3 Ways to Reduce Screen Time – Unlock your potential, not your phone.

By: Erin Foley



Photo by Niklas Hamann from [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/Pe4gh8a8mBY)

Today, screens are everywhere we look. From desks with laptops to our own hands holding a mobile phone, it is becoming hard to leave the screen.

According to a [Vox](https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/1/6/21048116/tech-companies-time-well-spent-mobile-phone-usage-data) article about efforts to reduce screen time, “By all accounts, the time we [spend](https://www.emarketer.com/content/us-time-spent-with-media-in-2019-has-plateaued-with-digital-making-up-losses-by-old-media) [attached](https://www.rbr.com/wp-content/uploads/Q1-2019-Nielsen-Total-Audience-Report-FINAL.pdf) to our [digital devices](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/11/19/americans-favor-mobile-devices-over-desktops-and-laptops-for-getting-news/) is [growing](https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/10/29/survey-average-time-young-people-spend-watching-videos-mostly-youtube-has-doubled-since/). American adults spent about 3 hours and 30 minutes a day using the mobile internet in 2019, an increase of about 20 minutes from a year earlier, according to measurement company Zenith. The firm expects that time to grow to over four hours in 2021. (Top smartphone users [currently spend 4 hours and 30 minutes per day](https://blog.rescuetime.com/screen-time-stats-2018/) on those devices)...” (Molla, 2020).

While there is no correct amount of time you should spend on a screen, there are several ways to lower your usage and “unlock” your potential. Here are 3 tips to reduce screen time.

1. Set a timer.



Photo by Marcelo Leal from [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/vZawEq0Eexo)

It can be easy to get caught up in your favorite game or a never-ending black hole of social media. But luckily there are several apps that can help reduce your screen time usage.

According to an article from [Bustle](https://www.bustle.com/p/9-ways-to-reduce-screen-time-fight-the-urge-to-check-your-phone-18841370), “If you're not even sure how often you use your phone, or where all that screen time usage is spent each day, try to start being more conscious of how often you pull it out to check on something…In addition to the Screen Time app that's available in your control center, some other apps that help you control your screen time include [Moment](https://inthemoment.io/), [App Detox](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=de.dfki.appdetox&hl=en_US), and Our Pact” (Burke 2019).

Taking small steps to reduce your screen time can make a big difference for your body.

1. Start a new hobby!



Photo by Lenin Estrada from [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/GCpyNh39kOc)

Instead of scrolling on social media, begin a new hobby that does not include a screen. You can start a new book, bake a recipe you have been thinking about, or try something out of you comfort zone like an instrument.

It can be easy to get caught up on apps like Tik Tok or Instagram. You might even feel like you are missing out. However, the world does not stop moving when you are scrolling, so get up and try something new!

1. Go outside.



Photo by Lukasz Szmigiel from [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/jFCViYFYcus)

Because of COVID-19, students are finding themselves isolated indoors for longer periods of time. It is important that you get outside and get fresh air. Like previously mentioned, taking a break from your screen can have several benefits for your body.

According to [Sharp Health](https://www.sharp.com/health-news/5-ways-being-outdoors-can-make-you-healthier-and-happier.cfm), “’Being outdoors in nature can be healing and beneficial for the body and mind… Whether at the beach, forest or in a neighborhood park, nature offers a calming effect. And when we combine nature with physical activity, it can help fight depression and anxiety’” (Sharp Health, 2020).

Along with fighting depression and anxiety and according to Sharp Health, being outside can also lower blood pressure and reduce stress, improve focus, improve our immune system, and helps us age gracefully.

Do not get stuck on your phone or laptops for hours. It can be tempting to feel the need to keep up with your friends and family, but the world does not wait for you to stop scrolling.

Put your phone down or close your laptop, get up, and unlock your potential!

About the author:

Erin Foley is a junior at Elon University. She is currently completing a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Strategic Communications with a minor in Business Administration. She loves all aspects related to communications, especially when she can use her skills to advise and motivate others on how to improve their health.