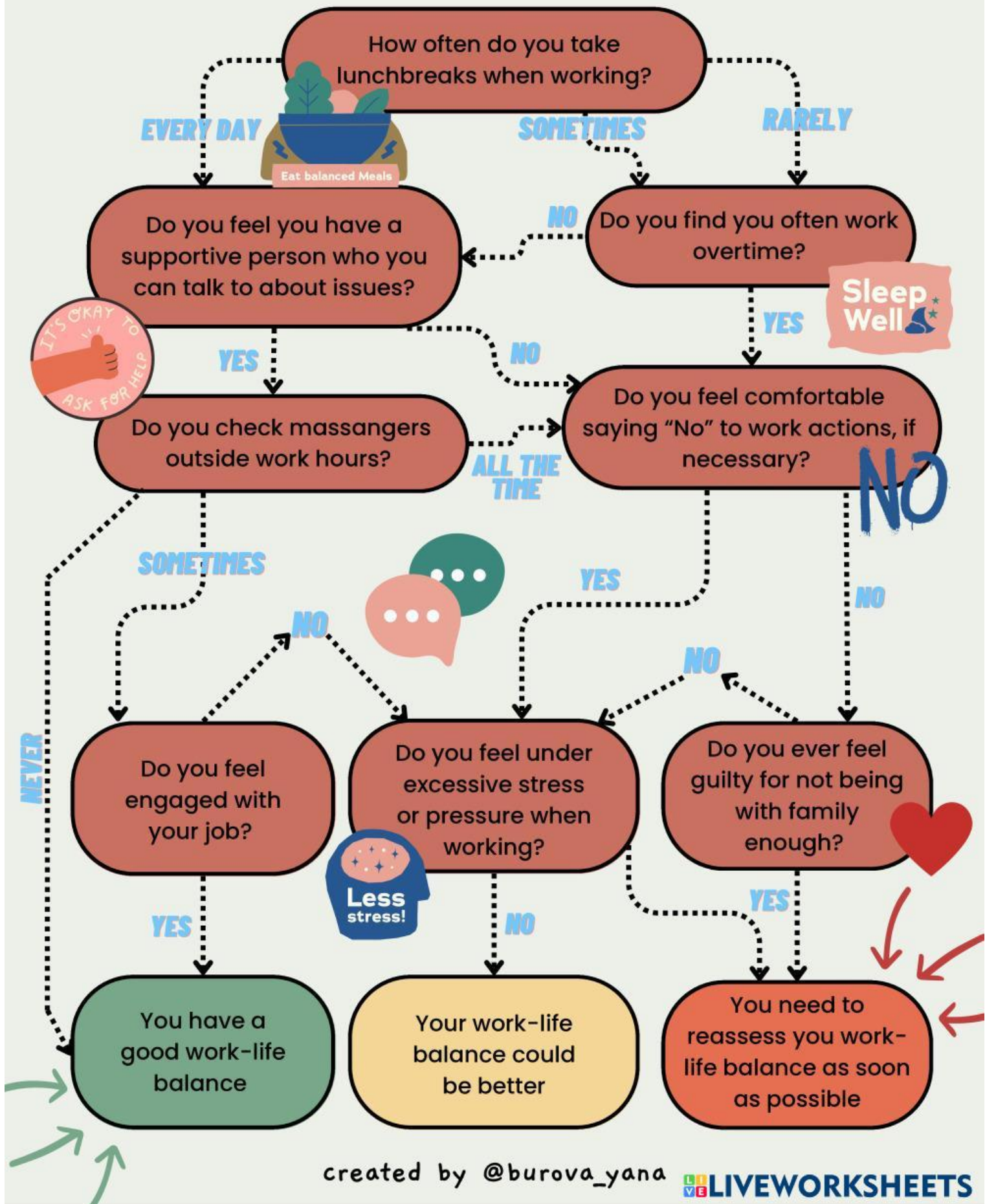


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# DO YOU HAVE A GOOD WORK-LIFE BALANCE?





# READING

Read the texts *Are you happy with your work-life balance?*  
Which situation is most typical in your country?

Dan, project manager, software company, Boston, USA

I'm not happy with my work-life balance at all. I work at least 50 or 60 hours a week so I don't have **any time / no time** at all for myself or to see my children. I communicate with my wife by leaving messages on the fridge. We hardly ever see each other because we work different hours and I never have time to see my friends or keep fit. Also, I eat very badly because my lunch 'hour' (about 10 minutes!) isn't **enough long / long enough** for me to have a proper meal. OK, I earn **a lot of / a lot** money but I don't have **enough time / time enough**. Is it worth it?

