

GEN Z AND THE FREE TIME PARADOX

HOW SWITCHING OFF MEANS SWITCHING ON



LADbible Group reach 2/3 of Gen Z every month with our content. We know what they want to watch, but we wanted to understand more about how they spend their free time.

Are they “always on?” What are their hobbies? How are they spending online?

We asked our 50,000 strong LADnation panel of Gen Z and Millennials all about their digital behaviours and were able to unpick some of the motivations behind their media consumption, so read on to find out more!

WHAT DRIVES THEIR DECISIONS ON HOW TO SPEND THEIR FREE TIME?

Gen Z, on average, claim to have five hours free time on a weekday and eight hours free on each day of the weekend. The biggest impact on how much free time they have is their **education commitments** (43%), but they have significantly less **family commitments** (24%) and **life admin** (17%) than the average UK population.

Thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic they have missed key life events and development of their career. This is creating a dichotomy of how they *want* to spend their time, against how they *should* spend their time. There is a desire to relax countered by a feeling that free time is their only chance to develop.

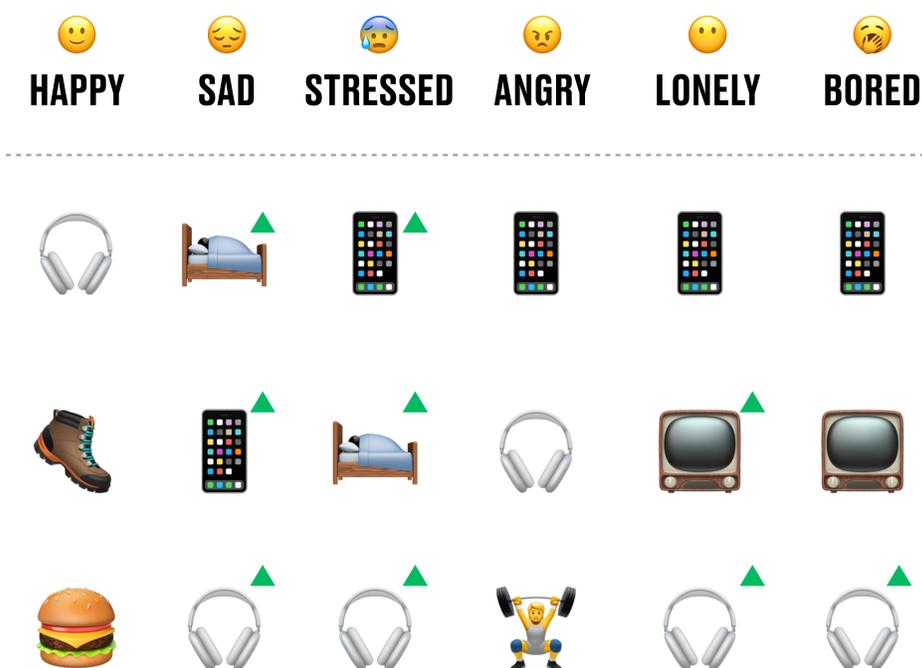
HOW DO THEY UNWIND?

When they do get a bit of down time, traditional media formats are not gaining a foothold with this generation. 1/3 of Gen Z claim they are **not watching any live TV**, 50% say they **do not listen to the radio**, and 82% say they never **read the newspaper**.

Instead they are living a digital life, choosing to **stream TV** (91%) for an average of 2.3 hours a day, and **listen to podcasts** (56%) for 30 mins a day. They are also significantly more likely to enjoy **online entertainment** (e.g., watch TikTok, YouTube, live streaming) than the UK population. They also enjoy **gaming** (50%) – an activity often played online.

Which of these activities they take up is noticeably impacted by the mood that they are in.

Most likely activity during moods for Gen Z (arrows▲ indicate significant difference vs all respondents):



Activities: Listen to music 🎧, spend time outdoors 🥾, eat favourite food 🍔, exercise 🏃, watch tv 📺, scroll on phone 📱, read 📖, take a nap 🛌

59% OF GEN Z SAY THEY 'JUST WANT TO CHILL IN THEIR FREE TIME'

58% ALSO SAY THEY 'FEEL A LACK OF ACHIEVEMENT IF THEY SPEND TOO MUCH TIME RELAXING'



By focusing on maximising productivity over relaxation the outcome is the most energetic, productive cohort. They are taking their futures into their own hands - 56% would prefer to be their own boss and 1 in 4 have a side hustle. It's no wonder they are considered the driving force behind the Creator Economy - a \$20B global market set to grow to \$104B in 2022.

