

LIKE Tip Sheet



Social media is place where we can connect, share with others, and express our feelings. It can also be a place of self-comparison, constant FOMO, and overall harmful for our mental health. Here are a few tips for leading a balanced lifestyle with the overwhelming presence of social media.

- **Turn off all notifications except for people.**
Notifications appear in red dots because red is a trigger color that instantly draws our attention. But most notifications are generated by machines, not actual people. Visit **Settings > Notifications** and turn off all notifications, banners, and badges, except from apps where real people want your attention; e.g. messaging apps like WhatsApp, FB Messenger, Signal, Telegram, WeChat etc.
- **Go Grayscale.**
Colorful icons give our brains shiny rewards every time we unlock. Set your phone to grayscale to remove those positive reinforcements. Go to **Settings > General > Accessibility > Accessibility Shortcut (bottom) > Color Filters**. This allows you to quickly triple-tap the home button to toggle grayscale on and off, so you keep color when you need it. (iOS)
- **Try keeping your home screen to tools only.**
Limit your first page of apps to just tools—the apps you use for quick in-and-out tasks like Maps, Camera, Calendar, Notes, or Lyft. Move the rest of your apps, especially mindless choices, off the first page and into folders.
- **Launch other apps by typing.**
Swipe down and type the app you want to open instead of leaving bad habits on the home screen. On **Android** you can use the Search Box on your home screen. On **iOS**, turn off Siri Suggestions (**Settings > Siri & Search > Siri Suggestions to off**).

- **Texting shortcut: Use quick reactions!**

On iOS, press and hold on a text message and you'll see this menu of quick reactions. It's faster than crafting a response, and can also add some context, giving a taste of the emotion that's often silently conveyed in a real, face-to-face conversation.
- **Charge your device outside the bedroom.**

Get a separate alarm clock in your bedroom, and charge your phone in another room (or on the other side of the room). This way, you can wake up without getting sucked into your phone before you even get out of bed.
- **Remove social media from your phone.**

If you really want to use your phone less, we recommend removing all the major social media apps from your phone. It's the easiest way to cut back, as these apps can easily take up so much of our time.
- **Put your phone away when speaking to someone.**

Being able to communicate without a phone in hand or readily accessible is an important skill. It also shows that you care about the conversation you are having.
- **Pay attention to your body.**

When you notice that you're in the midst of a phone spiral, ask yourself: What's your posture like? How's your breathing? Is whatever you're doing on your phone making you feel good? Do you *want* to be using it right now? The more tuned in you are to your own experiences in the moment, the easier it will be to change your behavior.
- **Call a friend or family member.**

Texting or emailing can sometimes feel like a chore. Talking on the phone is a more natural and communicative way of checking in with those who are close to you. *(Note: this tip isn't for everyone or for all circumstances)*

● **Use the sight of others on their phones as a reminder of your own intentions.**

The sight of someone else pulling out his or her phone on the elevator probably makes you want to check yours as well. But with practice, you can transform this into a cue for a new, healthier habit. When seeing other people reach for their phones, try to use it as a cue to take a deep breath and relax.

● **Reframe the way you think about social media.**

Many people equate spending less time on their phones with denying themselves pleasure — and who likes to do that? Instead, think of it this way: The time you spend on your phone is time you're not spending doing other pleasurable things, like hanging out with a friend or pursuing a hobby. Instead of thinking of it as "spending less time on your phone," think of it as "spending more time on your life."

● **Ask yourself what you want to pay attention to.**

When we decide what to pay attention to in the moment, we are making a broader decision about how we want to spend our time. The people who design apps desperately want our attention, because that's how they make money. Have you ever wondered why so many social media apps are free? It's because advertisers are the customers — and your attention is what's being sold. So ask yourself: What do you want to pay attention to?

● **Set yourself up for success!**

Create triggers that will remind you of your goals and make it easier to live up to them. If you want to spend more time reading, leave a book on your bedside table. If you want to cook more, lay out a shopping list for that recipe you're eager to try. On the flip side, avoid triggers that will set you up for failure. Delete social media apps from your phone. Disable notifications. Establish a rule for yourself and your family of not keeping phones on the table during meals.

Communicating Online

We recommend distributing these detailed and relevant guidelines for digital behavior to your students. It will help to focus future discussions and allow your class to agree upon a set of standards.



Adapted from our friends at Common Sense Education.

- Think about what you write.**
Use the right language for your audience! You might write or speak to a teacher differently from a friend. Think about how your words could come across and affect people.
- Keep things private.**
Don't share personal information, including passwords, your home address, inappropriate images, or gossip. Once it's on the internet, it's there forever!
- Give credit where credit is due!**
Don't lie, steal, or cheat. Don't try to deceive others. Although it's easy to copy others' work, download things without permission, or use game cheat codes, don't do it.
- Report misbehavior.**
The Internet is a giant community, and everyone who is a part of it - including you - can help it be a nice place. If you see something, *say something*.
- Think before you post, text, or share.**
Consider how you and others might feel after you've posted something. It's not always easy to take back what you've said online, and your online behavior can create a lasting footprint.