

## 30-day digital detox guide

### How to start the challenge

- Find optional technologies to remove. These don't have to be just physical devices but also services. Think social media, streaming services, video games etc. This will be personal to you and you'll have to be honest about what counts as optional.
- Don't include anything that would harm you personally or professionally. If you need email or twitter for work that's fine. Just make sure you're only using it for work purposes.
- You're allowed practical exceptions (i.e. needing to be able to text your kids) but be strict with them. Again, down to you to decide what is reasonable but also try and think of alternatives where possible (i.e. call your kids instead of texting them).
- Write down your banned list and practical exceptions and stick them somewhere you will see them daily.
- Removing digital distractions before deciding what you'll fill that time with will be a disaster. Figure out what you want to do with your extra time *before* starting the challenge.

### How to spend your time

You'll find that you have a lot more time in your day so it's important to plan to know how to spend it. Below are some ideas.

- Create something as often as you can. While Cal recommends DIY, I would say just creating and being creative should be the goal. You can read my post about it [here](#).
- Join a social activity or club. It's the best way to connect with people (as things open this will hopefully become more of an option).
- Exercise! You could transform yourself in a month.
- Take long walks. As we've all probably found out recently, these are great.

Tip: Leave your phone at home/in another room. Removing easy access will help break the habit of instinctively reaching for your device.

### Ideas to help manage technology use during and after the 30-day challenge

#### Social Media

Get rid of social media on your phone and only access it only when you're on your computer. You may be surprised at how little you end up using social networks when they're not right there.

Consider the law of diminishing returns. The added value of something falls the more you use it. That's why focussed, intentional, engagement with something yields the best value for your time. Applying this to social media, you can probably get all the information you need in around 20 minutes a week.

## Embracing slow news

The constant flow of information coaxes us into wanting to always stay in the loop. But as the news cycle is endless, aiming to stay up to date is futile as we'll never be able to keep up. It's really fine not to be clued up on the latest stories. If something's important enough it will reach you.

Some approaches to news are to check only the best of the best news sources, not to look at the first wave of a breaking news story as it'll be all jumbled and contradictory, and to download articles to read without the distraction of the internet. Oh, and stay away from twitter.

To make any webpage distraction-free and easy to read install the [Just Read chrome extension](#) (it's free).

## Texting

Consolidate your texting. We're very used to having multiple conversations going at once and always being available. But by keeping your phone on do not disturb, checking texts only a few times a day and treating texting like email, you will free up a lot of time.

If you want to speak to someone why not give them a call or see them in person? As mentioned above, it will strengthen the relationship.

## Solitude

Solitude is not the same as loneliness. It is the state of being alone *without* being lonely and actually [has a lot of benefits](#). This is linked to letting your mind wander which [I wrote a post about](#).

Also, you can experience solitude anywhere as it's about what happens within your mind, not your environment. You can banish solitude if you don't allow inputs to intrude such as books, tv, podcasts, or any attention-grabbing activity.

## Reintroducing technologies

So, you've completed the 30-day digital detox and had revelations about your technology use and thinking about what technologies to reintroducing back into your life. When you do, consider the following.

- Does this technology directly support something I deeply value?
- Is this the best way to use technology to serve this value?
- How am I going to use this technology going forward to maximise its value and minimise its harms?