

Five tech tips for unplugging on vacation

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With summer travel kicking off, we're offering several tips on how to really disconnect from work electronically. After all, isn't taking a minute to enjoy a breathtaking view or your child's laughter more important than a corporate email? We think so.

Disable [email](#). Actually, disable everything. Turn off your work email, and really hide it. For example, on an iPhone, go to Settings and then Mail. Go to Accounts, and swipe the button to turn off your work email account, so it won't automatically download emails or show the red number of new messages. You can also temporarily move your mail icon into a folder, so it's hidden.

Also, disable alerts. We do not understand why people feel the need to have a palm-sized list of updates from Homes You Might Like and News That May Scare You. Create a smartphone environment where you seek out information.

Another way to do that? Log out of everything. We don't download apps for everything. And we don't save all passwords. So when we check social media, it requires actually typing in a website, username and password. Each layer serves as a check to see whether it's really more important than whatever you're doing in real life.

Remove calendars from your [phone](#). If you're the type who has work calendars, or any calendars, connected to your smartphone, remove them. Some people might feel comfort in having everything constantly and electronically at their fingertips. But if you can stomach it, remove

the calendar and, with it, those constant appointment pings. You don't need an alert reminder of the weekly team meeting popping up as you order a mojito. Your only appointment is with the beach, the mountains or a good book.

Set up a solid out-of-office message. Do this early, so that you're not stressing about typing it out before heading to the airport. You can say, "I'm out of the office until (enter date). Try me then." Short, to the point, and this clarifies that you will not be available or responsive until after a certain time.

Use airplane mode, even after landing. Many people suggest swiping that airplane icon up whenever you can. Airplane mode doesn't allow accessing the internet for everything you need, but it does put an end to alerts, in case you didn't have the strength to disable alerts. Airplane mode at least keeps your phone somewhat muted, and again, connecting requires you to stop and think whether you really need to look at your phone.

Get a real camera. If you can, bring along a real camera. That's right, one of the old-school versions that's separate from your phone. Taking a photo is often why we reach for our smartphone, which too easily translates to just refreshing a website or checking in with a text. Save yourself the need to reach for your phone, and instead simply capture the moment. Maybe even reach for nothing, and enjoy the view.

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