



● **flexible working patterns** N-PLURAL

**Flexible working patterns** are arrangements in which some employees are allowed to vary the hours that they work in order to suit their personal needs.

*The study found that the growth of flexible working patterns was set to continue.*

*Seven in ten people who have flexible working patterns outperform their full-time colleagues by a third.*

● **flexitime** N-UNCOUNT

**Flexitime** is a system that allows employees to vary the time that they start or finish work, provided that an agreed total number of hours are spent at work. [BRIT]

*The Draft National Plan for Women is committed to promoting family-friendly policies, such as job-sharing and flexitime.*

*The company is also keen to introduce further flexitime working, with some workers possibly moving onto a four-day week.*

● **teleworking** N-UNCOUNT

**Teleworking** is working from home using equipment such as telephones, fax machines, and computers to keep in contact.

*Teleworking has increased substantially, with 39 per cent of businesses saying that their employees worked from home at least some of the time.*

*Teleworking is becoming a major force as people use the telephone and e-mail to allow them to work from home.*

● **freelance**

① ADJ

Someone who does **freelance** work or who is, for example, a **freelance** journalist or photographer, is not employed by one organization, but is paid for each piece of work they do by the organization they do it for.

*Michael Cross is a freelance journalist.*

*Jill was getting some freelance writing jobs from trade magazines.*

② ADV

If you work **freelance**, you do freelance work.

*He is now working freelance from his home in Hampshire.*

*She had a baby and decided to go freelance.*

**Common Collocations**

to go **freelance**

to **work on a freelance basis**

● **shift** (shifts) N-COUNT

If a group of factory workers, nurses, or other people work **shifts**, they work for a set period before being replaced by another group, so that there is always a group working. Each of these set periods is called a **shift**. You can also use **shift** to refer to a group of workers who work together on a particular shift.

*His father worked shifts in a steel mill.*

*The night shift should have been safely down the mine long ago.*

● **job share** (job shares, job sharing, job shared)

① VERB

If two people **job share**, they share the same job by working part-time, for example one person in the mornings and the other in the afternoons.

*They both want to job share.*

② N-SING

A **job share** is an arrangement in which two people share the same job by both working part-time.

*One lady who works in a bank job share said 'I can have my career and I can see my kids. It's wonderful.'*

● **career break** (career breaks) N-COUNT

If someone takes a **career break**, they stop working in their particular profession for a period of time, with the intention of returning to it later. A **career break** is usually unpaid.

*Another major disadvantage for women is that many still take career breaks to bring up children, which cuts down the time they have to save towards a pension.*

*'I'm considering a career break so I can concentrate on playing rugby,' revealed the Bedford-based police officer.*

● **long-hours culture** N-SING

The **long-hours culture** is the way in which some workers feel that they are expected to work longer hours than they are paid to do.

*The report concluded: 'Our research confirms that Britain's long-hours culture is seriously undermining the quality of life. We must challenge this culture, for everyone's sake.'*

● **part-time**

① ADJ

If someone is a **part-time** worker, or has a **part-time** job, they work for only part of each day or week.

*Many businesses are cutting back by employing lower-paid part-time workers.*

② ADV

If someone works **part-time**, they work for only part of each day or week.

*I will continue to work part-time as a consultant after 60.*

● **short-term** ADJ

**Short-term** is used to describe things that will last for a short time, or things that will have an effect soon rather than in the distant future.

*The company has 90 staff, almost all on short-term contracts.*

➔ **work-life balance**: Topic 12.4; **salary**: Topic 14.2; **working conditions**: Topic 14.3; **absenteeism**: Topic 14.5



**PRACTISE YOUR VOCABULARY**

1. Complete the sentences by putting one of these words or phrases in each space.

*teleworking    freelance    flexitime    job sharing    shifts    short-term contract*

- a John's company demands that he is in the office between 10.00 and 15.00 but he can start earlier than that and finish later than that as long as he works 40 hours per week. He is working \_\_\_\_\_.
- b This is the worst week of the month for Mary because this week she's working nights. Next week is the best, because then she'll be at home when her daughter comes in from school. She's working \_\_\_\_\_.
- c Pat works for a large insurance firm but he only goes to their office one day a week. For the other four he works at home and keeps in touch by e-mail, fax and phone. He's \_\_\_\_\_.
- d Peter is a journalist. He writes for a variety of papers. This week it's the Financial Times, last week it was the Wall Street Journal. He decides how much work he does and when he works and completes his own accounts for tax purposes. He's working \_\_\_\_\_.
- e Heidi is working at a food processing plant in Germany. She's worked there for two months, and her job finishes at the end of this month. She hopes the company will renew her contract for another three months. She's working on a \_\_\_\_\_.
- f Mary and Jane are both receptionists for a PR firm. Mary works there on Monday and Tuesday, Jane then takes over for the rest of the week. They are \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Are these statements true or false?

- |   | True                     | False                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a When a worker is on a career break they are unpaid.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b Part-time workers do not have a full-time job.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c Flexitime workers always start their working day at the same time.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d Shift workers always work at night.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e Freelance journalists receive a regular salary from the newspaper company they work for.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f Companies which offer flexible working patterns give their employees more control over their hours of work. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g If a company has a long-hours culture, its workers often stay late at work.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. Some estimates suggest that up to one third of the workforce could eventually be teleworkers. List the benefits to a company and to the employee of this way of working. Choose from the list below.

*no commuting    smaller premises    flexible working hours    wider choice of potential employees    lower overheads  
no restrictions on where you live*

COMPANY	EMPLOYEE