Moderation Is Key

Setting Boundaries

Setting boundaries around your technology use is an important step to prevent compulsive behavior. Here's how to do it:

- **Set Time Limits:** Decide how much time you'll spend on video games, social media, or watching TV each day. You could limit yourself to 1 hour of screen time after school, for example, and use the rest of your time for homework, hobbies, or spending time with family.
- **Create No-Device Zones:** Make certain areas of your home device-free, like the dining room or bedrooms. This helps you separate screen time from other important activities like meals or sleep.
- **Schedule Screen-Free Time:** Pick certain times each day, like during dinner or right before bed, when you don't use devices at all. This will help you focus on the present and avoid unnecessary distractions.

Stay Balanced and Healthy

It's okay to use technology—it's fun, educational, and helpful. But using it too much can lead to problems. Here are some final tips to keep technology use balanced:

1. **Take Regular Breaks:** After spending time on a device, take a break to rest your eyes, stretch, or engage in a different activity.
2. **Limit Screen Time:** Set a limit on how much time you spend on screens each day. Use apps or timers to help you track your usage.
3. **Focus on Other Activities:** Balance your day by spending time on hobbies, sports, or activities that don't involve screens.
4. **Get Enough Sleep:** Avoid screens at least 30 minutes before bedtime to help you sleep better and feel rested.



TEST YOURSELF

1. *Online gambling is not addictive.*
   A. True B. False
2. *Consuming content that makes you feel sad, anxious, or angry is called "Doomscrolling."*
   A. True B. False
3. *Cyberbullying on social media can lead to feelings of loneliness, sadness and even depression.*
   A. True B. False
4. *Excessive time spent gaming can affect your physical and mental health.*
   A. True B. False
5. *Setting time limits and taking breaks from technology can help reduce the risk of addiction.*
   A. True B. False

Answers: 1. False 2. True 3. True 4. False 5. True

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VIDEO GAMES, GAMBLING, AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION



Preventing Compulsive Tech Use



What Is...
Compulsive Technology Use?

Compulsive technology use occurs when you spend too much time on devices like smartphones, computers, and gaming consoles, to the point where it negatively affects your daily life. If you feel like you can't stop using your phone or playing games, even when it causes problems, this could be a sign of compulsive use.

Technology is designed to be engaging, but when you spend too much time on it, it can take over your life. It can interfere with your schoolwork, family time, sleep, and even your health. The goal is to use technology in a way that adds to your life, not take away from it. Understanding that it's okay to enjoy technology, but you need balance, will help you avoid problems in the future.

Signs
of Compulsive Technology Use

How do you know if you are using technology too much? Here are some signs to watch out for:

- You feel anxious when you can't access your devices.
- You spend more time on screens than you want to.
- You neglect other important activities, like homework or socializing.
- You feel upset, bored, or even angry when you're not on your devices.

If you notice these signs, it might be time to take a break or create healthier habits around technology use. It's important to remember that while technology can be fun and useful, it's also essential to have a healthy balance and not let it control your life.

Extreme Gaming!
The Effects of Video Games on Your Life

Video games can be a lot of fun, but spending too much time playing can have several negative effects:

- **Physical Health:** Sitting for long periods while gaming can hurt your posture, cause eye strain, and even lead to back or neck pain. You also miss out on physical activity, which can affect your fitness and overall health.
- **Mental Health:** Spending too much time gaming can lead to feelings of stress or anxiety. Sometimes, players get so focused on completing a game that they lose touch with other important aspects of life, like schoolwork or friendships. Plus, playing violent or intense games for too long may increase aggression or stress.
- **Social Impact:** Gaming for long hours can isolate you from your friends and family. Instead of socializing in person, you may find yourself spending more time alone or in online worlds.

Online Obsession:
The Dangers of Online Gambling

Online gambling involves betting money on games or activities like poker, sports betting, or slots over the internet. Although it may seem fun at first, it can quickly become dangerous:

- **Addiction:** Online gambling can be highly addictive. People often feel the urge to keep gambling, hoping to win back money they've lost. This can lead to spending more than you can afford and can become hard to stop.
- **Financial Problems:** Even small bets can add up quickly, leading to major financial problems. People may start gambling with money they don't have or use money meant for other needs. This can cause significant debt and stress.
- **Emotional Stress:** Losing money while gambling can create feelings of guilt, sadness, and anxiety. It can negatively affect your mental health and make you feel more isolated from others.

Social Media Addiction
The Impact on Your Well-Being

Social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook and others have become an important way to stay connected. However, spending too much time on social media can have several harmful effects:

- **Lowered Self-Esteem**: Social media often shows only the best parts of people's lives. This can make you feel like you're missing out or not measuring up to others. Comparing yourself to others online can make you feel worse about yourself.
- **Addiction**: Constantly checking your phone for new posts, likes, or comments can lead to an unhealthy cycle. It can be hard to stop scrolling, and you may find yourself wasting hours of your day without realizing it.
- **Sleep Problems**: Using your phone or computer right before bed can disrupt your sleep. The blue light from screens can trick your brain into thinking it's still daytime, which makes it harder to fall asleep and get rest.



Doomscrolling: What is it?

Doomscrolling is the act of spending too much time online consuming negative news or other content that makes you feel sad, anxious, or angry. It can include: reading negative news articles, watching short-form videos, and scrolling through social media.

How Technology Affects Your Physical Health

Spending too much time on devices can hurt your body. Here are a few things to watch out for:

- **Eye Strain**: Staring at screens for too long can cause your eyes to become tired, dry, and strained. This is known as digital eye strain, and it can lead to headaches and blurry vision.
- **Bad Posture**: Sitting hunched over a screen for long periods can lead to neck, back, and shoulder pain. This can also cause long-term problems with posture and mobility.
- **Lack of Exercise**: Spending all your time on technology means you're not moving your body as much. Not getting enough physical activity can lead to weight gain, poor health, and low energy.