

## REFINING YOUR LAYOUT

Take some time to make sure that everything fits logically and conveniently. It's easy to reposition your printer or move the monitor when it's only on paper. It becomes a lot harder when you're handling the real stuff. Make paper scale cutouts of all components. Measure your cable and connectors and try out your plans on paper. To help you determine typical sizes, check the footprint chart below.

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**Note:** *There are several software programs that support office plan design. For Windows, check out Broderbund's 3D Home Interiors, IMSI's Floor Plan Plus 3D, and Expert Software's Expert Home Design 3-D. For Macs, try Abracadata's Design Your Own Home 3D Walkaround.*

### OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOOTPRINT

Equipment type	Approximate size in inches
Answering machine	6 x 9
Desk	36 x 72
External modem	6 x 9 x 2
Fax machine	16 x 18
File cabinet (2-drawer standard)	15 x 26
File cabinet (lateral)	20 x 40
Keyboard	7 x 18 up to 10 x 22
Laser printer	16 x 16
Minitower	17 x 17 x 8
Monitor (13 inch)	14 x 14
Mouse pad	8 x 11
Notebook computer	9 x 12
Personal copier	16 x 18
Task chair	24 x 24
Telephone	7 x 9
Typing return	18 x 48

## OUTFITTING YOUR OFFICE

What goes in your office is controlled by what you do and what your budget is. Here are some pointers:

## CHAPTER 3

# Choosing Telephone Options

OTHER THAN A COMFORTABLE PLACE to sit, the single most important item any telecommuter needs is a telephone. Since the telephone is literally your lifeline to the outside world, it is important that you use it to maximize your productivity potential. In this chapter, we'll review your home phone choices—both wired and portable. We'll examine the possibilities of using your PC as a phone, and offer suggestions on using a headset. We'll also highlight phone services that are especially useful for telecommuters. Mobile phones will be covered in chapter 9.

## SHOULD YOU UPGRADE YOUR CURRENT PHONE?

You can get by with a simple single-line corded phone but, in many cases, you can improve your productivity by investing in a feature phone. If you're shopping for a new feature phone, look for:

### ■ **Caller ID compatibility**

Get a phone with a built-in display that shows the caller's telephone number (and sometimes, the caller's name) if the information is available. To activate this feature, you must sign up with your telephone company to get Caller

mark up the file with a strike-through or highlighting font, add new text, and fax back the changes. OCR could be useful for anyone using fax for group writing projects, editorial changes, or publishing. OCR also reduces the disk space required to store a fax.

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**Beware:** *OCR is far from perfect. Most output has errors which require careful proofreading. If you want to use OCR, be sure to coordinate with the sender, who needs to send clean, nonphotocopied documents with no illustrations, underlines, fancy typeface, or handwritten notes. Text should be in a sans serif typeface (such as Geneva or Helvetica) and be 12 points or larger.*

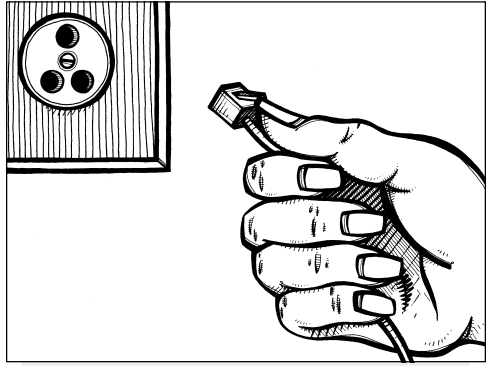
## IS A FAX MODEM RIGHT FOR YOU?

To determine if a fax modem is appropriate for you, answer the questions below. A score of five or higher indicates that PC or Mac faxing may be the right choice for you.

- Do you already have a computer and a printer?
- Are most of the faxes you send generated from your personal computer?
- If you wish to send noncomputer-generated documents, do you have, or plan to get, a scanning device?
- Do you need to keep archived electronic copies of your incoming faxes?
- Do you want to be able to annotate faxes electronically and forward them to others within your organization or workgroup?
- Are you willing to keep your computer on all the time (or be unreachable by fax for certain periods of time)?
- Do you have sufficient room on your hard drive to accommodate hefty fax files? You'll probably want to reserve at least an additional 40 megabytes for fax storage.

after normal business hours, and you may be able to send and receive your e-mail as well.

As a last resort, use public services in the city you're visiting. A good resource is Fodor's Worldview which offers do-it-yourself travel services on the Internet ([www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com)). Here you can search a database of information on more than 160 cities. Enter your arrival and departure dates and make selections from a list of such categories as festivals, dining, theater, and hotels. The result: an instant guidebook customized to your specific interests, trip dates, and destinations. You can also learn where to rent a computer, hire a translator, find conference facilities, obtain secretarial services, send a fax, or make a copy.



Recognize this problem?

## International dialing

Phone systems around the world use different signals for dial tone, busy, and ringing. Perhaps the strangest busy signal in the world is in Dakar, Senegal, where you'll hear Afro-pop music. Though these strange sounds will not pose a problem when you're dialing a voice call, they will thoroughly confuse your modem. Some modems come with a choice of country configurations. However, many designed to work in the U.S. or Canada may not be able to dial out abroad because they don't recognize the dial tone provided. To get around this, learn how to "blind dial."

## How to dial blind

You need to know how to blind dial so that your modem will ignore dial tone. This lets it connect when you're dialing from

## ONLINE SUPPORT

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### **CompuServe**

The *Working from Home Forum* has an active Telecommuting section. You can chat with other telecommuters and wannabes—and maybe even link up for a virtual job. In addition to a message-posting area, there is a library bursting with telecommuting resources. I'm the section leader in the telecommuting forum and look forward to welcoming you.

*<http://go.compuserve.com/WorkFromHome>*

### **The Mining Company**

Provides advice regarding working at home and runs a weekly telecommuting chat room.

*<http://telecommuting.miningco.com>*

## WEB SITES

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There are loads of sites with telecommuting information. Here are my favorites:

### **Canadian Telework Association**

*[www.ivc.ca](http://www.ivc.ca)*

This comprehensive site provides loads of information about telecommuting up north. This site also runs a telework job-matching board.

### **European Telework Online**

*[www.eto.org.uk](http://www.eto.org.uk)*

Links to more than 1,200 sites in Europe. Last time we looked, 28 countries and 15 languages were represented.

### **Gil Gordon Associates**

*[www.gilgordon.com](http://www.gilgordon.com)*

Consultant Gil Gordon provides excerpts from his newsletter, *Telecommuting Review*; loads of answers to common questions in his FAQ file; an excellent resources and technology section; and a comprehensive listing of other telecommuting sites on the Internet.