



Digital-Detox Settings on iPhone: Screen Time, Focus & Grayscale

Step-by-step settings to use your iPhone less, with nothing to buy and everything easy to undo

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1688 —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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WELCOME

1.! Your phone, your rules

Everything in this guide is a setting you can turn back off. Nothing here deletes your photos, contacts, or messages, so you can't break anything by trying. Use your iPhone less, on purpose. If your iPhone pulls at you more than you'd like, the good news is that Apple built in tools to calm it down. This guide walks through them one step at a time, in plain English. I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent 30+ years helping people feel at home with their technology, patiently and without jargon. I don't sell phones and I earn no commission, so this is just honest, practical help, the way I'd show you at your kitchen table. If you use an Android phone instead, see [Digital-Detox Settings on Android](#); for ideas that work on any phone, see [Making Any Phone Less Addictive](#). We'll cover four main tools: Screen Time (limits and quiet hours), Focus (who and what can reach you), Grayscale (turning the screen black-and-white so it's less tempting), and a small automation that ties them together. No silly questions here. If a menu looks different on your phone, that's normal — Apple moves things around between versions. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll walk through it with you.

THE 60-SECOND VERSION

2. The whole guide, on one page

If you only do a few things, do these.

- Open Settings > Screen Time and turn it on. It shows where your time goes.
- Set Downtime so the phone goes quiet for the hours you choose.
- Add App Limits for the one or two apps that eat the most time.
- Set up a Focus (Settings > Focus) so only the people and apps you pick can interrupt you.
- Turn on Grayscale in Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Size > Color Filters.
- Add a triple-click of the side button as a Grayscale shortcut so you can flip it on and off.
- Set a Screen Time passcode with a trusted person if you want the limits to hold. Start with just one. You don't need all of these. Many folks get most of the calm from grayscale and one Focus. Add more only if you want them.

THE BIG PICTURE

3. The four tools, and what each one does

Each tool does one job. Knowing the job makes it easy to pick.

Tool Its job Where to find it Screen Time Shows usage; sets quiet hours and app limits Settings > Screen Time Focus Silences notifications; picks who and what gets through Settings > Focus Grayscale Makes the screen black-and-white so it's less tempting Settings > Accessibility Shortcuts automation Turns grayscale on when a Focus starts Shortcuts app Think of Screen Time as the scheduler, Focus as the doorman, and Grayscale as the dimmer switch. None of them is a lock-out by default; they are gentle nudges unless you choose to make them firmer. Menu names can drift Apple renames and moves things between versions of iOS. If you can't find an item, use the search box at the top of Settings and type the name.

SCREEN TIME

4. Step one: turn on Screen Time

Screen Time is built into every iPhone. It's the foundation for everything else.

Turning it on

- Open Settings and tap Screen Time.
- If you see 'Turn On Screen Time,' tap it, then tap Continue.
- Choose 'This is My iPhone.'
- Come back after a day or two and look at what it reports. The report shows how long the phone was used and which apps took the time. Many people are surprised by one or two apps. That's the useful part: it tells you where to aim your limits. Look before you limit Let it collect information for a couple of days first. Then you can set limits on the apps that actually matter to you instead of guessing.

DOWNTIME

5. Downtime: quiet hours for your phone

Downtime is a schedule. During those hours, only the apps and calls you allow will work.

- Go to Settings > Screen Time > Downtime.
- Choose Every Day, or pick custom days.
- Set a start and end time, such as evening through breakfast.

- Turn Downtime on. Apps you haven't allowed will show a dimmed icon with an hourglass. When you try to open a blocked app during Downtime, the phone says the limit has been reached. You can tap to ask for more time or ignore the limit for the day, unless you've set a Screen Time passcode. It's a speed bump, not a wall, which is fine for most people.

WATCH OUT

Keep emergency access open Make sure calls from family and emergency services can always reach you. We'll set that up on the Always Allowed page.

APP LIMITS

6. App Limits: a daily allowance for the time-eaters

An App Limit gives an app, or a whole category like Social, a daily time budget.

