



Digital Wellbeing During COVID-19

As we all spend more time at home, we're learning to adapt to a new way of life. No matter what it is you're doing—working, learning, catching up with loved ones, even exercising—chances are you're doing it with a screen. There's no doubt about it: technology is a critical tool during this period of social isolation. And while screen time needs have changed, the need for focus, sleep, and boundaries between work and home life have never been more important. We're here to help.

Two years ago, we launched our Digital Wellbeing program, an initiative to research and develop tools that help people foster a more balanced relationship with technology. Here, you'll find helpful tips and insights from this research. There are ideas for finding focus, managing screen time, getting better sleep, and more. For more digital wellbeing tips and tools, visit wellbeing.google.



Finding focus while working from home

As we make new time for health, family and other priorities, it's important to adjust our expectations of what can be done in a given day. When you are able to work, consider some of these best practices to help you get—and stay—in the zone:

Try single tasking when you can

To improve focus, try reducing the number of screens around you. Prioritize the one that helps you achieve the task at hand. 'Multitasking' often leads to an increase in mistakes and the time to complete a task.

Block out distracting apps

Android's [Focus mode](#) temporarily pauses selected apps to minimize distractions. To help re-establish working routines from home, schedule Focus mode to automatically activate during working hours.

Put your phone out of sight

Just keeping your phone out of your line of sight can improve your concentration, your ability to retain information, and help reduce stress.

Simplify your home screen

Try moving specific apps that frequently distract you into a folder on the second page so you're less likely to open them out of habit. Keep your home screen for essential work apps and tools.



Adjusting screen time habits to new norms

It's natural for us to use devices more during life's major disruptions. To help make the most of your screen time (and step away when you'd like), consider a few of these hacks for a more balanced day:

Use your voice instead

To avoid getting pulled into your phone, ask your [Google Assistant](#) to complete actions like setting alarms, sending texts, or searching for answers on the web. [Routines](#) can even help you activate multiple tasks at once. With a single voice command such as, "Hey Google, good morning" your Assistant can tell you the weather, upcoming calendar events, start a podcast, and much more.

Set time limits for apps and sites

If you're finding it hard to stay off certain apps or sites like the news or social media, create daily [timers](#) to limit your usage to a time that feels right for you.

Establish digital ground rules for your kids

Parents can manage the apps and websites that a child uses with [Family Link](#). They can also visit the new [Kids tab](#) in the Google Play store to find high-quality apps for children. To help start the "tech talk", we've created a [guide](#) to spark conversations and identify healthy habits.



Establishing boundaries in a work-home blend

When your office is now your home, separating these two worlds isn't easy. While we no longer have the natural stopping cues from an evening commute or lunch break, we can still build in safeguards that make it easier to step away. Try these tips to establish some work-home boundaries:

Block out time in your calendar

Let coworkers know when you won't be online by scheduling lunch, family time, workouts, or anything else you need to recharge and unplug from work. For an extra nudge, create events in Google Calendar that [automatically decline](#) meeting invitations.

Establish a dedicated workspace

If you can, create a space in your home that is used only for working to let your brain know when it's time to work, and when it's time to relax (using the corner of a room as a consistent workspace can be enough). This can also help establish boundaries so those you live with know when you're unavailable.

Set an auto-reply

When you need to step away for an extended period of time, set a custom [out-of-office](#) message on Gmail to let people know that you won't be able to get back to them right away.

Turn off work profile

If you have an Android Enterprise account, set up a [work profile](#) on your phone so you can temporarily turn off all work-related apps. This lets you continue to use your phone during personal time without any interruptions from work emails, calendars, and messages.



Unplugging from technology for a better night's rest

With the constant deluge of news alerts, it can be especially difficult to step away from our devices when it's time to wind down. Consider some of these tips to unplug more easily:

Create device-free zones and times

Designate times of your day or spaces in your home to be device-free. Finding a central place to keep your phone can reduce the urge to check emails and notifications.

Create a regular bedtime routine

Try setting a bedtime schedule with Android's [Bedtime mode](#), which automatically turns on Do Not Disturb and fades the screen to grayscale at your chosen bedtime.

Reduce blue light exposure

Blue light can have a negative impact on our natural sleep cycles by delaying the release of sleep-inducing melatonin and increasing our alertness. To fall asleep more easily, try putting away your phone an hour before bed and choose a screen-free activity like reading a book or listening to a podcast.

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