How Many Work Hours Are in a Year?

The average person works thousands of hours in a given year, but how many exactly? This can be tougher to calculate than you may think.

This breakdown will explore how many work hours are in a year, how to calculate those work hours and why you need to know this information in the first place.

Why should you know how many work hours there are in a year?

You should know how many work hours there are in a given year for various reasons.

For example, you may need to calculate your hourly salary if you are on a salaried payment schedule (e.g., you get paid annually or monthly rather than by the hour).

Knowing how many work hours you commit to in a given week, you can easily calculate roughly how much you get paid each hour.

However, you may also need to calculate work hours for reasons like:

- Determining your annual salary. If you are an hourly employee, knowing how many work hours there are in a calendar year will let you figure out roughly how much money you'll make per year for tax and other purposes. You can also do the reverse, calculating your hours in a work year and determining your hourly rate from your annual income.

- Planning for extracurricular activities, big purchases and other major life events. Once you know how long you'll work, you can determine whether you'll take vacations and where you'll go.
- Evaluating your work-life balance. If you work too often, you could feel stress or burnout, reducing your productivity in your life enjoyment. Knowing how many work hours you put down annually will help you achieve a better work-life balance.
- Pursuing a promotion. If you are paid assuming that you work a certain number of hours per year but find out that you perform many more work hours in a given year, you can use that as evidence that you deserve a raise, promotion or some other benefit.

Grasping your average work hours in a year is vital. That way, you'll have a better understanding of your average time worked, how much your employer should pay you and whether you need to cut back for the sake of mental health.

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3 steps to determine the number of work hours in a year

If you work part-time, your total work hours will be lower. If you take many vacation days or sick leave, your total number of hours/annual hours will also be lower overall.

Additionally, knowing how many work hours are in a year isn't very difficult. Here's a step-by-step process to determine the average working hours you clock throughout the year.

1. Calculate weekly hours

First, calculate your overall weekly hours. Most Americans work about 40 hours per week to qualify as full-time

employees, typically a total time of eight actual hours a day across five days.

Whether you stick to this average or have some other total, figure out your hours for week X first to extend that average across the number of weeks in a year.

2. Multiply that average by 52

There are 52 weeks in the year. While you won't work every week of the year (in most cases), don't worry about subtracting those vacation weeks and other time off just yet.

Multiply the above calculated weekly hours you work by 52 to get your overall yearly hours worked.

3. Incorporate your PTO hours, then subtract them

You aren't done with your calculation quite yet. Now you must determine and incorporate your PTO or paid time off hours.

These include any:

- Paid vacation time hours.
- Other paid time off hours your employer might grant you (paid holiday hours for public holidays and work holidays).

Most companies in America give their employees about two weeks' worth of paid vacation time per year.

This typically averages out to about 80 hours per year. For example, if you previously calculated that you should work about 2080 hours per year, subtract those 80 hours to represent your average or expected paid time off.

This should leave you with about 2000 hours of work every year, although your answer might differ depending on how much

you truly work in a given week.

Furthermore, if you are salaried, you might work more than 40 hours per week. And if your employer provides you with extra PTO, you'll need to subtract that extra time from your worked hours total.

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What is the average amount of work hours in a year?

In America, the average full-time employee works about 1820 hours per year. This assumes about a 35-hour work week.

Despite ostensibly holding 40-hour-per-week positions, most employees work closer to 35 hours per week (though this can be different depending on the industry).

When you assume eight paid holidays and about 10 days of PTO, the U.S. average, your typical employee will work between 1800 and 2000 hours a year.

Meanwhile, if you work 52 weeks a year and don't take any PTO, you could work an average of about 2080 hours per year.

Work hours averages can vary by industry

As you can see from the above breakdown, this metric has a lot of variation. Many people work less than 2000 hours per year, but many Americans also work more than 2000 hours per year. It all depends on the industry, payment arrangement and other factors.

Usually, salaried individuals work more than hourly individuals. Salaried employees can (theoretically) go home when their work is done.

Still, many salaried employees are managers or executives,

requiring them to clock additional hours to tackle their responsibilities and ensure that projects get done on time.

Indeed, taking on a salaried position might let you skip working eight hours a day here or there. But most of the time, you'll work more than hourly or part-time employees.

Furthermore, individuals in finance, construction and teaching work drastically higher hours than individuals in other industries. For example, many teachers are estimated to spend several extra hours per week on "unpaid" work, such as grading papers at home or spending more time at the office.

If you believe you do a lot of extra work for which you are not paid, you should determine how many work hours are in a year. Then, you can take that information to your boss or supervisor to lobby for a pay raise or promotion.

What if you work too much?

It's easy to clock too many working hours in a given year. At the end of the year, when you take stock of your life and plan to make different decisions for the year to come, you might look back and wonder just when you worked so much.

Your average number of hours should be similar to others in your industry for your well-being.

If you work too much, you add to your mental stress, reducing the amount of time you have for recreation, relaxation and time with friends and family.

You'll have less free time to enjoy your days and the money you earn. Sick days don't count, either – you need fewer hours, even with full-time work, to live your best life.

Generally, you should try not to work longer hours than 40 per week. Forty hours per week is, some studies say, already pushing it. Most people are only productive for three to five

hours per day – the rest of the time is not very productive.

With that in mind, you should reduce your working hours to fewer than 2000 per year at a bare minimum. This is only sometimes feasible depending on your financial obligations or the obligations you have to your company.

Still, it's a good goal to pursue, particularly if you want to enjoy better mental health and spend more time on other elements of your life.

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Use these tips to calculate your work hours

As you can see, most people have about 2100 work hours in a given year. That might differ for you or your business, so use the tips above to calculate an accurate answer.

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