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Volume 9 • Issue 2

# iCarePalmCity

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Magazine



## ANGRY KIDS

How to deal with  
explosive behavior

Is detoxing  
from your phone  
possible?

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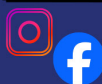
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## FROM OUR PUBLISHER



## HAPPY VALENTINES! 2026 STAYING ON COURSE, ITS ONLY FEBRUARY

By ANGEL CHAVEZ

It's only February and staying focus is mandatory weather you are a mature Christian or a brand-new baby. Staying focused until you enjoy the journey is a must. It doesn't take too much effort, only a few minutes daily preferable as soon as you wake up. "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

*Colossians 3:1-4*

APPEARING IN GLORY WITH JESUS is a present & future daily event. Your mind will not understand this right away but keep reading and accepting the Word in your heart. When The Word reaches your spirit, it (HE) brings revelation to your mind, not the old head but the new mind, the mind of Christ that you have received when you accepted Jesus as your Savior.

Some Christians become religious and postpone everything for when they die, please don't do that; Or you will never become the light of the world and the salt of the earth: "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men... You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." *Matthew 5:13-14*

STAY ON COURSE UNTIL YOU FIND HIS PLANS: "I KNOW THE PLANS THAT I HAVE FOR YOU... SAYS THE LORD"

I know most of us are very focused on our own plans and needs, please don't make the same mistake over and over again. Your own plans will never match the originals. Find

the originals by navigating into the deepest compartments of your spirit, [The Word of God is your traveling vessel] those plans were written by God Himself. Your success depends on finding them.

I you develop your life with Jesus and for His Glory, you are accumulating blessed riches here and most important, riches in Glory that will last forever. There is a big difference between His Plans and your own make up plans. Growing up and developing His original plans for our life comes with win-win benefits: You will be more than a conqueror in this life here on earth, with supernatural health, joy, peace, purpose and riches in heaven, including the salvation of your own household. The enemy won't be able to steal a penny from you.

STAYING ON COURSE TILL YOU FIND DELIGHT IS KEY: God's purpose for our life is a perfect deal: "Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart." *Psalms 37:4* Read your Word daily till you experience that His Word is sweeter than honey in your mouth.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart." *Jeremy 29:11-13*

WHEN YOU ARE OCCUPIED ON HIS PURPOSES FOR YOUR LIFE, HE KEEPS YOU COMPLETE: When you begin to understand it with your spirit, the journey gets easier and delightful: GOD HIMSELF WILL KEEP YOUR

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## ANGRY KIDS:

# Dealing With Explosive Behavior

Source: CHILDMIND.ORG

When a child — even a small child — melts down and becomes aggressive, they can pose a serious risk to themselves and others, including parents and siblings.

It's not uncommon for kids who have trouble handling their emotions to lose control and direct their distress at a caregiver — screaming and cursing, throwing dangerous objects, or hitting and biting. It can be a scary, stressful experience for you and your child, too. Children often feel sorry after they've worn themselves out and calmed down.

### So what are you to do?

It's helpful to first understand that behavior is communication. A child who is so overwhelmed that they are lashing out is a distressed child. They don't have the skill to manage their feelings and express them in a more mature way. They may lack language, impulse control, or problem-solving abilities.

Sometimes parents see this kind of explosive behavior as manipulative. But kids who lash out are usually unable to handle frustration or anger in a more effective way — say, by talking and figuring out how to achieve what they want.

Nonetheless, how you react when a child lashes out has an effect on whether they will continue to respond to distress in the same way or learn better ways to handle feelings so they don't become overwhelming.

### Behavioral techniques for anger management

Here are some pointers to help kids learn techniques to regulate their emotions:

- Stay calm. Faced with a raging child, it's easy to feel out of control and find yourself yelling at them. But when you shout, you have less chance of reaching them. Instead, you will only be making them more aggressive and defiant. As hard as it may be, if you can stay calm and in control of your own emotions, you can be a model for your child and teach them to do the same thing.
- Don't give in. Don't encourage them to continue this behavior by agreeing to what they want in order to make it stop. Praise appropriate behavior. When they have calmed down, praise them for pulling themselves together. And when they do try to express their feelings verbally, calmly, or try to find a compromise on an area of disagreement, praise them for those efforts.
- Help them practice problem-solving skills. When your child is not upset is the time to help them try out communicating their feelings and coming up with solutions to conflicts before they escalate into aggressive outbursts. You can ask them how they feel and how they think you might solve a problem.
- Time-outs and reward systems. Time-outs for nonviolent misbehavior can work well with children younger than 7 or 8 years old. When using time-outs, be sure to be consistent with them and balance them with other, more positive forms of attention. If a child is too old for time-outs, you want to move to a system of positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior — points or tokens toward something they want.
- Avoid triggers. Vasco Lopes, PsyD, a clinical psychologist, says most kids who have frequent meltdowns do it at very predictable times, like homework time, bedtime, or when it's time to stop playing, whether it's Legos or video games. The trigger is usually being asked to do something they don't like, or to stop doing something they do like. Time warnings ("we're going in 10 minutes"), breaking tasks down into one-step directions ("first, put on your shoes"), and preparing your child for situations ("please ask to be excused before you leave Grandma's table") can all help avoid meltdowns.

