



## Finding Balance: Using Social Media as a Muslim

The first iPhone was released in 2007. That means that most of you were born at a time when smartphones were already popular and widespread! The average person spends 4.5 hours on their phone daily! Back in 2005, only 7% of American adults used social media daily. In 2024, it is reported that more than 70% of American adults use social media daily!

The world has changed significantly due to the widespread use of social media. With social media we can see what's happening in other parts of the world within a few seconds. It plays a massive role in politics, often playing a big part in elections. Smartphones and social media have become a part of our society and aren't going anywhere anytime soon. As Muslims, we need to know how to use social media properly to avoid time-wasting and sin.

Islam emphasizes *making an intention for everything that we do*, including how we use social media and technology. Free time is a gift from Allah swt, and we will be questioned on how we used it. There are a lot of do's and don'ts when it comes to social media, and if used correctly we will benefit from and be rewarded for the time we spend on it.

### The Benefits of Using Social Media

There are a number of ways we can use social media, and with all of these uses, many can be beneficial, while some can also be harmful. Some excellent uses of social media include connecting with family & friends, learning about Islam, learning new things, informing ourselves of world news, raising awareness for the oppressed, and fundraising for the less fortunate. It can also be a powerful way of spreading the message of Islam.

### The Harms of Using Social Media

Unchecked social media use can be harmful. Here's what to consider:

- **Unrealistic Portrayals:** Social media often shows only the amazing aspects of others' lives, which can lead to envy and sadness. Remember, everyone faces challenges in life, even if not displayed online.



- **Misinformation:** False information spreads quickly online. Be cautious about the content you consume and verify information from credible sources.
- **Inappropriate Content:** Exposure to inappropriate content can be harmful to your spiritual well-being. Be mindful of what you follow and what you share. Remember, even if others aren't watching, Allah is!

### Using Social Media Wisely:

- **Set Clear Goals:** Before logging on, take a moment to reflect. Ask yourself: "What is my purpose for using social media today?" Do you want to connect with loved ones, learn something new about Islam, or share positive content? Having a clear intention can help you use your time productively.
- **Evaluate Your Feed:** Follow accounts that inspire and uplift you, and unfollow those that cause negativity or envy. Who we follow is the company we keep whether it's people from school, influencers, even celebrities. Whoever's lives we follow on social media will influence us, whether we realize it or not. We should also realize there are people on social media who, if we follow, can harm our deen and Islamic thinking.
- **Publicizing Our Sins:** Publicizing our sins is becoming more common through social media and like this our sins are doubled. One of the names of Allah is As-Sattar, the one who hides our sins, to protect us from shame and embarrassment. Publicizing anything incorrect we do is rejecting this mercy and blessing. Be extra cautious in staying away from this trend and advise others to do so as well.
- **Avoid Envy and Seek Perspective:** It's natural to compare ourselves to others, especially on social media where people often portray a perfect life. However, remember that everyone faces challenges, even if not displayed online. When feelings of envy arise, recall the Prophet's (PBUH) advice: "Look at those that have less than you, not more than you" (Muslim). Focus on gratitude for your own blessings and strive for Taqwa (piety), which is what truly matters to Allah (SWT).



- **Take Breaks and Detox:** Schedule social media detoxes to disconnect and refocus on real-life connections and spiritual practices. Even having a 24-hour period away from social media occasionally can have many benefits.

From the above, we learned that social media is like a double-edged sword. Some aspects are positive, while others are negative. As long as we ensure that we have a correct intention, we are mindful of the content we consume and the people we follow, and we learn how to control our social media usage, using social media will not be a problem in our lives.

**May Allah guide us towards using social media and technology in a way that is pleasing to Him. Ameen!**

**Sources:**

[Fiqh of Social Media: Timeless Islamic Principles for Navigating the Digital Age](#)

[Here's How Social Media Affects Your Mental Health | McLean Hospital](#)

[Teens and social media use: What's the impact? - Mayo Clinic](#)



## **The MESBA 7-Day Challenge**

Ready to take control of your social media habits? The MESBA 7-Day Challenge encourages you to significantly reduce your social media usage starting with a single week. Students can even make a deal with their parents for successfully completing the challenge! This challenge can help you:

- Reclaim your time and attention.
- Reconnect with yourself and your surroundings.
- Rediscover the joy of real-life interactions.

### **Here's how to participate:**

1. Delete social media apps and turn off notifications.
2. Log out of all accounts on your devices.
3. Keep your phone out of sight when not in use.

### **Plan how you'll spend your newfound free time:**

- Read a book.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Volunteer in your community.
- Focus on your personal growth; exercise, play games, cook/bake etc.

### **Pre-challenge Exercise:**

How are you going to spend your time during the 7 days that you would've otherwise spent on social media?

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What are you going to do if you feel tempted to use social media during the week?

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### **Post-challenge Exercise:**

List some of the benefits you noticed from reducing your usage on social media.

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How did you feel without using social media?

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What will you do in the future to continue to reduce social media?

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