

10 tips for healthy screen time

1 Set a limit

Challenge yourself to stick to a daily limit for overall screen use – or for a specific app – for one week. Use Screen Time for iPhone or Digital Wellbeing for Android to set alerts when you've hit your limit. You'll still be able to use the app, but you'll be more aware of how long you've been on it.

2 Cut out distractions

Turn off notifications for apps that don't need your immediate attention. Put your phone on silent or out of sight and delete apps you don't use. You'll be amazed how much extra time this frees up for other things that matter more.

3 Keep screens out of the bedroom

Make your bedroom a screen-free zone by putting your phone in another room before you go to sleep. You'll fall asleep faster and be less tempted to scroll first thing in the morning.

4 Track your screen use

Make a list of the pros and cons of your screen use. Could you swap some of that screen time for screen-free alternatives? Meet up with a friend instead of texting them, read a book instead of watching a show, or play a board game instead of gaming online.

5 Make mealtimes phone-free

Not only is this better for the overall mood at the table, it also helps you connect with your food and the people around you.

6 Get active with your screen time

Not all screen time has to be sedentary. Think: yoga and workout apps, dance videos, guided walks, and fitness games.

7 Stick to one screen at a time

Minimise distractions by focusing on one screen at a time. Don't scroll social media while watching a show. Put your phone away and stay present. If your phone is out of reach, you'll be less tempted to pick it up.

8 Set screen time rules

Talk about your screen habits with your friends and family: agree on when, where, and how long you can use it.

9 Switch to greyscale

A colourful screen will keep you hooked longer, so set your phone to greyscale instead. Most apps are designed to grab your attention with bright colours and animations. Knowing this can help make things less tempting.

10 Choose a specific time to reply to messages

Pick a set time to respond to messages, like between 9:00 and 10:00 in the morning or 17:00 and 18:00 at night. This will reduce the urge to constantly check your phone and ease the pressure of replying immediately.

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wijsheid
7 t/m 14 nov 2025