- Go to Settings > Screen Time > App Limits and tap Add Limit.
- Pick a category (Social, Games, Entertainment) or expand it and choose single apps.
- Tap Next and set the amount of time per day.
- Optionally choose different times for different days, then tap Add. When the time is used up, the app dims and a message appears. You can usually tap 'Ignore Limit' for the day. That's okay. The pause itself is often enough to make you ask, 'Do I really want this?' Start generous A limit you can live with works better than a strict one you'll switch off. You can always tighten it later.

ALWAYS ALLOWED

7. Always Allowed: the apps that must keep working

Quiet hours shouldn't cut you off from the things you truly rely on.

In Settings > Screen Time > Always Allowed you choose which apps and people stay reachable during Downtime. Phone and Messages are allowed by default, which is a good starting point.

- Keep Phone, Messages, and Maps on if you drive or live alone.
- Add a medication-reminder or health app if you depend on one.
- Under allowed contacts, choose Specific Contacts and add family and your doctor's office.
- Leave out anything that's a time sink, such as games or social apps.

WATCH OUT

Don't lock out your safety net If you live alone or have a medical alert app or contacts you rely on, make sure they stay on the Always Allowed list. Quiet hours should never get between you and help. Calls to emergency services always work regardless.

RESTRICTIONS

8. Content & Privacy Restrictions

This is the firmer tool. It can stop certain things from happening at all.

Find it at Settings > Screen Time > Content & Privacy Restrictions. Turn the switch on, then explore the sections below it. Useful things you can restrict

- iTunes & App Store Purchases: stop new apps from being installed or deleted.
- Allowed Apps: hide built-in apps you never use.
- Content Restrictions: limit web content and mature material.
- Privacy: control which apps can use location, photos, and more. A trusted helper makes this stronger If you want the settings to stick, a family member or I can set the Screen Time passcode so it isn't easy to undo in a weak moment. Call (330) 200-8042.

PASSCODE

9. The Screen Time passcode: keeping limits in place

A separate passcode makes your limits harder to wave away.

Under Settings > Screen Time you can choose 'Use Screen Time Passcode.' It is a four-digit code that is different from your phone's unlock code. Without it, nobody can change your Screen Time settings or extend a limit. Some people choose a code they know. Others hand it to a spouse, child, or friend, so a limit really means a limit. Either approach is fine.

WATCH OUT

Write it down somewhere safe If you forget the Screen Time passcode, getting back in can be a hassle. Keep it in the same safe place as your other important passwords, and tell someone you trust where that is.

FOCUS MODES

10. Focus: deciding what gets through

A Focus is a mode that silences the noise and lets through only what you choose.

Open Settings > Focus. You'll see ready-made ones such as Do Not Disturb, Sleep, and Personal. Tap one to adjust it, or tap the plus button to build your own.

- Choose People who can still reach you, such as family.
 - Choose Apps that can still send alerts, such as Phone or a weather app.
 - Everything else stays quiet while the Focus is on.
 - Turn a Focus on from Control Center, or let it run on a schedule. Make one called 'Calm'
- Build a single everyday Focus with just your family and a few essential apps. It's easy to remember and easy to switch on.

FOCUS SCHEDULES

11. Making a Focus run by itself

A Focus is most helpful when you don't have to remember it.

Ways to switch it on

- Time: for example, every evening until morning.
- Location: when you arrive at home, or at church or the library.
- App: when you open a particular app.
- By hand: swipe into Control Center and tap Focus. Open your Focus in Settings > Focus and look for 'Add Schedule.' Pick what fits your day. You can also let a Focus share its status so people who text you see that you have notifications silenced. Know where the off switch is Whatever you set, practice turning the Focus off from Control Center. Knowing you can switch it off makes it feel less like a trap.

HOME SCREEN

12. A simpler Home Screen for each Focus

A Focus can also change which Home Screen page you see, hiding the temptations. First, make a calm page. Press and hold an empty spot on the Home Screen until icons jiggle, then drag only the essentials onto one page: Phone, Messages, Camera, Maps, and maybe your health or weather app. Next, open Settings > Focus, choose your Focus, and look for Home Screen under Customize Screens. You can pick which page appears while that Focus is on. You can also hide the badges (the little red numbers) and silence the banners. Hide, don't delete Moving an app off your main page doesn't remove it. It's still in the App Library to the right of your last page. Hiding is a gentle experiment you can undo. Our Turn Your Smartphone Into a Simpler Phone guide goes further.

