

4-day working week



Learning objectives

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Look at working schedules around the world
- Use phrases and vocabulary related to working hours
- Debate the idea of a 4-day working week

Ask and answer the questions

- How many hours a week do you work? What do you think about this?
- The 40-hour working week is the “standard” why is this and what do you think about it?
- How many hours would you like to work?

Look at these countries, how many hours per week on average do you think they work?



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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mexico• USA• Spain• Turkey• Australia | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 49.7 hours per week• 34.5 hours per week• 43.5 hours per week• 33.6 hours per week• 34.7 hours per week |
|---|---|

Ask and answer the questions

- Is any of this information surprising? Why or why not?
- How do you think these statistics compare to your country?
- How do you feel about these numbers?
- What is work-life balance?

Look at these expressions in bold in the sentences, match the expressions to their meanings, and discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with the statements.

1. Employees are paid a fixed **hourly rate**, so working **overtime** is the employee's responsibility.
2. **Zero-hours contracts** are a legal loophole for companies to avoid giving their employees benefits and paying extra taxes.
3. **Graveyard shifts** and jobs with **unsocial hours** are usually paid at a lower hourly rate.
4. It is fundamental for every single employee to **clock in** on time and fill out the **timesheet** correctly.

- A work shift that runs through the early morning hours, typically covering the period between midnight and 8 a.m.
- The working hours of an employee do not change or cannot be varied
- To record the start or finish time of work on a special machine
- The salary that is paid per hour of work
- An agreement under which an employer can change the number of hours worked by an employee and does not have to offer any hours
- Hours outside of the normal working week
- A record of the numbers of hours worked by an employee

Watch the video, <https://youtu.be/WBLxCPTPF0s>, and discuss the question.

Where and when did the 4-day week work?

Role-play

Student A: You are a young human resources manager with modern ideas and want to improve the working environment. You have a proposal to move to a 4-day working week.

Student B: You are a more conservative operations manager who believes that the traditional 40-hour standard week is the most productive approach to working.

Student C: Listen and provide feedback

Presentation

Investigate the life of an average worker and present your findings.

- Mexico
 - USA
 - Spain
 - Turkey
 - Australia
- A. Addicted to work
 - B. Begin
 - C. Give permission
 - D. A policy or technique of aggressive salesmanship or advertising

Vocabulary

1. Take your first steps
2. Condone
3. Workaholic
4. A hard sell

1. B 2. C 3. A 4. D

Follow-up discussion. Ask and answer these questions about the working week in your job and country.

- Do you condone the idea of a 40-hour industrialized working week?
- Would a 4-day working week require the hard sell in your company?
- Do you consider yourself a workaholic?
- How would your country go about taking the first steps to adopting a 4-day working week?