



Is doing nothing good for you?

Some people say it's important to take a break from being busy all the time.

What you need to know

- The term "brain rot" was coined in 1854 by naturalist Henry David Thoreau to describe a preference for simple ideas over complex ones.
- "Brain rot" was the 2024 Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year, defined as the negative impact of too much social media or online content.
- The "default mode network" (DMN) in the brain is activated when we aren't focused on a specific task. This "inner mind" is said to be related to daydreaming and imagination.



DID YOU KNOW?

A study of 2,000 kids ages 3 to 12 found that it took them an average of 33 minutes to get bored.

Modern life is full of distractions, with few opportunities to sit and think or simply gaze out the window. More often than not, every minute of our day is filled with something to do and somewhere to be, whether it's going to class or practice, doing homework, scrolling on our devices, or talking to family and friends. Many doctors and scientists say it's important to stop being so busy and make time to do nothing once in a while. A chunk of time without any planned activities can help us look inward, find calm and relaxation, and just be. But others call this "boredom" and say it's bad for us. What do you think? Is doing nothing good for you?

Yes—give me a break

Our brains are busy! They focus on so many different things throughout the day, and just like our bodies, they need a break from constant stimulation. A break isn't scrolling on our phones, watching videos, and brain rotting though. Studies show that constant distraction like that can actually cause anxiety or unhappiness, rather than be restorative. Instead, experts say, the best thing we can do is be "bored" in a good way. That doesn't mean being lazy or wasting time. It means letting our minds wander, staring at the ceiling, or gazing off into the distance. This leads to deeper thought, creative ideas, and a greater sense of purpose.

No—there's no time to waste

Doing nothing leads to a cycle of more doing nothing. The fact is that when you aren't busy, you can start to feel down or even lazy—which in turn makes you feel even less motivated. Being busy and productive keeps our brains alert and boosts our mood. Doing nothing can also mean sitting around a lot. A lack of physical activity is bad for us and increases the risk of developing health problems. Besides, there are only so many hours in the day and there's so much to do in life! We don't necessarily have to fill every minute with activities, but it's a shame to waste too much time sitting around.

YES Three reasons doing nothing is good for you

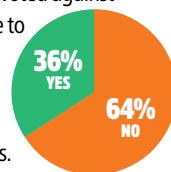
- 1 Like our bodies, our brains are busy and need time to unwind and recharge.
- 2 Constantly distracting ourselves by staying busy or scrolling on our phones can be bad for our mental health.
- 3 When we allow our minds to wander, creative ideas start flowing and we experience a greater sense of purpose.

NO Three reasons doing nothing is not good for you

- 1 Once you start doing nothing, it's hard to stop. You can lose even more motivation and end up accomplishing less and less.
- 2 Doing nothing can mean cutting back on physical activity, which can be bad for our long-term health.
- 3 Time is precious, and we shouldn't squander it by sitting around.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if extra tourist fees are a good idea. Most of you voted against paying more to see popular sites: 64% said no, and 36% said yes.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote **YES** if you think doing nothing is good for you or **NO** if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.