

Turn off your TV and Turn on your Life

Turning off your television will gain you, on average, about 4 hours per day. Imagine if you took that time to exercise, give your brain a workout and develop strong relationships. Not only would you be adding years to your life, you would become more interesting, energetic, and fun. So take the plunge and try not watching TV for a week. At first it will be strange and awkward, but stick with it and soon you will love all the extra time.

1. Television Eats Your Time

The average U.S. adult watches more than 4 hours of television a day. That's **25 percent** of waking time spent every day. Imagine if you suddenly had 25 percent more time -- that's **three extra months** per year! You could get in all your [exercise](#)¹, [cook your meals from scratch](#)² and still have time left over to write a novel.

Over a lifetime, an 80-year-old person would have watched 116,800 hours of television, compared to only 98,000 hours of work. As a nation, adults watch 880 million hours of television every day or 321 billion hours per year. Whew! Imagine what could get done if we all just stopped watching TV.

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/tp/Turn_Off_TV.htm?p=1³

2. Television Makes You Stressed

With the average of four hours a day gone, it's no wonder everyone is feeling stressed out and overwhelmed. We put aside paying bills, finishing projects, making phone calls and cleaning our homes to watch TV. We feel overwhelmed because of all the things we should be doing (exercising, spending time with family, eating right) go undone. And when we feel overwhelmed, tired, and exhausted we don't have energy to anything but -- you guessed it -- watch TV. It is a dreadful cycle. So take a break from TV for a week and see what happens to your life.

3. Television Makes You Overweight⁴

Eating while distracted limits your ability to assess how much you have consumed. According to [Eliot Blass](#)⁵ at the University of Massachusetts, people eat 31% to 74% **more** calories while watching TV. This could add, on average, about **300 calories extra** per TV meal. Now consider that at least 40 percent of families watch TV while eating dinner. It becomes clear that TV is a big part of the obesity epidemic in the United States; and that TV, in fact, makes you gain weight.

[More Info](#)⁶

4. Television Makes You Uninteresting⁷

Many people have whole conversations that are recaps of TV programs, sporting events and sitcoms. When asked about their real lives, there is little or nothing to report and no [stories](#)⁸ to tell (except the TV shows they have watched). Life is too interesting and wonderful to spend your time either watching TV or recapping television to your friends. Find something interesting to do: volunteer, read, paint -- anything but watch more TV.

5. Television Ruins Your Relationships⁹

A television is turned on an average of 7 hours and 40 minutes per day in many U.S. households. With the TV on that much, there is little time for you and your significant other or children to spend time together, share experiences, and develop deeper relationships. Sitting together and watching TV does not grow a relationship. Turn that TV off and find something to do together -- cooking, exercising, taking a walk, anything.

<http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/f/relationships.htm>¹⁰

6. Television is Not Relaxation¹¹

TV is the opposite of exercise. If you are watching TV you are usually sitting, reclining or lying down. You are burning as few calories as possible. It has been shown that a person burns more calories sleeping than watching TV. All that extra food you eat while watching TV does not get burned off. Your brain goes into a lull. But you are not relaxing -- your mind is still receiving stimuli from the TV, you are processing information and reacting emotionally. Have you ever found yourself thinking about TV characters? Do you ever dream about TV shows? These are signs that the brain is working hard to process all the TV you have been watching.

http://longevity.about.com/od/preventingandreversing/ht/relax_response.htm¹²

7. Television Loses Opportunities

If you are sitting and watching TV, nothing new or exciting is going to happen to you. New opportunities and ideas come from being out in the world, talking to people, and reading interesting things. Watching TV isolates you. Nothing is going to change in your world if you are watching TV. Turn off the TV, go out into the world, talk to people, and see what happens.

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/tp/Turn_Off_TV.htm?p=1¹³

8. Television is Addictive

Television can become addictive. Signs of TV addiction include:

- *Using the TV to calm down*
- *Not being able to control your viewing*
- *Feeling angry or disappointed in how much TV you watched*
- *Feeling on edge if kept from watching*
- *Feeling a loss of control while watching*

If the idea of giving up TV for a week is horrifying, you may be addicted to television. Luckily, TV addiction is a habit and not a physical addiction like smoking. You should be able to control it once you are aware of the problem and make a decision to change.

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/tp/Turn_Off_TV.htm?p=1¹⁴

9. Television Makes You Buy Things

By age 65, the average American has seen **2 million** commercials. Your knowledge of products and brands comes from these TV commercials. Your perception of what you need also comes from these commercials.

If you didn't know that your iPod could talk to your running shoes, you wouldn't feel like your current shoes are too low-tech. If you didn't know about vacuums that never lose suction, your current vacuum would seem fine. Our perception of need is determined by what we see. Need less by watching less TV.

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/tp/Turn_Off_TV.htm?p=1¹⁵

10. Television Costs Money

A basic cable package [costs \\$43 per month](#)¹⁶ and many packages cost much more than that. That comes to at least \$500 a year spent on TV. For that much money you could: buy a membership to every museum or zoo in your town, get a gym membership, buy a nice bicycle, invest it every year for 10 years at 10 percent interest and have more than \$10,000.

Sources: [TvTurnOff.org](#)¹⁷; [US Census Bureau](#)¹⁸
[More Ways to Improve Your Mental Fitness](#)¹⁹

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongrelationships/tp/Turn_Off_TV.htm?p=1²⁰

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