

How I work 9-5 and freelance

They always seem to be kind of mutually exclusive situations – either you work full time or you freelance, but I do both. I won't lie and say that it's easy but I've definitely found a balance and a routine which gets me through it. I've needed a lot of motivation and ultimately I always put myself as number one – if I really don't feel like writing after a long day at work then chances are that I won't. But for the most part, in my spare time I will freelance – and it's really becoming something I enjoy.

I realised that after leaving University, without a solid plan or a safety net of money I wouldn't be able to galavant off to an unpaid internship or even some unstable freelance job – I'd have to start working. However, at 21 my main goal right now is to build up my CV, improve my writing skill and (obviously) increase my wage. So, after a couple months of the 9-5 life, I decided to start freelancing again, something I was doing in University too. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to do both, and each position has its negatives and positives, so here's what I think and how I do it.

9 to 5 life

The best things about working 9-5 are the security and routine. Believe it or not, waking up early every day has made me a much more productive person – I wake up, drink coffee, go to work, catch up with colleagues, get stuff done and learn new things. Even if your full-time job is something supposedly simple like waiting tables or cleaning, you'll still be growing, whether it's becoming more confident by talking to people, multitasking, learning attention to detail or business awareness. I've actually had two online marketing jobs since graduating University but both have been completely different, and I continue to learn something new every day. The negatives to working 9-5 are definitely personal to me, you can try to use astrology or psychology to explain it, but I don't like being limited to a position or place. I always want to be doing something new, travelling somewhere different and meeting new people and an office job doesn't really fit that.

The main reason I've continued to work 9-5 is the money – the stability of money, the knowing when and how much you'll get paid and how (most of the time) this is set in stone.

Freelancing

So, I've been freelancing since my first year in University when I really needed the extra money and writing experience. The first writing gig I got after seeing a post on Facebook, I wrote for a small jewellery company for about a year – and didn't really earn all that much but it paid for a few drinks on a night out which is all first-year Katie cared about. In the second year, I discovered Upwork, which is basically where freelancers go to get work, almost like the Uber for writers. And so I put down all my experience and started applying

for jobs. After gaining a few I've continued to use Upwork until now, but because I've written for so many places, I also get approached on many other platforms – which is the beauty of a portfolio and word of mouth.

I love freelancing and it offers me so many amazing opportunities, more financial security and enables me to build my writing skill. I have a crazy dream that I'll just grab my laptop and travel the world, freelancing to keep me going, and that may happen...who knows? I definitely enjoy freelancing more than office work, but I feel like that's an obvious conclusion.

How do I do both?

It takes a lot of balance and organisation. I never feel overworked and always try to stay on top of my work so that I don't feel stressed or rushed. With the freedom that comes hand in hand with freelancing, it means I can pick and choose the types of jobs I take. For example, I only write for companies that need a maximum of 5 articles a week, and social media management is made super easy with apps that schedule posts for you.

I enjoy writing, and use it as an escapism and so freelancing when I get home from work isn't necessarily a chore for me. But it can be difficult to juggle so here are my top tips:

- Get a planner or diary to jot down what freelancing you're going to do when you get home.
- Meal prep to save a little bit of time.
- Try not to procrastinate (I put my phone in my drawer until I've finished an article)
- Know your worth and timing. I only write a max of 5, 500-word articles a week which is perfect for me
- Try your hardest.
- Use apps to notify you when you should be writing or working
- Keep in contact with your freelancers and always submit work on time
- Allocate a few hours a week just to organise your freelancing work and network with the people you're writing for
- I always plan my articles by paragraph which, I find, makes the writing process easier