

Balancing Tech

Textbook

Balancing Tech



Tech Time and the Human Body

Technology helps us learn, connect, and play—but too much screen time can affect how we *feel* and *function*. Long hours on digital devices may lead to:

- **Device addiction:** The constant need to check your phone or play one more game
- **Digital overload:** Feeling mentally tired from switching between apps, notifications, and messages
- **Changing behaviors:** Acting differently online than in real life—like being bolder, ruder, or more anxious

These impacts don't just affect your mood—they can change how you treat others and how you see yourself.

Follow the 20-20-20 Rule

Ever notice your eyes feeling tired after looking at a screen too long? That's called **eye strain**, and it's very common. A simple rule can help:

The 20-20-20 Rule: Every **20 minutes**, look at something **20 feet away** for **20 seconds**. This gives your eye muscles a break and helps prevent headaches and blurry vision.

You can even set a timer or use an app to remind you—it's a small habit that makes a big difference.

Sleep and Screens Don't Mix

Screens can seriously mess with your **sleep schedule**. The **blue light** from phones and tablets tells your brain to "stay awake!"—even when it's bedtime. Late-night scrolling also keeps your mind busy when it should be winding down.

Tips for better sleep:

- Power down screens at least 30 minutes before bed
- Use night mode or blue light filters
- Keep devices out of the bedroom if possible


Your body and brain need sleep to grow, learn, and stay sharp—so don't let tech steal that time.

Body Changes from Too Much Tech

Using devices too often, especially with poor habits, can lead to real changes in your **muscles, bones, and nerves**:

- **Neck strain (tech neck):** From looking down at a phone
- **Back and shoulder pain:** From bad posture
- **Thumb and wrist pain:** From tapping or swiping too much
- **Weakened muscles:** From sitting too long without movement

And don't forget—**dehydration** can make it worse. When you're focused on your screen, you may forget to drink water!

 **Mini Activity:** In pairs, take turns practicing "tech-safe" posture while using a phone or laptop. A partner checks for:

- Neck alignment
- Back support
- Feet on the floor
- Screen at eye level

Then switch roles. This reinforces body-awareness and healthy habits.

Your Brain on Tech

Have you ever tried to do homework while texting a friend and watching a video? That's **digital multitasking**, and it often *hurts* more than it helps. Over time, too much screen time can affect:

- **Memory:** Making it harder to remember things
- **Focus:** Your brain gets used to constant switching
- **Decision-making:** More impulsive choices online and offline

These changes may not be obvious right away—but they can build up over time.

Regulating Your Digital Life

It's not about avoiding technology—it's about **regulating it**. That means setting limits and making healthy choices like:

- Taking device breaks
- Turning off notifications during work or meals
- Making time for *offline* hobbies like reading, drawing, or sports
- Talking to friends *in person* when possible

Your **mental and physical health** are connected. Choosing when, how, and why you use tech is a skill that will help you stay balanced for life.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why might screen time affect sleep and brain function differently than playing outside or reading a book?
2. What's one strategy you could use to remind yourself to follow the 20-20-20 rule when using a device?

Questions (5)

1. What is one possible mental effect of excessive screen time?

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose the correct answer:

- A. Back pain
- B. Device overheating
- C. Trouble concentrating
- D. Thumb soreness

2. What is the correct way to use the 20-20-20 rule?

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose the correct answer:

- A. Look at your screen for 20 seconds every 20 minutes
- B. Switch apps every 20 seconds
- C. Close your eyes for 20 minutes after using tech
- D. Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds

3. How does blue light from screens affect sleep?

Choose the correct answer:

- A. It helps your body relax
- B. It encourages your brain to fall asleep
- C. It signals the brain to stay awake
- D. It reduces eye strain

4. Which of the following is NOT a physical effect of poor device posture?

Choose the correct answer:

- A. Eye strain
- B. Neck pain
- C. Muscle growth
- D. Wrist discomfort

5. What is one benefit of regulating screen time and using devices in moderation?

Choose the correct answer:

- A. Your battery lasts longer
- B. You will never have to do homework again
- C. Improved mental focus and healthier habits
- D. You won't need to sleep as much

Answer Keys & Solutions

Questions

1. What is one possible mental effect of excessive screen time?

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Correct Answer:

- A. Back pain ✗ Incorrect
- B. Device overheating ✗ Incorrect
- C. Trouble concentrating ✓ Correct
- D. Thumb soreness ✗ Incorrect

2. What is the correct way to use the 20-20-20 rule?

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Correct Answer:

- A. Look at your screen for 20 seconds every 20 minutes ✗ Incorrect
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- C. Close your eyes for 20 minutes after using tech ✗ Incorrect
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