Amilie, Lawyer, Paris, France

I didn't use to have **much time / many time** for anything because I was working **too much / too many** hours - 45 or more a week. But then here in France the government decided that people should only work 35 hours a week. Nowadays I have **plenty of / plenty** time for myself. I play tennis two evenings a week, and I finish work at lunchtime on Friday, so I can have long weekends. I am much happier. I think when you have time to enjoy your personal life, you work much better.

Nayuha, store assistant, Tokyo, Japan

Yes, I am happy with it because I've chosen a lifestyle that I like and that gives me **quite a lot of / quite** free time. But my father, on the other hand, works more than 70 hours a week for a car company, which I think is madness. **Lots of / Much** Japanese people do the same. There's an expression in Japanese, *karoshi*, which means 'dying because you work **too hard / too much hard**.' A lot of people in Japan get ill or die because they work **too / too much**. I think my generation is different. We don't want our lives to be ruled by work. I work **a few / a little** hours a day in a store - that gives me enough money to live. I spend the rest of my time seeing my friends and playing baseball.



Match portraits of people with texts. Explain your choice.

1. How has the change in working hours affected Amilie's personal life?
2. Why is Dan unhappy with his work-life balance?
3. What is *karoshi*, and why is it a concern in Japan?
4. What does Nayuha think about his own work-life balance, and how does it differ from his father's experience?

## GRAMMAR

Study these grammar rules. Read the text again and underline the correct phrases.

### Large quantities

They have **a lot of** money.  
She has **lots of** friends.  
He eats **a lot**.  
There aren't **many** cafes near here.  
Do you watch **much** TV?  
Don't run. We have **plenty of** time.

- Use **a lot of / lots of** in + sentences.
- Use **a lot** when there is no noun.
- **Much / many** are normally used in - sentences and **?**, but **a lot of** can also be used.
- Use **plenty of** in + sentences to mean as much as we need or more.

### Small quantities

Do you want some ice cream? Just **a little**.  
The town only has **a few** cinemas.  
Hurry up. We have **very little** time.  
I have **very few** close friends.

- Use **little** + uncountable nouns, **few** + plural countable nouns.
- **a little** and **a few** = some, but not a lot
- **very little** and **very few** = not much / many

### Zero quantity

There **isn't any** room in the car.  
There's **no** room in the car.  
How much money do you have?  
**None**.

- Use **any** for zero quantity with a - verbs. Use **no** with a + verb.
- Use **none** (without a noun) in short answer.

### More than you need or want

I don't like this city. It's **too big**.  
There's **too much** traffic.  
There are **too many** tourists.

- Use **too** + adjective, **too much** + uncountable noun, **too many** + plural countable nouns.
- Use **enough** before a noun but after an adjective.

### Less than you need

There aren't **enough** parks.  
The buses aren't **frequent enough**.



# SPEAKING

## USE GRAMMAR RULES

How much time do you have...?

- for yourself
- to do exercise
- to see friends
- to be with your family

How much...do you have?

- work
- school/university/work
- English tasks
- energy

- How do you currently manage your work and personal life?
- In your opinion, what are some of the biggest challenges in achieving a good work-life balance?
- Have you ever experienced burnout from work? If so, how did you deal with it?
- Do you think it's important to have a good work-life balance? Why or why not?

# LISTENING

Listen to a radio interview and do the task.

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening/bl-listening/work-life-balance>



1. How popular is Chris Svensson's book?

- a. Not very popular.
- b. Very popular.
- c. It's new. People don't know it yet.

2. What is the work-life balance like in traditional workplace?

- a. Work lives and private lives are clearly divided.
- b. People work too much overtime and so they have no private life.
- c. People are free to manage the balance themselves.

3. How often do people overtime?

- a. Often.
- b. Sometimes.
- c. They don't.

4. In traditional workplaces, do people work at weekends or when on holiday?

- a. Yes, it's normal.
- b. No, never.
- c. Usually, they don't.

5. How has technology helped people work with more flexibility?

- a. They can send and receive emails from their phones from home.
- b. Their working hours can be easily tracked.
- c. Robots can do their work for them.

