Top tips to reducing the impact of screen time

Dr Larry Rosen, psychology professor at California State University, says that it's more important to limit the stretches of time children spend in front of screens rather than worry about the total amount each day. Frequent breaks stop the brains from becoming overstimulated and combat screen addiction.

Got one or more of the below symptoms?

- dry eyes
- sore eyes
- burning eyes
- itchy eyes
- watery eyes
- blurred vision
- doubled vision
- headaches
- soreness in the neck, shoulders, or back
- sensitivity to light
- trouble concentrating
- difficulty keeping eyes open

Try some of these top tips

Wear your glasses!
Long periods of working at a computer screen can cause discomfort. You must ensure the size of text and images on the screen are the right for you.

Follow the 20:20:20 rule
The 20:20:20 rule is simple. Look away from the screen every **20 minutes**, and look at something **20 feet away**, for at least **20 seconds**. This will relax your eye muscles and help to reduce the risk of many symptoms of digital eye strain.

Adjust your screen distance
Another guide for screen distance is the 1-2-10 rule. Mobile phones should ideally be one foot away, laptops and computer screens should be two feet away, and televisions should be 10 feet away. This will allow your eyes to focus properly on screens at the correct distance.

Adjust your screen position
The screen should be slightly below your eye level, as looking up at screens widens the eyes and dries them out quicker. If your workstation is not set up properly, you may suffer from headaches caused by screen glare or bad posture.

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Dim your screen

If your screen is much brighter than the rest of the light in the area, you should dim it. You could also adjust the room lighting so the contrast is lessened.

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Clean your screen

Keep your screens clean. Dirty screens with fingerprints and other marks can strain your eyes even more.

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Blink, and blink again

We normally blink about 10 to 15 times per minute, but studies show when people are staring at a screen they tend to blink less than half that often. Blinking helps replenish your eye's own tears, so try and do some extra blinking while working.

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Stay hydrated

Water is important for every aspect of your health - and your eye health isn't any different. Staying hydrated will help to avoid dry eyes, so keep a water bottle close by and keep it topped up.

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What else can be done?

Media-free times

Arrange some media-free times every day to help reduce your eye fatigue. Perhaps try 'screen-free' time during your break and lunch times, or even reduce screen time in the evenings.

Get outside

Try and venture outside as often as you can. The time spent outside will not only give your eyes a rest from focusing on a screen but will also give the mind a chance to slow down and relax too.