

How to Make Your Days Off Count

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We all lead incredibly busy lives, and sometimes it can feel like you never get a proper, full day off, especially if you are a parent. Even when they do happen, once in a blue moon, it's so easy to feel like you've wasted them – sleeping in, rushing around doing chores, eating rubbish food because you haven't had time to cook – and before you know it, you're waking up on Monday morning feeling even more tired than before.

When these amazing days arrive, perhaps when the children are at the grandparents, or away with school, and you are off work – whether that is a weekend, or you work different days – it's important to know you're making the most of your valuable time. Follow these simple steps to help yourself feel rested, rejuvenated, and like you'll never let your day off slip through your fingers again.

Getting Up

Sleeping in is undoubtedly one of the best aspects of a day off. However, it's very important not to take this too far, or you risk not only wasting your day, but also damaging your sleep patterns for the next week. Scientists recommend adults have [between 7-9 hours of sleep a night](#). Any more than this can actually be almost as bad as not getting enough sleep, as it can cause increased feelings of fatigue and even depression.

A nice compromise is to limit your lie-in to an extra hour (two at the most) – and perhaps even keep your alarm, but use the extra time to doze or read in bed before starting your day. If you're really struggling to get up on those days off, a great incentive is to promise yourself an extra-special breakfast. Nothing tends to get people out of bed better than pancakes!

Activities

Now, your perfect idea of a day off might be to do absolutely nothing all day – and that's completely fine! However, the idea that idle hands are the devil's tools definitely has some truth to it. A day will always feel longer and more worthwhile if you have at least one activity planned. This can be as simple as a walk, a coffee or drink with friends – even just a craft activity at home, or finishing that book you've been meaning to get through. Something as small as this can give you a great sense of accomplishment, and actually help your mind relax even more than just sitting in front of the television.

Lunch and Dinner

Here is where your day off can really give you an opportunity to treat yourself. You don't have to be eating meal-prepped dinners, or stuffing yourself with anything you can find between work and other commitments. Cooking can be an incredibly soothing and de-stressing activity for a day off, without you having to worry about time or complexity. It is now even being used as a therapy technique for people suffering from stress and anxiety, which just shows how valuable it can be. Perhaps try out some [gourmet dishes](#) you haven't made before, or even invent your own meals without any pressure or expectation – and then you get to eat some delicious food afterwards, which is always a bonus.

Relaxing

Here we get to the most important part of your day off: sheer relaxation. You have so many options here, so don't always fall into the Netflix trap whilst the hours pass you by. Reading a book, playing a video game, or even choosing a specific film rather than a TV series are all brilliant options. A top tip is to do any of these things under a weighted blanket. Now, many people might think these are purely for bedtime, and [why use a weighted blanket](#) if you're not trying to sleep? There are so many benefits to spending your relaxation time under a top-notch blanket – they are proven to reduce stress and help you feel secure, which will maximize your chill-out time as much as possible.

A Good Night's Sleep

This might seem obvious, but the worst thing you can possibly do after a wonderful day off would be to stay up until the early hours, and wake up the next morning feeling exhausted. It might be tempting to make the day last as long as possible, but getting that good night's sleep at the end of your day off is the best way to really make it count. Encourage relaxation with an appropriate [CBD oil](#) and then, try to get an early night. If this is difficult, try banning technology from your bedroom – or if that's not possible, have a look at [blue light filters](#) for your devices so you can give your eyes the break they deserve.

Following all these tips will help you relax in the most productive way possible, and feel like you've made the most of those rare, wonderful days off.

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