



Press release – 27th May

LOCKDOWN LEARNING LEADS TO SKILLS BOOM

- New research reveals time spent on self-improvement is helping increase our transferable skills to bolster careers post lockdown -

- **New research by [SpareRoom](#)¹ reveals that over half (61%) of under 35s have been learning a new skill/hobby/activity during lockdown**
- **From cooking to coding to launching new businesses, the nation has been busy upskilling during this time of uncertainty**
- **Hobbies including perfecting TikTok moves, learning sign language and calligraphy are among those the under 35s are taking on during quarantine**
- **Of those who have learnt or tried something new, 89% said they want to apply it to life outside lockdown and 21% are even considering a career change as a result of the pandemic and the skills they've been learning**

With more time spent at home than ever before, the under 35s seem to be using it wisely – building up their skillset to help boost their career during a time of economic uncertainty.

Life is a lot quieter for many right now - no commute, no weekend plans and nearly a quarter of the British workforce are currently furloughed². People have been left with a lot of time to fill, with many choosing to use that time to learn or try something new. In fact, new research from flatsharing site [SpareRoom](#) has found that 61% of under 35-year-olds have been learning a new skill or trying a new activity during lockdown.

Almost half (43%) of those who are learning or trying something new have devoted their time to educational activities, like a new language, taking an online course or even learning to code. The research also shows that over one in 10 (13%) of this group have ramped up their side hustle by focusing on something entrepreneurial, like developing business opportunities.

39% of those under 35 believe their newfound skills will be transferrable to their current jobs, with 89% keen to apply their new ability to life and work outside of lockdown. 21% of those who have learnt or tried something new are even considering a complete career change as a result of the pandemic.

Out of this group who are trying something different, 75% have focused on fitness, 54% are working on their culinary skills, 67% are trying their hand at creative disciplines like painting, learning a musical instrument or photography and 14% are mastering the art of meditation.

DIY/home improvements (incl gardening) have also been a big hit during lockdown for those learning or trying something new, with (23%) fixing household objects, improving their outdoor space and re-decorating to help alleviate stress and boredom during this challenging time. One in seven (14%) of those doing something new have gone back to basics, keeping themselves entertained, and their minds active, by spending hours

completing puzzles. Even perfecting TikTok moves, learning sign language and calligraphy have been taken on by under 35s in isolation over the last two months.

The types of new skills & hobbies people aged 18 - 34 have taken up through lockdown (2,377 respondents - select all that apply)

Answer Choices	%
Fitness	75%
Getting creative (e.g. drawing, knitting, sewing)	67%
Cooking / baking	54%
Educational (e.g. learning a new language, a skill, taking a course, coding)	43%
DIY/home improvements (incl gardening)	23%
Puzzles	14%
Meditation	14%
Developing business opportunities	13%
Volunteering	6%
Other	3%
Reading	1%

Tough though lockdown is, there can be positives to take from an extended period of time spent at home, with 38% of those who have learnt or tried something new during the pandemic admitting they would never have done so had we not gone into lockdown. 89% of those who have learnt or tried something new have found that devoting this time to self-education, whether studying a new skill or concentrating on an existing one, has also been good for their mental health during lockdown.

Matt Hutchinson, SpareRoom director comments: “Being in lockdown has its ups and downs, but it’s provided lots of us with something we aren’t used to having, and that’s time. That means a one-off opportunity to do things we’d never have normally done, and it’s great to see that so many people are using their free time to learn something new.

Whether it’s learning to code or speak a new language, using the time to get fit or indulging a love of baking, it’s great to see that many of these activities will be carried on after lockdown and some can be transferred into people’s current jobs, or even into new careers. Could there be a skills boom once lockdown ends? It would be great to think so, and that something positive can come out of a difficult time.”

- ENDS -

For more information please contact spareroom@cowpr.com or call 020 7234 9150.

Notes to Editors

¹ Research conducted by SpareRoom in 2020 with 3,906 UK flatsharers & lodgers, aged 18 - 34

² <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/04/over-a-fifth-of-british-employees-furloughed-in-last-fortnight>

About SpareRoom

SpareRoom is the UK's leading flat and house share site with nearly 10 million registered users. Founded in the UK in 2004, the company expanded into the US market in 2011 and has currently helped over a million people find a room or roommate in the US.