



Lent is a traditional Christian season of fasting in the lead-up to Easter. The 40 days of Lent begin on Ash Wednesday (14 February 2024) and go right up until Easter (31 March 2024).

The purpose of Lent is to focus on our relationship with God. Fasting helps us do this by limiting our distractions and humbling our appetites.

At TCBC, we used to have a stronger focus on Lent but haven't done much in this space in recent years. The goal of Lent is to experience a spiritual reset, breaking bad habits, and focusing more on the grace of Jesus.

This year, we've decided to take the season of Lent together as a chance to fast from technology. Technology has gradually become all-pervasive and many of us, and our children, experience a daily addiction to our screens. This has led many people to realise their need for a "digital detox". A digital detox enables us to intentionally reduce our reliance on screens for a season, so that we can experience more fully the life that God intends for us.

To help you experience a digital detox during Lent, we're running Low-Tech Lent. We'll provide you with a new idea each day to help you change your habits one day at a time. Feel free to follow these ideas religiously or feel free to choose your own adventure. We just want to provide you with great ideas to help you unplug from your screen and plug into the goodness of God.

A FEW DETAILS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

1. When we talk about "screen time", we mean all recreational screen time, i.e. TV, movies, videogames, social media, news sites and scrolling the internet.
2. The 40 days of Lent do not include Sundays. Sundays are always feasting days in the Christian calendar. You don't need to fast on Sundays, and you don't count them in the 40 days. The Mondays in Lent 2024 are: 19/2 = Day 5, 26/2 = Day 11, 4/3 = Day 17, 11/3 = Day 23, 18/3 = Day 29, 25/3 = Day 35. The final day of fasting is Easter Saturday (30/3).
3. If an idea doesn't apply to you, you may want to choose another idea from the list and do that instead. There's no harm in doing one idea twice.
4. We encourage you to do this as a family. Every age group has their own bad habits when it comes to screens, whether it's social media, video games, or just plain old TV.
5. Low-Tech Lent could be a great opportunity to reach out to your friends and neighbours. You don't need to be a Christian to benefit from a digital detox.
6. We'll release one idea each day on social media. The whole list is also available here. Pop it on the fridge.
7. The ideas are mainly focused on reducing tech – and it's up to you to replace that time with activities that enable spiritual growth. Maybe choose a Bible reading plan or pray with someone or spend more time walking and talking with Jesus.
8. If you would benefit from a book of devotional thoughts, reflecting each day on who Jesus is, check out *Truly, truly, I Say to You* by Adam Ramsey.

LOW TECH LENT



- 1 Decide the maximum amount of screen time you want to have in the evenings and stick to that all through Lent.
- 2 Don't look at a screen for an hour before bed to promote better sleep hygiene.
- 3 Charge your phone in another room overnight to start the day without immediate screen exposure.
- 4 Delete unnecessary apps from your phone to minimise distractions.
- 5 Disable app notifications to reduce interruptions.
- 6 Engage in an unplugged outdoor activity, like gardening, walking, or swimming.
- 7 Reserve work emails for work hours only to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- 8 Designate a daily specific time for social media usage to control screen time.
- 9 Use your phone to call someone just for a chat today, fostering real connections.
- 10 Open up about your tech struggles to a friend for support and accountability.
- 11 Craft a handwritten letter to someone special.
- 12 Schedule a tech-free hangout with friends to enjoy quality time together.
- 13 Go out without your phone to experience the world without digital distractions.
- 14 Limit an app or game that you've been using too much to regain control of your time.
- 15 Experience an "Amish Evening" devoid of technology to reset your habits.
- 16 Exercise without documenting it electronically.
- 17 Read a physical book instead of a screen.
- 18 Put a rubber band around your phone all day to reduce mindless screen time.
- 19 Family night: Cook a meal together without screens.
- 20 Cancel a streaming subscription to reduce screen time and prioritise other activities.
- 21 Set a designated time to check your phone in the morning. Delay usage until 9 am?
- 22 Invest in an alarm clock to reduce reliance on your phone for waking up.
- 23 Keep your phone out of reach all day, using it only when necessary for essential tasks.
- 24 Put your phone on airplane mode for an hour to disconnect and recharge.
- 25 Check your average screen time usage and endeavour to reduce it by 25%.
- 26 Put a phone bowl by the front door to encourage face-to-face interaction.
- 27 No screens while eating to fully enjoy your food and company.
- 28 Family night: Play board games together without screens.
- 29 Limit sports watching to prevent excessive screen time and encourage other hobbies.
- 30 Make TV a social activity, not a solitary one, to promote bonding with others.
- 31 Take off your smartwatch for a tech break to disconnect from constant notifications.
- 32 Unsubscribe from distracting emails and unfollow distracting accounts.
- 33 Indulge in a day without video games to explore other interests.
- 34 A complete "Screen Sabbath" – no recreational screen time at all.
- 35 No online purchases, including takeout, to minimise online spending.
- 36 Read a physical Bible rather than the digital version.
- 37 No social media today at all to disconnect from online noise.
- 38 Don't read the news online today to reduce information overload.
- 39 No TV for a day.
- 40 Decide which ideas from Low-Tech Lent you want to implement permanently.