The 7-Day Phone Reset

A one-week plan to use your phone on purpose again — no shame, no cold turkey, one small change a day.

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Before you start: get your real number

Most of us underestimate our screen time. Before changing anything, look at the truth once, without judging it.

On iPhone, open Settings, tap Screen Time, then See All App & Website Activity. Write down three things: your daily average, your top three apps and your number of pickups.

This week is not about hitting a perfect number. It is about making every hour on your phone a choice instead of a drift.

> Write it down: daily average ____ h ____ m · top apps _____ · pickups ____

Day 1 — Clear the home screen

Move every app that eats time without giving much back off your first home screen. Put them in a folder on the last page.

Keep only tools on screen one: maps, camera, calendar, notes, banking. You will still use the others — you just won't trip over them.

- Remove social and video apps from the dock
- Turn off badge counts for anything that is not a person
- Set a plain, calm wallpaper

Day 2 — Silence the slot machine

Notifications are the hook that drags you back in. Today, keep notifications only from people and from things with a deadline.

Go to Settings › Notifications and switch off everything else. Most apps will survive without telling you about themselves.

- Keep: messages, calls, calendar, delivery or ride apps while in use
- Remove: likes, follows, 'you might like', news alerts you never asked for

Day 3 — Give your phone a bedtime

The hour before sleep is when scrolling costs most. Choose a phone bedtime 30–60 minutes before your own.

Charge the phone outside the bedroom if you can. If you use it as an alarm, a cheap alarm clock is the best money you'll spend this year.

- Set Downtime in Screen Time to start at your phone bedtime
- Put a book or notebook where the phone used to go

Day 4 — Set a daily budget

Pick a daily allowance 15–20% below your average from day zero. Not an ideal number — a number you will keep.

Decide in advance what happens when you want more. Most people break strict limits by tapping 'ignore' repeatedly. A better rule: extra time is allowed, but it comes out of tomorrow's budget. That turns going over into a choice you can see.

- Weekday budget: ____ minutes
- Weekend budget: ____ minutes

Day 5 — Replace, don't just remove

Every habit fills a gap: boredom, stress, waiting, avoiding a task. If you remove scrolling and leave the gap empty, it comes back.

List your three most common 'pick-up moments' and give each a replacement that is just as easy.

- Waiting in line → a saved podcast or simply looking around
- Avoiding a task → a 10-minute timer and the smallest first step
- Winding down at night → paper book, stretching, a shower

Day 6 — Make one place phone-free

Choose one place where phones simply don't go: the dinner table, the bedroom, the car, or the first hour at your desk.

Make it visible. A basket on the table, a charger in the hallway, a sign on the door. Shared rules are easier than private willpower.

Day 7 — Review and choose what stays

Look at Screen Time again and compare with day zero. Whatever the number, notice how the week felt.

Keep the two changes that helped most and drop the rest. A reset is not a diet — it's a new default you can live with.

Plan your next check-in for one month from today.

> This week's average ____ h ____ m · change ____ · the two changes I'm keeping: _____, _____

Want this on your phone?

Time Debt turns this plan into a daily budget with real app blocking. When you need more, you borrow minutes from tomorrow, on purpose.

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