

FIVE STEPS TO A SCREEN-FREE DINNER

SUMMIT
MINISTRIES

TECHRESETBOOK.COM

① COMMIT

Who among us couldn't use the reminder to set down our screens, turn off the TV, or detach from email? Mealtime is a great place to loosen the grip tech has on our families.

The commitment to do a screen-free meal isn't necessarily easy, but it's one step toward taking control of technology in your home. And as soon as you have done even one, you're already in the minority.¹

Be bold and do it!

② PREPARE

Don't just announce a screen-free dinner while on the way to the table. Get started with a little preparation:

- Get on the same page with your spouse or other adults in the home. It will take everyone's commitment. It's okay if not everyone is excited, but they need to be willing.
- Have some questions ready (and not saved in a note on your phone 😊). Try to break away from "What did you learn at school today?" Get creative and expect surprising answers!
 - ✓ How would you describe your perfect day?
 - ✓ What made you smile or feel sad today?
 - ✓ What's one of your funniest childhood memories?
 - ✓ Do you think your friends make you a better person? How?
 - ✓ How much money is enough? How much is too much?
- Pray. Pray for courage, for patience, for cooperation, and for open hearts. Pray for God to lead the conversation and for hope to remain in him, not in a perfect, amazing conversation on the first try.

③ PLAN

Have a plan for how it will go:

PICK A DATE. Work with your schedule. Don't pick a day that is typically crazy busy, or where everyone is coming and going. Coordinate with your spouse. If there is likely to be a busy work night, don't work against yourself and settle on another day. But once you set a date, be bold and commit! You can be strategic, but there won't be a night that makes it easy. You got this!

TELL THE FAMILY. Cast a vision or keep it informal. You know what'll be smoothest. Whatever your method, tell everyone and lay out the expectations. Put it on the family calendar or a sticky note reminder on the fridge.

PLAN A FUN SPIN ON THE NIGHT. Make it a candlelight dinner, plan a fun dessert, have a family-favorite meal, or get takeout but put it on the fancy dishes. Don't stress or overcomplicate it. Just take the attention off "missing" screens and make a good memory.



④ DO IT

Now it's time for action. Share the ground rules and make it happen.

- No screens at the table or nearby (another room is best!)
- All devices on silent
- Everyone participates (adults don't get a pass)
- Embrace the awkwardness

Don't drag it out. If everyone is done eating, but the questions didn't go over well, that's okay! Dismiss and aim to linger longer next time. If you have a competitive family, add a little more fun: the first one to touch a device after has to take out the trash or put away leftovers. Bottom line, you proved it can be done.

And now you can do it again.

⑤ CELEBRATE!

Count *any* progress as a win.

- Did you and your spouse get on the same page unexpectedly? Celebrate!
- Did your kids at least put their phones down, even if they didn't look you in the eye? Celebrate!
- Did you learn something about someone around the table? Celebrate!

You get the idea. Name the accomplishment of the family out loud. Make sure your kids know you're proud of them. Look for ways to make the celebration for the whole family.

The goal is not a perfect dinner. The goal is presence. Reclaiming real life from the counterfeit life technology offers is hard work. It can take a while for connection to grow, but you took a big step in the right direction.

Celebrate!

➔ READY FOR THE NEXT STEP?

Follow these same steps and do a longer technology fast in your home. Pick a Saturday, an evening, a whole weekend, or even a week and remove technology's influence on your time and attention.

Check out Summit's TECH FAST resource at techresetbook.com to get started.