



Cutting the Smartphone Cord

People are attached to their smartphones more than ever, using them for everything from making dinner reservations and tracking their favorite sports teams to checking the weather and their social media accounts.

While having a phone that doubles as a computer by your side 24 hours a day is an amazing resource, it also comes with disadvantages: less time interacting with family and friends, fewer chances to engage with nature and the world around you and extreme anxiety when that smartphone goes missing or runs out of power. That's why it can be healthy to take a break from screens and to learn to curb the desire to constantly check your phone for the latest update.

Here are some ways to overcome a smartphone addiction while still using your iPhone, Galaxy or LG in a healthy way in your day-to-day life:

- **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, but try to set clear rules about when you won't have your smartphone in your hands, 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. If your smartphone addiction is affecting 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.
- **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 predetermined times, such as when you're driving, which truly can be a life saver.

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