

11 Steps to a More Balanced Digital Home



Creating a safe and healthy digital home doesn't happen by accident. Here are just a few steps you can take to keep technology in its proper place in your home:

- Establish “tech-free” zones in the house and “tech-free” times during the day.
- Limit technology at the dinner table. Instead, choose a day of the week and create a list of ‘conversation prompts’ about technology topics.
- Go online as a family and search for the types of games that appeal to your family. Order one immediately. Play it as soon as it comes.
- Create a *Bored Emergency Kit*. Using Popsicle sticks, 3x5 cards, or any other creative format you can find on Pinterest, make a collection of activities (inside and out, mostly without tech) from which kids can draw when they announce that they are “bored.”
- Try one of the following creative technologies this week:
 - Minecraft (Have your kids show you if they are already on)
 - Code.org (Great intro activities to teach basic programming)
 - Create a stop motion animation (Plenty of options. Just add Legos!)
 - Shoot and edit a short movie on your phone or tablet
- For those who “bring work home,” establish clear physical *and* time boundaries between work activities and family. Just do it.
- Ban devices from ALL bedrooms and establish a ‘tech curfew’ at least an hour before each family member turns in for the night.
- Make a list of expectations for social media use. Do this collaboratively with your kids. (If you already have this, review it with your older kids.)
- Read to and with your kids on a regular basis at an established time. Ask your librarian for good recommendations. And buy books as gifts for every occasion.
- Go to geocaching.com, create an account, download the app, and head outside.
- Set up OpenDNS Home or Family Shield (opendns.com) on your router to immediately filter your home Internet connection on every device.

For more ideas on creating a balanced digital home, go to parentingdigital.com