

Digital Detox



The term **NOMOPHOBIA**, or **NO MOBILE PHOne PhoBIA**, is used to describe the psychological fear of being detached from mobile phone connectivity. If you are addicted to checking your phone or rely extensively on digital devices, it may be time for a “digital detox.” Learn how to curb your screen time to increase productivity and be more present day-to-day.

Be aware: Pay attention to your surroundings and how you feel when you’re on your smartphone. Did you sneak away from a date or are you hiding in the bathroom stall at work or school to scan your Facebook or Twitter account? Are you checking your smartphone because you’re bored, lonely or anxious? If so, you might be best suited by putting your smartphone down and finding a healthier activity.

Set rules: Forcing yourself to face a complete digital detox may be an impossibility due to job or family reasons, but try to set clear rules about when you won’t have your smartphone in your hands or near you, such as when the kids come home for school, during mealtimes or when you go to sleep.

Get help: Decreasing your attachment to smartphones can be quite a challenge, so tell family and friends what you’re trying to accomplish and ask for their support (and, if possible, to put their smartphones away when they’re around you). If your smartphone addiction is negatively impacting your physical, mental or social health, you might consider seeking help from a therapist or support group.

Grab a book: Many people seem to have forgotten that they can still obtain information without using the Internet. Put your smartphone away and spend a few hours at the library or bookstore and see how it feels to flip through the pages of a book or magazine.

Move around: Instead of sending an email or commenting on someone’s latest social media post, set up a time to meet them in person. Or, if you’re spending hours downloading fitness apps and surfing the Internet to see what exercises will help you get in shape, set down your smartphone, go outside and start moving.

There’s an app for that: If you’re struggling to turn off your smartphone, there are apps that can shut them down for you at pre-determined times, such as when you’re driving—which truly can be a lifesaver.

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