

Time to unwind

Time off is precious, so you need to make the most of it. Follow our expert tips for ensuring your downtime is as uplifting as possible, in association with Starbucks® Chilled Classics

It's absolutely essential you don't let work take over your life – as difficult as that may

sound. Finding time to relax – be it starting a boxset marathon or meeting some friends for a chat over a chilled coffee – and enjoying your time off can be the difference between feeling happy, motivated and inspired, or feeling exhausted, sluggish and burnt-out.

Luckily, there are simple things you can introduce to your downtime that will improve your physical and mental wellbeing. *Stylist* has teamed up with a panel of experts to give you tips for finding and maintaining that elusive work-life balance.



JO USMAR
Wellbeing expert

Jo is a journalist and co-author of the bestselling *This Book Will Make You...* series

"The pervasiveness of technology means there's an expectation we'll always be available so if your boss emails at 10pm, they expect an answer – ridiculous. Establishing boundaries won't get you fired and will make you feel calmer, so schedule technology blackout times. Take half an hour each day when you turn your phone to silent and put it away somewhere not easily accessible – in a drawer, a zipped-up pocket or in another room altogether. We often check our phones on autopilot. The screen lights up and we click on it, like robots, then 30 minutes later you notice you're midway through your sister's ex-boyfriend's holiday snaps from Barcelona 2009.

Giving yourself tech breaks will prove that the world won't end if you give yourself time off and will make you feel more present in the moment. It's actually incredibly liberating.

During your breaks, head outside. A study by mental health charity MIND* found that 90% of people who took a walk around a park reported increased feelings of self-esteem, while 44% of those who walked around an indoor shopping centre reported feeling worse. Grab a refreshing coffee and go for a walk or try gardening – anything as long as it's outside.

If you like hanging out with a particular friend, let's call her Jen, for God's sake, hang out with Jen. Phone her and organise to meet up. Pride and nerves have a lot to answer for when it comes to losing touch with people. Get over it and contact those who lift you up and make you feel good (and don't feel bad about avoiding those who don't. We waste a lot of time with people who bring us down. Life's too short). Relationships give purpose and protect against anxiety and depression. If you are feeling lonely look into joining some classes or clubs. Check out meetup.com/find, an international community of people who set up events for the sole purpose of meeting other people."



SHARA TOCHIA
Health expert

Fitness trainer at 1Rebel and co-founder of health app DOSE (doseapp.co.uk)
"One of the simplest ways to fit exercise into your downtime is to make sure it doesn't feel like a chore. Find classes that have a party atmosphere. At 1Rebel

we have Garage Rumble boxing classes with a live MC, for example. Whatever you're into, it's covered – hula hooping or rave-based trampolining with lasers and glowsticks? Done.

Exercising doesn't even have to feel like exercising. If you love dancing try Morning Gloryville (morninggloryville.com), a sober morning rave at venues in London and Manchester with live DJs before work. Even if you're just dancing in a club, you'll be sweating off the day's stresses and strains. The Crystal Maze in London is hugely popular right now – you'll not only get some exercise, but a healthy dose of nostalgia too. Or try a city treasure hunt that will lead you on a long walk around town.

Fitness can be a great way to socialise and meet people. Join a netball team in one of the many leagues around the country or sign up to Rabble (joinrabble.com) whose tagline is 'Stop exercising. Start playing'. They set up team games like Dodgeball and Capture the Flag. British Military Fitness (britmilfit.com) is great too – groups put through their paces by ex-or-current military trainers. You can also hang out afterwards – many classes, teams and games organise regular pub nights. Every week DOSE recommends a new fitness workout to try, followed by brunch with your friends. Fitness with friends works – you're far less likely to let someone else down than you are yourself. Also, if you're going to book a class, book it within a non-cancellation window – that way you'll get charged if you cancel. We often need all the incentives we can get to crawl out of bed in the morning, but you'll be so glad you did."



EMILY SEARES
Style expert

Emily is editor at fashionbite.co.uk and co-founder of creative digital agency we-elevate.co.uk

"To make the most of your downtime invest in some key 'time off' wardrobe saviours that will make you feel confident, calm and ready to unwind.

Wearing something ill-fitting or that you don't feel confident in, is uncomfortable for both body and mind. You'll worry people can see you feel insecure or have noticed you're pulling at your clothes.

Beautiful loungewear can make you both feel and look good, even if you're just sat at home with



Sunglasses, £145, Emporio Armani, (sunglasshut.com); top, £140, LF Markey (lfmarkey.com); shorts, £194, Maison Kitsune (maisonkitsune.fr); outdoor pouffe, £69, made.com

a glass of wine and a boxset. Clothes that fit well and feel soft to touch will make you more relaxed.

If you're heading out, embrace the summer spirit with bright jewel colours guaranteed to put you in a good mood. If you've got pale skin choose blue sapphire, redheads look great in emerald green, while Asian skin suits hot pink and darker skins look beautiful in ruby red. For more impact, go for single pieces in one shade – a dress or jumpsuit, for example – but bold shoes or bags add interest to any outfit.

Accessories are the perfect way to transform an everyday look into an elegant evening ensemble so you don't need to waste time going home to change. Statement

chandelier or shoulder grazing earrings paired with an off-the-shoulder top will create a laid-back but still glamorous weekend look.

Wide leg trousers are big this season (literally) and will make you feel stylish, yet comfortable – your only off-duty requirements. And, brilliantly, the bomber jacket is enjoying an extended fashion moment and is perfect for throwing over a smarter outfit for a more casual feel."

For more information and to find out how you can win prizes that will help you re-energise your life visit stylist.co.uk/starbucks

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Stay on top

Lift your downtime with a Cappuccino or Caffè Americano from the Starbucks Chilled Classics range

Make the most of your time off this summer with a refreshing beverage from the Starbucks Chilled Classics range. The Cappuccino is an artful blend of rich espresso and smooth creamy milk, lightly sweetened with hints of cocoa. It's the perfect accompaniment to a leisurely summer stroll in the park or a catch up with friends. Also in the range, you can enjoy the Caramel Macchiato, Caffè Americano and Caffè Latte. They're all available in the chilled section of your local supermarket, convenience or high street stores.

