



[Guest Post: How to Make the Most of Your Time](#)

This is a guest post by Jennifer Landis, who writes at [Mindfulness Mama](#). ([See her previous guest post](#).) Jennifer is a health nut – which explains what she’s doing here at Rogue Health. When she pitched me this post, she said it was a bit “parenty”, which it is, but it’s all good.

Unexpected Ways to Make the Most of Your Time

When you’re a parent, the amount of free time you have is pretty much non-existent. After all, you’re doing cooking, cleaning and laundry for more people – and the smaller that extra human is, the messier they tend to be!

You’re also on high alert pretty much round the clock, so even small tasks you used to do without thinking take at least twice as long because you’re constantly being interrupted – or at the very least, your mind isn’t fully on the job.

Five Ways to Get a Little Extra Time

This means your leisure time takes a big hit, and that could turn you into an extremely miserable person to be around. Instead of embracing martyrdom and turning into a monster, try these tips for getting a little more out of your day.

Just a little extra efficiency here and there can add up to a glorious couple hours of free time on the weekend – and maybe a little each day – if you play your cards right. Here’s how:

1. Turn Tasks Into Togetherness Time

Whether you see your kids all day or they have started school and won't be home until mid-afternoon, you can still kill two birds with one stone in the time you spend with them. Once a day(ish), declare that it's time to do a chore together – emptying the dishwasher, folding laundry, sweeping the floor, whatever. The job goes faster with help as long as you [pick something age-appropriate](#), and you set the expectation that families pitch in together.

You can also have more in-depth conversations that you might think – working side by side somehow frees older kids up to start talking about things they'd never bring up at the dinner table.

2. Limit Your Screen Time

For real, it's time to talk about what a time suck Facebook is. It's so tricky to get a handle on just how many minutes – or hours! – per day you waste on social media because you probably open up those apps for just a few minutes at a time. Maybe you're waiting for the microwave to finish, and then suddenly your food got cold because you got sucked into a political debate.

Instead, give yourself a specific time frame for internet browsing and social media during the day – maybe 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes at night. When you compartmentalize, you'll use those distracting screen a lot less and have more free time for something you really love.

3. Maximize Your Time in the Car

Whether you commute to work or just spend a lot of time playing chauffeur for your kids each afternoon, the time you spend behind the wheel – or worse, stuck in traffic – can seriously cut into your enjoyment of life. Try using that time to your advantage with some great apps that let you listen to your favorite book, learn a new language or even meditate – all hands free!

You can also record your daily to-do list or make phone calls with your Bluetooth to take care of little things while you're stuck on the road.

4. ABC: Always Be Carrying ... a Book!

You never know when you're going to be stuck waiting in line for longer than you expected, so it's a good idea to toss a book into your bag so you can pass the time productively. You can leverage this otherwise annoying time to enjoy yourself for a bit, or you can focus on learning a new skill.

Carry a journal instead, and you can get creative by writing your own material while you wait. Maximizing your time also means stealing some moments back for yourself, and this is easier to do when you pack appropriately.

5. Learn to Say No to Things That Don't Bring You Joy

If you're feeling over-booked with committees and volunteer work in addition to everything else you do for your family, it's time to start cutting back. You de-clutter your home to get rid of things you no longer need, right? You can also de-clutter your life to clear your schedule of activities and commitments that are making you crazy instead of fulfilled.

You only need to ask yourself one simple question to know if a new activity is something you should say yes to: Would you be glad to clear your Saturday to do it, right now? If not, it's probably not worth adding to your schedule. Avoid a difficult conversation by [emailing your polite regrets](#), and refuse to feel guilt by saying you're going to spend time with your family instead – then do it!

By finding extra time in your day with just a few of these tips, you can breathe a little easier because you won't be breathlessly running from task to task. Enjoy your extra time by doing something for yourself – even if it's just a quick trip to the gym! – or by spending a relaxing afternoon with your family. You've definitely earned it!

PS: If you liked this article or my website in general, check out my books, [Dumping Iron](#), [Muscle Up](#), and [Stop the Clock](#).

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