### What kind of tantrum is it?

How you respond to a tantrum also depends on its severity. The first rule in handling nonviolent tantrums is to ignore them as often as possible, since even negative attention, like telling the child to stop, can be encouraging.

But when a child is getting physical, ignoring is not recommended since it can result in harm to others as well as your child. In this situation, Dr. Lopes advises putting the child in a safe environment that does not give them access to you or any other potential rewards.

Critics of time-outs argue that they can be emotionally isolating for kids, but research shows that they are effective and do not cause children harm. (For more on the debate around time-outs, read our full article on the topic.) However, it's very important to use them as just one technique in a nurturing, supportive parenting strategy. Be sure to balance use of time outs with lots of praise for kids' positive behaviors. It's also important to manage your own stress so that kids can learn how to regulate their emotions from your positive example.

see "ANGRY KIDS" on page 20





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## America's 250th Anniversary License Plate

In honor of America's 250th birthday in 2026, the Department has created the America's 250th Anniversary license plate. The new America's 250th Anniversary license plate will only be available for original, replacement, transfer and personalized reservation issuances beginning in December 2025.

The America's 250th Anniversary license plate will have a center logo design and will follow the same requirements as the current regular graphic license plates. The license plate will be renewable throughout the 10-year license plate cycle.

The America's 250th Anniversary license plate does not replace the standard graphic license plate; it is a new limited license plate available upon request by the customer. The new plate will start to be shipped the week of December 8, 2025. Deliveries will be completed in two weeks.

Counties will be able to order the license plate; however, orders will be monitored by the Inventory Control Unit to limit over production for this limited license plate. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA! ♦**



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The Florida Supervisor of Elections is proud to offer scholarship opportunities to eligible students from around the state. Three scholarships for \$1,200 each will be awarded in 2026, with the winning students to be announced and recognized at the FSE Summer Conference to be held in May.

Applicants must be registered voters in Florida and have lived in the state for two years, maintained at least a "C" average, and have been accepted or enrolled as a full-time student in a senior college or university in Florida and completed two years of junior college or undergraduate work. Students who apply must be either a Political Science, Public/Business Administration, or Journalism/Mass Communication major.

As Martin County Supervisor of Elections, I encourage all qualified students to take the time to apply for this scholarship opportunity. Applications must be received by March 6, 2026, together with two letters of recommendation.

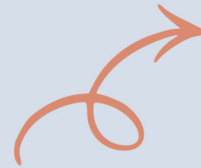
For more information, visit [MartinVotes.gov](http://MartinVotes.gov) or contact the Martin County Supervisor of Elections office at 772-288-5637. Education is the key that opens doors of opportunity for a bright future! ♦



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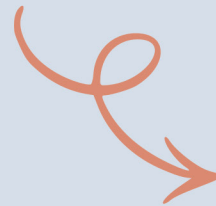
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# Detoxing From Our Phone Screens... Is it Possible?

Source: ROAMERTHERAPY.COM



Our phones are the center of our lives right now. It is not just a tool to help us communicate with others. It is a tool that lets you reach out to places around the world, order whatever you need or want, connect with strangers, and access any kind of information. And that is not limited to our phones; other digital devices are also so-called smart nowadays. You might even notice that only one screen is not enough anymore. You can use your phone, television, and PC all together and all connected. That might help you transfer information quickly and make your life easier. Yet, you might also notice that sometimes you are picking your phone up for no reason, or you might not remember why you picked it up in the first place. The urge to scroll through social media can present with tiredness, or more negative feelings like guilt, anxiety, and anger at the same time. The need for digital devices might feel too much. Yet, it is hard to balance the need to use digital devices, which make life so easy and relatively enjoyable, with the need to be without screens. That might lead you to search for the ways that can help, and one of the things you will see in this literature would be “digital detox.” Digital detox means disconnecting from technology for a certain period of time. This could be a day, a week, or just a few hours. Even though it sounds like a quick fix for digital exhaustion, it’s way harder than it sounds. And maybe the real question is how feasible and sustainable this is in today’s digital world?