[Source: LADnation Survey, May 2022, Sample = 1,301, UK 18+]

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HOW DO DIFFERENT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IMPACT THEIR BEHAVIOUR?

The digital space provides **opportunities to be social**, and Gen Z average 3.5 hours of **social media** each day.



NEARLY ALL OF GEN Z USE SOCIAL MEDIA (98%)

Understanding favourite platforms and influencers is key, as significantly more Gen Z are likely to purchase a product if they **see it promoted on a platform which they like** (55%) and significantly more Gen Z are likely to **purchase a product if a celebrity/influencer they like promotes it** (30%).

Looking specifically at purchasing, **Instagram** is the leader in driving significantly more **Gen Z to purchase an item** (51%), followed by **TikTok** (30%) and **YouTube** (18%). These platforms are perhaps not surprising given their level of creator engagement. **Instagram** is also being used significantly more by Gen Z than the UK population for reading **news stories**, keeping in **touch with friends**, **following brands**, **shopping**, and **following sports teams**.

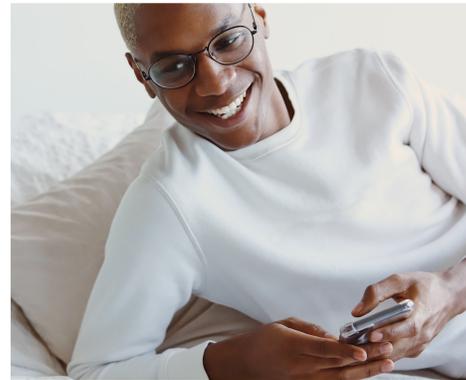
This generation are the most likely to use TikTok, with the platform being used significantly more than the rest of the UK for **reading new stories**, **keeping in touch with friends**, **following brands**, **shopping**, **following sports teams**, **filling their spare time**, **sharing/discussing opinions** and **watching live streams**. In contrast **Facebook** is being used significantly less than all other age demographics, but is used for a wide variety of reasons.

Snapchat is used by Gen Z significantly more than the rest of the UK population for **news**, **keeping in touch with friends and family**, **following brands** and **sports**, **filling spare time**, and **sharing/discussing opinions**. **Twitter** is used significantly more for **news** and **sharing/discussing opinions**. And **YouTube** is seen significantly more as a **time filler**.

[Source: LADnation Survey, May 2022, Sample = 1,301, UK 18+]

DO THEY CONSIDER THEIR DIGITAL BEHAVIOURS AS TIME WELL SPENT?

There is no activity that some Gen Z do not use a phone for – even during **exercise** to track progress (47%), **diet** (21%) and for **sleep** (19%). There is a realisation that this can be a distraction, but not everyone is keen to change their habits. In fact most of Gen Z choose to ignore phone usage tracking and notifications of too much screen time.



48% MONITOR THEIR MOBILE SCREEN TIME

BUT ONLY...

15% SET NOTIFICATIONS AFTER A CERTAIN TIME PERIOD OF USE

AND OF THOSE...



75% CARRY ON AS NORMAL AFTER RECEIVING A NOTIFICATION



Although they are choosing to not be notified, Gen Z are likely to be trying to **find moments throughout their day** where they are away from their phone (92%). Gen Z are significantly more likely to try and stay off their phone when **hanging out with friends** (72%) and **whilst at work** (65%), valuing the face time they get to spend with others and prioritising their work commitments.

Even when they attempt to switch off from the world, they are **second screening**, and hobbies such as watching TV are becoming an activity they do whilst also on their phone (96%). What are they doing on their phones whilst watching TV? **4 in 5** of our Gen Z audience are using their phones to **discuss what they are watching with others** online (84%).

Gen Z are also significantly more likely to use their phones when **socialising** (83%) even though they said they try to put their phone away **whilst out with friends** (72%), showing how difficult it is to balance their desire to switch off with their screen addiction.

Whilst switching off they remain “switched on.” Even when attempting to disconnect, they are connected.