WHO THIS HELPS

13. Using it for yourself, or for someone you love

People reach for these settings for different reasons, and that changes which tools matter most. If you want to use your phone less You feel pulled to the phone and want fewer hours on it. The goal is calm, focus, and getting time back for other things.

- Grayscale and one App Limit often make the biggest difference.
- A nightly Downtime keeps the phone out of your evening.
- Hide the social apps from the main Home Screen page.
- Check your Screen Time report weekly and adjust gently. If you're helping someone else You're setting up an iPhone for a parent, grandparent, or someone who finds the phone overwhelming. Your goal is fewer interruptions and fewer risks.
- Focus with a short list of family and essential apps reduces noise.
- Content & Privacy Restrictions can block new app installs.
- A Screen Time passcode holds settings in place; share it with a trusted person.
- Ask the person first. These settings work best when they agree. Setting it up for someone else? I do this often, and the key is doing it with the person, not to them. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll set it up together.

GRAYSCALE

14. Grayscale: take the color out of temptation

Bright colors are part of what keeps us tapping. Take them away and the phone gets quieter. Turning it on

- Open Settings > Accessibility.
- Tap Display & Text Size.
- Tap Color Filters and turn Color Filters on.
- Choose Grayscale from the choices. The whole screen turns black-and-white at once: apps, the Home Screen, and websites. Nothing is lost or changed in your photos or files; it's only how the screen looks. Give it a few days. It can feel dull at first. That is the point. Many people notice they reach for the phone less once it's no longer a candy store.

THE SHORTCUT

15. A triple-click to flip grayscale on and off

You don't have to dig through Settings each time. One shortcut puts grayscale under your thumb.

- Open Settings > Accessibility, scroll to the bottom, and tap Accessibility Shortcut.
- Tick Color Filters in the list.
- Now triple-click the side button (or the Home button on older models) to toggle color filters.
- Try it a few times so it feels natural. If you ever need color back, such as to look at a photo or a map, triple-click and it returns. Triple-click again for grayscale.

WATCH OUT

Pick one shortcut. If you've ticked more than one item in the Accessibility Shortcut list, the triple-click will show a menu to choose from instead of toggling directly. Keep just Color Filters ticked for the one-step version.

AUTOMATION

16. Make grayscale follow your Focus

A Focus can't switch grayscale on by itself. A small Shortcuts automation can do that job for it. The Shortcuts app is built into the iPhone. An automation there can watch for a Focus turning on and then flip the color filter.

- Open the Shortcuts app and tap the Automation tab.
- Tap the plus button and choose your Focus as the trigger, set to 'Is Turned On.'
- Add the action Set Color Filters and set it to On.
- Choose to run it immediately so it doesn't ask each time.
- Make a second automation for 'Is Turned Off' that sets Color Filters to Off. Menus may differ The exact names of Shortcuts actions can shift between versions. If you don't see Set Color Filters, search for 'color filters' in the action search box. I'm happy to set it up for you in person.

NOTIFICATIONS

17. Quiet the notifications that nag

Most of the pull of a phone comes from the little alerts. Turn down the volume on them.

- Open Settings > Notifications and go through the apps one by one.
- For apps you don't need alerts from, turn Allow Notifications off.
- For others, switch off the red badge on the icon and the lock-screen banners.
- Try Scheduled Summary to receive non-urgent alerts in one batch. Keep alerts for the things that truly matter: calls, texts from people you love, appointments, and your bank's fraud notices. Everything else can wait until you choose to look.

WATCH OUT

Scam alerts exist too A pop-up that says your phone is infected or your account is locked is a scam. Fewer notifications also means fewer chances for a fake alert to grab you. When in doubt, don't tap, and call me.

BEDTIME

18. Bedtime: let the phone go to sleep too

A phone that stays quiet at night helps you stay away from it.

The Sleep Focus is made for this. In Settings > Focus > Sleep you can set a schedule, silence everything except people you choose, and dim the Lock Screen. Pair it with an old-fashioned habit: charge the phone outside the bedroom if you can, and use a simple alarm clock to wake up. If you need the phone nearby for safety, keep it across the room rather than in your hand. Keep one door open Let your closest family through the Sleep Focus so an urgent call can still reach you. Everyone else can wait until morning.

