Screen time

To look after your health, it is important to avoid sitting or lying down for long periods of time when you are awake. This is called sedentary behaviour.

One of the main things contributing to sedentary behaviour is screen time.

Screen time is time spent watching TV, playing games on video consoles or using computers, iPads, smart phones and other handheld technologies.

**How much is too much?**

# Australia’s [24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Young People](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-children-and-young-people-5-to-17-years)[[1]](#footnote-1) recommend a maximum of two hours per day recreational screen time. This does not include time you spend on a screen for school or work.

# While screen-based activities can be fun, it is important to balance this sedentary time with physical activity and spending time with friends and family.

# Why is too much screen time bad?

Screen time usually involves sitting or lying down. Too much sitting or lying down can impact your physical health and lead to long-term health issues such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and unhealthy weight gain.

Other health problems resulting from too much screen time may include:

* problems with sleep
* limited social skills
* poor posture
* effects on eyesight, for example development or progression of myopia (short-sightedness).

**Tips to reduce screen time**

* Work out a screen time schedule with your parent or guardian which has the right balance between screen time and active time each day.
* Set aside a certain time each day for using social media on your tablet or smart phone – and limit it!
* Try not to spend too much time inside on screens during the daytime. You could be outside having fun with family and friends!
* Have at least one hour of screen free time before bed. This should help you sleep better.
* If your favourite TV shows are on during the day or late at night, use on-demand apps to watch them later.
* Turn off notifications. If your phone or tablet is constantly buzzing and demanding your attention, it is hard to switch off and be screen free.
* Keep screens out of the bedroom.
* Keep your phone out of sight when you need to concentrate.

1. <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-children-and-young-people-5-to-17-years> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)