

7 Easy Ways to Save Your Eyes From Smartphone Strain



Your smartphone is a sight for sore eyes. Literally.

If you're one of those people who glances at their smartphone 150 times a day, chances are your eyes are paying the price for your screen addiction.

Staring at your smartphone — or tablet, e-reader or laptop, while we're at it — for too long can lead to tired, itchy, dry eyes, and even blurred vision and headaches. Think zombie eyes and you're there.

Luckily you can minimize inevitable digital eye strain by blending a few simple, healthy habits into your smartphone-gazing routine.

Here are seven super quick and easy ways to give your eyes a break during your all those smartphone marathon sessions.

1. Blink, blink and blink again. Blinking often (and for more than a second) keeps your eyes moist and reduces dryness and irritation. We tend to blink about a third less than we normally would when we stare lovingly at our precious smartphone screens, which starves our poor peepers of protective tears. Keep your eyes wet by blinking about 10 times every 20 minutes or so and you should be good to go. Bonus: Blinking often helps refocus your eyes, too.

2. Minimize glare. Unless you have a smartphone equipped with anti-glare Corning Gorilla Glass or use a matte screen protector film, you're probably coping with a fair amount of annoying

reflective glare. The fix is easy and inexpensive: Buy an anti-reflective coating and (carefully) slap it on your smartphone screen. They range between about \$1 and \$20 on Amazon.com and in most mobile service provider stores. Bonus: Anti-glare screen protectors also fend off fingerprints.

3. Take breaks. Sounds scary, right? But your eyes will thank you. By now you've probably heard of the 20-20-20 rule. The concept is to take a break from looking at your screen every 20 minutes for 20 seconds while looking at something 20 feet away. Doing so relaxes your eye muscles (and gives you ample time to contemplate which fun, new iPhone or Android app you'll play with next).

4. Adjust your brightness. Having your screen too bright or too dark stresses your eyes out and can cause problems maintaining focus. To eliminate either issue in about a matter of seconds, simply go into your smartphone settings and adjust your screen brightness so it's about the same as the light level in the environment around you. Wait — that is unless you're in the pitch black dark squinting at your smartphone in bed, which, by the way, can lead to insomnia and less sex).

5. Tweak your text size and contrast. Adjusting your smartphone text contrast and size also provides a little much-needed relief. It makes it easier to read web content, email messages, calendar appointments and everything else on your phone.

6. Keep a clean screen. Routinely wipe down your smartphone screen with a dry (not wet!) cleaning cloth to remove distracting dust, grime, smudges and fingerprints.

7. Hold your smartphone farther away. It's ok. You don't have to put it *all* the way down. We promise. Most people tend to hold their cell phones only about 8 inches from their faces. Not good. Try holding yours at least 16 to 18 inches away from your eyes to give your eyes a break. It might feel funny at first but shouldn't take long to get used to.