CHECK-IN

19. A weekly check-in that keeps it working

Settings only help if they fit your life. A short look each week keeps them honest.

- Open Screen Time and glance at the weekly summary.
- Notice which app still takes the most time and decide whether that's okay.
- Adjust one limit, up or down. Only one at a time.
- Ask yourself whether the Focus is helping or just annoying you.
- Make sure family can still reach you quickly. Small changes win I've watched folks do best when they change one thing, live with it, and then change the next. Big overhauls tend to get switched off. Call me at (330) 200-8042 if you'd like company for the first check-in.

UNDOING IT

20. How to undo anything

Knowing you can reverse a setting is what makes it safe to try.

To undo this Go to Screen Time limits Settings > Screen Time > App Limits, then delete or turn off Downtime Settings > Screen Time > Downtime, then turn off A Focus Settings > Focus, choose it, and turn it off or delete it Grayscale Settings > Accessibility > Display & Text Size > Color Filters, then off Shortcut automation Shortcuts app > Automation, swipe to delete If you set a Screen Time passcode, you'll need it to change those settings. This is why it should be recorded somewhere safe. Nothing here erases anything These are display and notification settings. Your photos, contacts, and messages stay exactly where they were.

COMMON QUESTIONS

21. Common Questions

The questions I hear most from folks calming down their iPhone.

Q: Will Screen Time stop me from getting calls? Not unless you choose to. Phone and Messages are allowed by default during Downtime, and calls to emergency services always work. Check Always Allowed to be sure the right people can reach you. Q: Can a Focus turn on grayscale by itself? No. A Focus can silence notifications and change your Home Screen page, but it can't flip the color filter. A Shortcuts automation can bridge that gap, as shown in this guide. Q: I set a limit and I keep ignoring it. Is that a failure? Not at all. Many people tap through at first. Try a gentler limit, move the app off your main page, or ask a helper to set the Screen Time passcode. Q: I can't find the setting you described. Apple renames and moves menus between versions. Use the search box at the top of Settings, or call me and we'll find it together. Prefer to be shown? Sitting beside someone and setting this up together is one of my favorite visits. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

BILL'S HERE TO HELP

22. You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made calming down your iPhone feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything. When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I'm a tech helper, not a counselor or a doctor. If constant phone use is affecting your sleep, mood, or relationships, a doctor or counselor is the right person to talk to. What I can do is set up the tools in this guide with you, and help you line up the right professional. Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Four iPhone Calm-Down Tools

What each one does and where it lives

	What it does	Where to find it
Screen Time	Limits, quiet hours	Settings > Screen Time
Focus	Who and what gets in	Settings > Focus
Grayscale	Black-and-white	Accessibility > Color Filters
Automation	Links Focus to gray	Shortcuts app

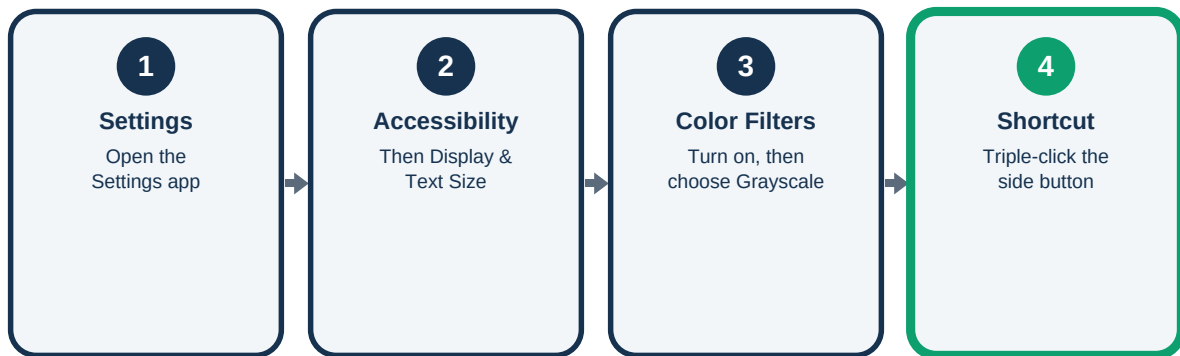
Start with one tool. You can add the others when you want them.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Turning On Grayscale

The path through Settings



Menu names can shift between versions. Use Settings search if lost.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com

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