

How to resign from a job you just started

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ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

About 30% of US workers say they've quit a job within six months of starting it.

FULL TEXT

It can take a while to adjust to a new job. But sometimes you know right away that you've made a big mistake. Maybe the issue is a micromanaging boss. Or maybe it's a job that feels very different from what was advertised. Whatever the root cause, a person who finds themselves miserable at a new job faces a dilemma. Should they stick things out so they don't look like a job-hopper, or go ahead and quit? And if they choose the latter, is there a way to leave without burning bridges?

Why it's OK to quit a job you just started

While the prospect can be nerve-wracking, quitting your job after a short amount of time is actually pretty common. One 2018 survey of 1,000 US workers found that 31% had left a job within six months of starting it. The top reasons for their swift departures included clashing with their new boss, discovering that the job wasn't what they'd expected based on the interview, and simply deciding they didn't want to do the work anymore.

Another reason people leave jobs they've just started has to do with the nature of the interview process. Many people apply to multiple companies when they're looking to leave their current position. They may wind up accepting a role with one employer only to get a better offer from a different company a few weeks later. This becomes even more common when the labor market is tight, like it is now in the US.

If you're itching to quit, it's worth exploring whether there's a way to address your concerns before you turn in your resignation. Writing in the Harvard Business Review, organizational consultant Roberta Matuson recommends going to your new manager with proposals about how to structure your job in a way that might make you happier. If the situation can't be fixed, don't stress too much about how leaving after a month or two will affect your career in the long term, Alison Green, the author of the advice column "Ask a Manager," advises in New York Magazine. "Job hopping is about a pattern where you repeatedly leave jobs after only a short time; it's not about one short tenure," she writes. What's more, Green says, even if you do have a record of switching jobs frequently, that's not a reason to stay in a role where you're really unhappy for a year or two. "I'd rather you find a job you like and that you can commit to staying at for a while," she writes.

So you made the decision to leave your job. Now what?

First, follow the usual protocol when it comes to quitting: Let your manager know you're resigning, ideally in person or on a video call, depending on whether you work remotely, and thank them for the opportunities they've given you. (Even if there's not much you liked about your job, you don't have to get specific.)

There are a few other steps you might consider taking in an effort to leave on good—or at least, not horrible—terms. You might consider giving your employer the option to decide whether they'd like you to stay for the traditional two-week notice period or choose an earlier end date.

You can also provide some context about why you decided to leave so soon, as long as there's a way to do so politely. If the issue has to do with a miscommunication about what the job would entail, that's helpful for the hiring managers to know before they write a new job posting. If you're leaving because the dream job you'd applied to months ago wound up coming through, at least your boss knows it's a matter of unfortunate timing rather than

a rebuke. On the other hand, if the issues is simply that your boss is a jerk, you're probably better off keeping that to yourself.

No matter how polite and professional you are, it's possible that your manager will hold a grudge against you for leaving so soon. But the risk of incurring that grudge isn't nearly as bad as the toll that a terrible job can take on you.

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