

# Tips to Reduce Screen Time

Between texting, talking with friends, connecting on social media, or playing games, we all spend a lot of time plugged in. Take a quick account of how many hours a day you spend on recreational screen time.\* A healthy amount is 2 hours or less. That's on top of your schoolwork, of course. So, how do we cut down?

Here are 5 tips to help cut back on screen time:

- **Remove screens from your bedroom.** If you have a computer or TV in your room, you're likely to use about 1.5 hours more screen time a day. Screens in your room also keep you from interacting with the rest of the family.



- **Turn off screens when eating meals and snacks and before bedtime.** Using your phone at mealtime takes away from family time, and distracts you from fullness cues. So leave your phone alone and enjoy your meals with the fam.
- **Keep screens off for 1 hour before bedtime and store all screens away from your sleeping area.** It will help improve your sleep, and you'll feel more rested during the day. Good quality and quantity of sleep also helps to control appetite and prevents overeating.

- **Get out. Do more.** There's a whole world of fun stuff out there that doesn't involve your phone or a computer. Plan activities that take you outdoors; plan a picnic in the park; take a hike with a friend; go for a bike ride with your family. These things are fun, and don't involve screens.
- **Press pause.** As tough as it might be to put your devices away, try to turn them off completely. Set a reminder on your phone to turn off your screens. Even just while your studying. Take breaks during the day from you phone. Find other ways to have fun — there are so many.

Screen-free days and turning off your devices when they aren't in use are good ways to protect the environment by saving energy, too. Any electronic gizmo that has a clock, digital timer, remote control or standby mode is sucking energy when it's not being used (it's called 'phantom electricity' — and it's scary how much of it there is).

\* Recreational screen time — use of screens for entertainment rather than for school or other educational activities.

## REFLECTIVE QUESTION

Would you consider getting rid of screens in your bedroom?

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