

Social Media Distractions

Are you spending too much time on social media or texting? Take this short quiz and fill in your answers in the table below.

- How often do you check social media sites or messages on your phone?
a) Once or twice a day b) Five plus times c) So many times a day I lose count
- How much time do you spend on each login or texting?
a) A couple of minutes b) Up to an hour c) Several hours
- Do you spend more time on social media sites or texting than you do studying?
(Take a minute to calculate your time usage before answering this question.)
Yes / No
- When you study, do you check social media sites or text first?
Yes / No
- Do you have social media sites running in the background or are you texting while you study?
Yes / No
- During a lecture or lesson, do you switch your attention from listening or making notes to checking social media sites or texting?
a) Never b) Once or twice c) I can do both at the same time
- Do you check social media sites or text during the night, after you go to bed?
Yes / No

Scoring:

Give yourself two points each if you answered (b) to questions 1, 2, 6.

Give yourself four points each if you answered NO to questions 3, 4, 5, 7 or answered (a) to: 1, 2, 6.

Give yourself minus two points each if you answered YES to: 3, 4, 5, 7 or answered (c) to: 1, 2, 6.

| Question | One | Two | Three | Four | Five | Six | Seven | Total: |
|----------|-----|-----|-------|------|------|-----|-------|--------|
| Points | | | | | | | | |

If you scored:

20 - 28... you are able to resist being distracted.

12 - 18... you are easily distracted.

0 - 12... social media is significantly getting in the way of your academics.

(-2) - (-28)... you are displaying some addictive characteristics to social media.



Five ways to take back control

1. **Keep a time log for a week.** For just one week, note start and end times for every study session and start and end time for each time you are on a social media site. A quick glance, even a second, at a social media site is considered a break. (You have to switch attention from learning to check Facebook/twitter or send a message.) At the end of the week, total the amount of hours spent studying compared with hours spent on diversions. You might be shocked by how much attention-switching you are doing!
2. **Reward yourself.** Make the social media site a reward after no less than 50+ minutes of focused study. (And avoid having it running in the background.) Set clear boundaries between study time and connecting with friends.
3. **Temporarily Deactivate Social media sites.** There are free program downloads that you can use to temporarily block popular social media sites, addicting websites, online games and whatever else you want! Once started, it cannot be undone by the application or by restarting the computer; you must wait for the timer to run out. You can use it to help you concentrate while you work on your computer. Imagine how fast you could do your work without all those distractions!
SelfControl for MAC - <http://visitsteve.com/made/selfcontrol/>
Cold Turkey for PC - <http://getcoldturkey.com/>
4. **Keep your computer and phone turned off and out of sight while studying.** It is much easier to be distracted when your phone and computer are giving you auditory indicators that a friend is trying to reach you. If possible turn your computer and phone off, to aid in a higher level of concentration for longer periods of time.
5. **Focus on the future.** When you start to lose concentration, focus on how this hard work will not only benefit you in your short term future (grades), but for your long term future as well (dream career and lifestyle).

How will studying now affect your future goals? It will help you get the grades you need to pass the class, to get the knowledge you need for the next term, to graduate, to get to the next step of education, to obtain your dream career and lifestyle. Remind yourself regularly why this hard work will be beneficial.

6. **Visit a success coach.** If you would like more information on how to incorporate these strategies into your study routine visit a success coach. To book an appointment, visit the student success office (2nd floor of south campus hall) or call 519-888-4567 ext. 84410.

Adapted from University of Waterloo Counselling Services