6. Traditional division between work and life are fading. What does this mean for employees?

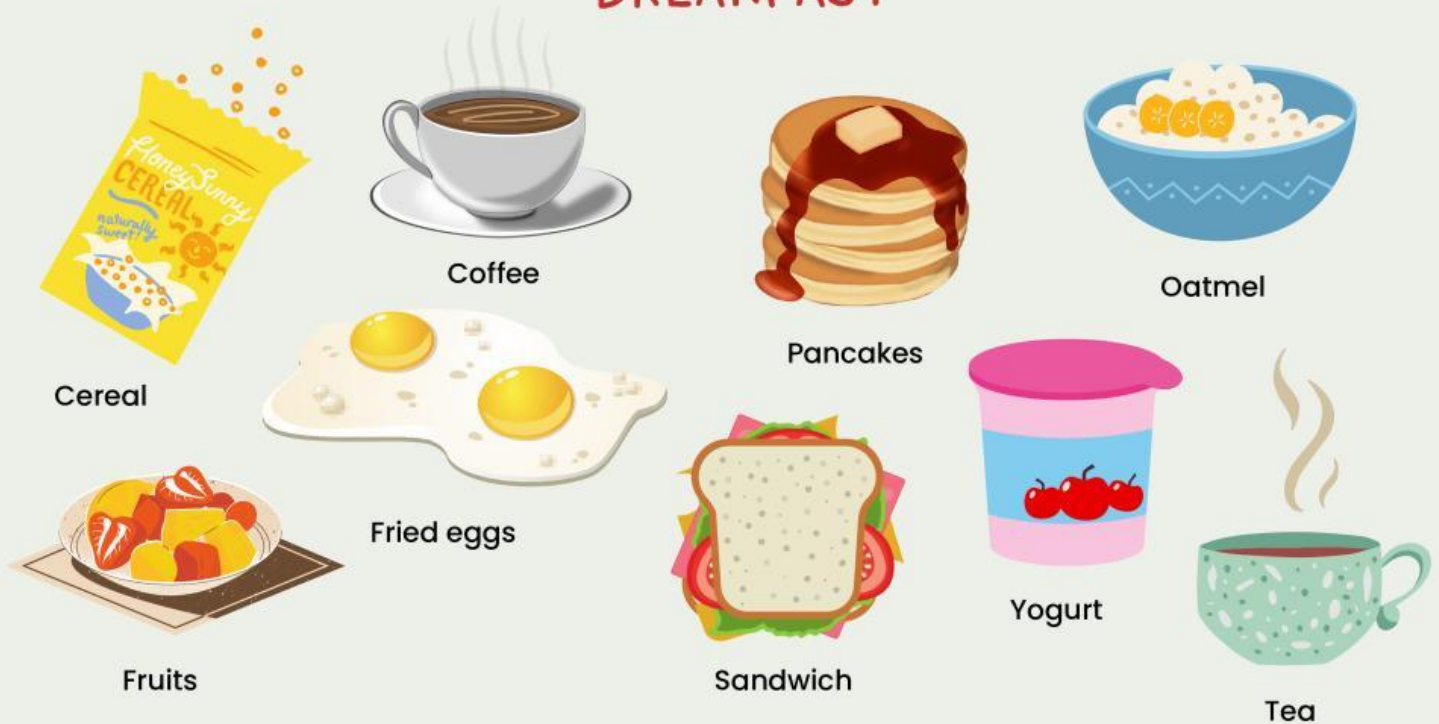
- a. Everyone has to do overtime, all the time.
- b. People have to work while they're on holiday.
- c. They can be flexible to work when and where it suits them.



# TOP-4

## TIPS FOR LIFE-WORK BALANCE

### 1. SET ASIDE ENOUGH TIME TO HAVE BREAKFAST



Describe your favourite breakfast. Is it crucial part of your day?

### 2. AIM TO SPEND TIME EXERCISING AFTER WORK TO KEEP FIT AND DE-STRESS

Here are some facts. Do you agree with them?

1. Exercise triggers the release of endorphins, the brain's feel-good chemicals.
2. Physical activity reduces the levels of stress hormones in the body.
3. Regular exercise improves mood and contributes to better mental health.
4. Yoga and tai chi are effective exercise forms for reducing stress and anxiety.
5. Aerobic exercise, such as running or cycling, can alleviate symptoms of depression.



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 **LIVEWORKSHEETS**



### 3. LEARN TO SAY NO WITH A SMILE

Read these quotes.

"The difference between successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything." - Warren Buffett

"The art of leadership is saying no, not saying yes. It is very easy to say yes." - Tony Blair

"The greatest power you have is the power to say no." - Bo Bennett

Do you agree with these quotes?

### 4. AIM TO SHUT OFF ALL WORK-RELATED COMMUNICATIONS IN THE EVENING

Make the list of things, you have no time for during a day.

Do you think rejecting work-related communication in evening would contribute to achieving these plans?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