## What makes us seek detox from the digital world?

Digital detox is a concept that emerged in the early 2010s with the frequent use of technological devices. After digital devices became more common, the researchers found a profound negative effect of them on individuals’ mental health. Several

studies reported increased anxiety, mental exhaustion, attention deficiencies, and severe dependency on digital devices. Moreover, individuals reported feeling constantly on edge because they must split their attention between the digital and physical worlds. That affected not only the individuals’ inner world but also important areas such as school, work, hobbies, friendships, and relationships.

## Digital Overexposure

Digital overexposure is what happens when your mind is asked to hold too many lives, too many crises, and too many opinions at once. You open your phone to relax and end up absorbing grief, outrage, beauty, success, and catastrophe in the same five minutes. It’s often associated with feeling emotionally flooded without knowing exactly why.

## Digital Fatigue

After hours of emails, messages, and video calls, your body may be sitting still, but your nervous system feels like it’s run a marathon. It’s commonly linked to a sense of dullness, irritability, or the feeling that even rest doesn’t feel restorative anymore.

## Notification Anxiety

Notification anxiety is the tension of waiting for something to happen on your phone, even when nothing is happening. You check your screen not because it buzzed, but because it might, which is often associated with anxiety.

## Hyperconnectivity

Hyperconnectivity means being reachable all the time and forgetting what it feels like not to be. Messages, calls, video



meetings, or app notifications come in at all hours, and silence starts to feel like neglect or avoidance.

### Fear of Missing Out

Fear of missing out, or FOMO, is the anxiety that something meaningful is happening and you are missing it somehow. So, scrolling becomes a way to reassure yourself that you're still "in the loop". Ironically, it deepens the sense of exclusion because you are not physically present. It's often tied to social comparison and a fragile sense of belonging.

### Nomophobia

Nomophobia is the fear that shows up when your phone isn't somewhere near you. In this concept, your phone stops being just a tool and starts functioning like a safety object. It's commonly associated with anxiety regulation.

### Netlessphobia

Netlessphobia is the fear of being without internet access. It's not about communication with a specific person, but about losing the sense of orientation that being connected provides. This often manifests as restlessness or disorientation in offline settings.

### Phubbing

Phubbing is what happens when the person across from you slowly disappears behind a screen. You can see that what you just talked about is not heard, eye contact is lost, and the connection becomes only physical. It affects relationship satisfaction drastically.

### How do digital devices reshape our brains?

Researches show that digital devices interact directly with the brain's reward and regulation systems. Social media apps, notifications, and endless scrolling are designed to trigger dopamine release. The way these platforms are designed offers novelty, unpredictability, and quick response from others. Over time, our brains can begin to crave this constant stimulation, making stillness, boredom, or slower activities feel uncomfortable.

At the same time, frequent exposure to LED screens, especially in the evening, interferes with melatonin production, the hormone that regulates sleep-wake cycles. Blue light and cognitive stimulation delay sleep onset and reduce sleep quality. This can affect cognitive processes like attention, mood regulation, and emotional resilience the next day. Together, disrupted dopamine reward patterns and altered melatonin rhythms can leave the brain feeling overstimulated yet exhausted.

### How to do Digital Detox?

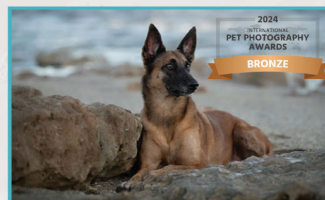
Digital detox may be worth considering if you experience negative well-being outcomes after using digital devices most of the time. There are many ways to start digital detox, as you can see from different resources. However, please keep in mind that not every plan might align with your reality and your needs. Therefore, starting the digital detox process begins with clearly understanding the place of technology and media in your life. At this point, you can develop awareness in the following key areas:

see "DETOXING" on page 30

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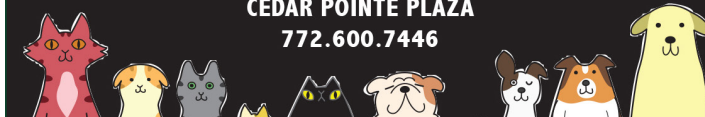
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# Your Guide to HEALTHY EATING HABITS That Stick

Source: HEART.ORG

Making small, simple changes to your overall eating pattern can help you and your family stay healthy. Learn the basics of good nutrition and making healthy food and drink choices.

Eating healthy can help reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke and many other diseases and conditions. The good news is, eating right doesn't have to be hard or require you to give up all the foods you love. And it can be easy, affordable and delicious.

