

# Screen Time Guidelines by Age

*As recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics*

## Under 18 months old

No screen time outside of video chatting with Grandma, etc.

## Toddlers (18 months-24 months)

### Little to no screen time recommended

- This is a critical developmental period for them, so encourage as much physical and creative interaction with people as possible.
- If they do get screen time, co-watch high-quality educational content with them to help them understand what they are seeing, and limit total exposure to < 1 hour. (Content offered by [Sesame Workshop](#) and [PBS Kids](#) is great)

## Preschoolers (3-5)

### Up to 1 hour per day is fine

- Try to plan TV-time in advance – resist the temptation to use them as a calming or distracting device.
- Children at this age can have mindful interaction with characters, so help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them!
- Many types of screen media content have print or other versions – try finding books or toys that can enable your child to interact with favorite characters off-screen. It makes for another way to engage your kids in creative play!

## Elementary School Aged (6-10)

### Up to 1 to 1.5 hours per day

- Place consistent limits on time spent using media, and the types of media being consumed.
- Since they are now entering school, make sure screens don't become a habit before homework gets completed.
- While developing tech skills is important, try to aim for a balance of creative and laid-back time.
- As they grow, parents can gradually give kids more control and choice in how they manage their time.
- Make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.

## Middle School Aged (11-13)

### Up to 2 hours per day

- At this age, children can understand the concept of balance. It is up to parents to help them see how screen time fits into their schedule.
- If you find your child getting really into a certain video game for a week or two, gently try to help them understand the benefits of moderation.
- Help your children understand that recognizing when we are spending too much time doing any one thing is a valuable life skill.

## Everyone in the Family

- Communal screen activities positively engage children in different ways! Break down screen time's inherent tendency to isolate us by enjoying a movie night or trip to the theater together.
- Participate in regular, physical activity together – walks, bike rides, trips to the park, etc.
- Model the type of behavior you want – limit your own screen time to 2 hours per day.
- Reinforce the message by having consistent conversations about appropriate amounts of screen time.
- Designate media-free time together, such as at the dinner table, in the car, etc., to achieve balance.



### Sources:

"American Academy of Pediatrics Announces New Recommendations for Children's Media Use." AAP.org, [www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use.aspx](http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/pages/american-academy-of-pediatrics-announces-new-recommendations-for-childrens-media-use.aspx).

Marcoux, Heather. "No More Guessing: Screen Time Guidelines for Toddlers to Teenagers." Motherly, Motherly, 7 Aug. 2018, [www.mother.ly/child/no-more-guessing-screen-time-guidelines-for-toddlers-to-teenagers](http://www.mother.ly/child/no-more-guessing-screen-time-guidelines-for-toddlers-to-teenagers).

## Managing Screen Time at Home

The guidelines listed above are a great starting point. Additional ways to monitor and protect your children from the effect of blue light exposure from digital screens include:

- Monitoring time on devices via screen-time-tracking and parental control apps like [\*Zift\*](#) and [\*Screen Time\*](#)
- Balancing exposure by implementing "earned" screen time by completing homework, finishing chores, brushing teeth, etc.
- Removing or shutting off digital devices in the child's bedroom 2 hours before bedtime to enforce limits and encourage a consistent sleep routine.
- Providing nutritional support against the harmful effects of blue light on eyesight via [\*EyePromise Screen Shield™ Teen\*](#)