



10 LIFE HACKS FOR A WORKING MUM



Do your grocery shopping online

This has been a real game changer and is a massively growing industry. I remember I used to do the weekly shop every Monday, whilst dragging my moaning child round in the trolley. He used to eat half the contents of my trolley just to keep him quiet whilst I tried to focus on what I needed and do my best not to forget too much. Urrgg the thought of doing that now with 2 children under 6 fills me with dread. First of all the moaning would give me brain ache but also whenever I take them to a shop it invariably leads to me spending more as I give in to their constant “I wants” just to enable me to get round. Now I have a weekly shop delivered to my door and carried into my kitchen! My online order takes me about 10 minutes and I always have it delivered in the evening past my kids bed time so I get it put away in super fast time.



Get a cleaner

As soon as I went back to work this was top of my agenda. You don't want to be cleaning when you can be spending precious time with your kids. I also hate doing it, so for me it was a no brainer. I can easily justify the cost as if I work more, my hourly income is far more than I pay my cleaner and my time with my kids is priceless.

Job done.



Get meal prepped.

This is something I do religiously and when I don't do it for any reason I really regret it. Firstly plan all your family meals for roughly the week ahead. It means you can ensure everything you need to cook is on the online order but also when you get home from work you don't have to think what you're having for dinner. After a long day at work anything to think less is a bonus surely! I use a simple 7 day meal planner on a page for this. Then plan in a couple of prep times throughout the week.

For example on a Sunday evening I will generally make a dinner that can last us two days so Monday is covered. I also make 2 lunch boxes for my husband, 2 for me and 2 for my oldest son. This basically means Monday and Tuesday are sorted. Depending on what I'm making I sometimes get 3 prepped! Again this gains you time back as you don't have to do this preparation every night and when I get home from work I don't have to think so much, I can just enjoy some short time in the evening with the kids.



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Live by a diary.

If I lost my diary my life would honestly come to a standstill. I have a good tip I'd like to share with this point as I know lots of mum's do have diaries already. I now use a diary which shows a week on a page. It means I can very quickly see my week ahead of me but it also means the spaces for each day aren't so big. I have one rule here....

If the space in the day gets full, I can't take on anymore. This has really helped me to not over commit to things. I used to have a page for every day, but all I did was fill it up! Put where you and your kids need to be in each day. Again keep this super organised. We all have baby brain at times

so if it's in the diary chances are it won't be forgotten. My diary is also linked regularly with my husbands. I really can't get on with online diaries, I like the traditional pen and paper versions so linking with my husband's means actually having a conversation! I recommend you do this about once a month; you both soon will get into the swing of doing this and know how important it is to inform the other if any changes are necessary. So often last minute work commitments get thrown in with little notice so keeping tight on each other's schedules usually means we can work through most curve balls thrown at us.



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Teach the kids some chores.

You can do this Mary Poppins style or however you want but get them helping around the house. It gets the jobs done quicker (well hopefully!) but is also bonding time with your kids. We love to put some music on and have a dance as we go. Depending on their ages the chores will inevitably vary but teach them young to have fun whilst doing the jobs and hopefully it will teach them some great life skills at the same time as helping you. Some examples are: My 6 year old will put his washing away, do the washing up and help me prep the dinner. My 3 year old will pass me the pegs to hang up the washing and likes to have a duster and dust anything about his height!



Early bedtimes

I have young children so I understand this will be different for different ages, but I ensure my kids are into bed early so this gives me a longer evening which is when I am often working and it means my kids are ready to get up early after having a quality 10/11 hours night sleep. We are all early risers as we need to get to breakfast clubs and work but I also truly believe in the saying:

“Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man (or woman!) healthy, wealthy and wise!”



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Buy in bulk.

A recommendation is to buy in bulk presents and cards for kids parties. Sometimes it feels like there's a party every week with kids, so I ensure I buy a number of presents at a time so I have them ready in the house.

There's nothing worse than the morning of the party having to run out to get a present, a definite time saver, but also potentially a money saver as if you see some toy at a good price, don't buy 1 buy 3, that's 3 parties sorted!



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After school clubs.

My advice would be to take advantage of whatever after school clubs are available to your child.

Firstly, they will probably love a club as I know lots of children do and certainly mine do. The after school ones are normally the cheapest but it also makes that short school day a bit longer. Most days my child's schooling finishes at 3pm, but he is in a club until 4pm, he loves it and I get more time at work, a double win.



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Love a Direct debit.

Have all your bills on direct debit. Set them up, be super organised and once it's done that's it. I also do this for my credit card. There is literally not one bill I need to think about paying. This saves time but also eliminates any risk of forgetting to pay a bill and being forced to pay the extortionate late payment charges! Most banks have apps for your phone now so set it all up so you can keep an eye on what's going on in a click of a button.



Practice saying NO.

Having the confidence to say no can be harder for some than others but for many mum's, we just want to please, whether it's our kids, family, friends or work and it is easy to get sucked into taking on more than we can physically do. Say no as and when necessary and don't feel pressured into doing anything that is going to put additional pressure on you.



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Have FUN!

This is my 10 life hacks for working mum's, but I had to include this final tip that all working mum's need to do. Plan every week your “fun time”, that thing that keeps you sane, that time when you really let your hair down and switch off. It could be anything from going for a run, seeing friends to having a bath but plan it in and don't compromise on it. Keep your vibe high and you, your kids and work will massively reap the benefits.

Want to join my programme designed specifically for working mum's? Visit www.rachelsmithcoaching.co.uk to learn more.



BONUS TIP