

## Screen time & phones after a concussion

### Why this matters

After a concussion, your brain is more sensitive to light, noise, and concentration demands. Screens (phones, tablets, computers, TVs, gaming consoles) can **worsen symptoms** in the first couple of days.

But screens are also a huge part of modern life – for **friendship, socialising, schoolwork, relaxation, and even recovery support**. The key is not to avoid them completely, but to **reintroduce them gradually and safely**.

### Suggested "Return to Screen-Time Pathway"

*(symptom dependent)*

#### Stage 1: Relative Rest (Day 0–2)

**Goal:** Reintroduce screens in a gentle, controlled way.

**Advice:**

- Use screens for **5–15 minutes at a time**.
- Prioritise calm, low-stimulation activities (chatting with friends, short videos, light browsing).
- Avoid fast-moving games, bright flashing content, or long binges.

#### Stage 2: Short Bursts (Day 3–4)

**Goal:** Increase duration and complexity.

**Advice:**

- Extend use to 30–45 minutes at a time, with short breaks.
- Begin light schoolwork, video calls, and social media scrolling.
- Gaming can resume at a light level if symptoms allow (turn brightness down, avoid competitive online play initially).

#### Stage 3: Normal Daily Use (Day 5 onwards)

**Goal:** Return to usual patterns, while still being sensible.

**Advice:**

- Normal screen use, including schoolwork, socialising, and gaming.
- Keep regular breaks (every 45–60 minutes).
- If symptoms reappear, take a break and retry later.

### Tips for healthy screen use during recovery

**Adjust brightness:** Lower screen brightness or use night mode.

**Use big fonts & contrast:** Reduce eye strain.

**Take breaks:** 5–10 minutes away from screens every 30–60 minutes.

**Mix activities:** Balance screens with outdoor time, in-person chats, and rest.

**Stay connected:** Use your phone to keep in touch with friends - it helps mood and avoids isolation.



### Key Points

Early on: **less is more** – keep it short and gentle.

By one week: most teens can handle **normal school and social use**.

Screens are not the enemy – they're part of staying connected and supported.

Always let your **symptoms guide you**.

