

# How to Better Manage Your Screen Time

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I can't stop looking at my phone but I'm not alone. Over 2.5 billion people have smartphones now, and a lot of them are having a hard time putting them down. The problem is, our devices are designed to keep us engaged. They're intentionally addicting. But if you understand the tricks that grab your attention, you can learn to have a healthier relationship with your phone.

[Here is some advice from] Tristan Harris. He has worked as Google's design ethicist, and now runs a non-profit initiative called Time Well Spent, advocating for awareness of how tech companies profit off of users' attention.

## 1. Turn off all notifications, except for when a real human is trying to reach you.

When you get a call, a text, or a message, it's usually because another person wants to communicate with you, but a lot of today's apps simulate the feeling of that kind of social interaction, to get you to spend more time on their platform.

## 2. Grayscale your screen.

The easiest way to attract your eye's attention on a screen is through color. Human eyes are sensitive to warm colors. That's why so many apps have redesigned their icons to be brighter, bolder, and warmer over the years.

But you can neutralize that distracting effect by selecting a grayscale color filter in your phone's accessibility settings. When you make everything black and white, your brain isn't tricked into thinking that certain apps (e.g. those that appear to be more vibrant colour) are more important than others.



*Popular apps such as Instagram, Airbnb, and Google have redesigned their icons to be brighter, bolder, and warmer over the years.*

## 3. Restrict your home screen to everyday tools.

Make sure that your home screen, when you unlock it, doesn't have anything except for the in-the-moment tools that help you live your life (e.g. Contacts, Maps, Calendar). None of these are apps that you can fall into and then get sucked down some bottomless vortex of stuff. Apps that use infinite scrolling create a frictionless experience, but they also reduce a user's sense of control and make it harder to stop.