**Here are some ways you and your family can adopt a healthier eating style:**

## **Power Your Plate**

- Fruits and vegetables contain a wide variety of vitamins and minerals. Try to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. They can be chopped up and added to many dishes and are a good replacement for less healthy sides such as chips or fries.
- Whole grains are high in dietary fiber and can help lower cholesterol and improve heart health. Easy examples include oats, corn tortillas and pre-cooked brown rice without salt added.
- Beans and legumes and other plant-based proteins can help lower your risk of heart disease and obesity. Try adding beans such as black, kidney, or pinto to your dishes to bulk up both protein and fiber in your meals. Other examples include tofu, lentils, and unsweetened soy milk.
- Nuts like unsalted almonds, walnuts, pistachios, pecans and hazelnuts contain healthy fats, protein and key nutrients that support heart and brain health.
- Fish such as salmon, mackerel, cod, herring, trout, and fresh yellowfin tuna are rich in omega-3 fatty acids that can support heart and brain health and should be eaten without breading or frying at least twice a week as a replacement for less healthy options like fatty meats.
- Lean meat from chicken, beef, pork or turkey are other good examples of protein-rich foods that are also important sources of B vitamins and iron. Trim visible fat from beef, pork and poultry in addition to removing any skin.

continued next page

[www.iCareTown.com](http://www.iCareTown.com)



## eating habits cont.

- Dairy foods and dairy alternatives including low fat and fat free milk, yogurt and cheese give you protein, calcium and vitamin D to keep your heart and bones healthy. For plant-based milk alternatives, choose products that have been fortified with calcium and vitamins A and D, such as soy or almond milk.
- Healthy Fats like those in some cooking oils can help lower your bad cholesterol when used instead of less healthy fats. They're better for your heart than solid fats including butter or tropical oils like coconut oil.
- Seasoning your meals using salt-free spices and herbs like cilantro, oregano or garlic isn't only about taste. Herbs and spices, whether fresh or dried, can support good heart health, including being a great substitute for salt.



### Limit for Heart Health

- Sugar-sweetened drinks
- Sodium and salty foods
- Saturated fats
- Fatty or processed red meats (If you choose to eat meat, select leaner cuts)
- Refined carbohydrates including added sugars and processed grain foods
- Full-fat dairy products
- Tropical oils such as coconut oil and palm oil

### Healthy Eating Begins with Everyday Choices

- Choose mindfully, even with healthier foods. Ingredients and nutrient content can vary a lot.
- Read labels. Compare Nutrition Facts labels on food products and select products with the lowest amounts of sodium, added sugars, saturated fat and no trans fat, or no partially hydrogenated oils.
- Eat reasonable portions. Often this is less than you are served, especially when eating out.
- Cook and eat at home. You'll have more control over ingredients and preparation methods. ♦

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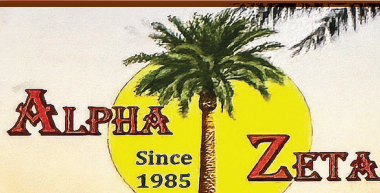


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**TODD HARRIS**





Perhaps you've heard the news: pickleball is popular. Like fastest-growing-sport-in-America popular, with a 21% increase in players between 2019 and 2020. Or, once-in-the-morning-and-once-at-night popular. And, planning-my-vacations-around-it popular. Suddenly this quirky, fun sport is being played by just about everybody, everywhere.

Its addictive nature is often chalked up as the reason for its popularity. It has a way of burrowing under your skin and making itself comfortable there. You move quickly from playing the very first time to routinely picking up your paddle as you walk through the house and practicing your groundstrokes.

While the addiction is real though, that's just the underlying context. So is the fact that it's amazingly fun. I think there are two powerful but slightly less obvious reasons for the sport's seemingly unprecedented popularity.

### It's made for learners.

We are born learners. We come into the world and immediately start soaking up intelligence about how the world works. We have an innate drive to learn new things, and ultimately to perfect them. There's a reason why most of us walk a bit differently than we did when we took our first steps.

Well, Pickleball is all about learning. You have to learn the scoring system, which even the most savvy players will admit was more than a bit befuddling when they first stepped onto the court. Zero zero what?

You have to learn how not to pop the ball up in the air, because when you do you will routinely eat it when your

opponent takes that simple mistake out on you. Fortunately it's "just" a whiffle ball, said the guy with ball marks indented into his forehead.

You have to learn how to use that mystical seven foot wide area on either side of the net to your distinct advantage. Wait, when can I go in there again? And why is it called "the kitchen"??

And, you have to learn to bounce back from failure, again and again. Pickleball gives you an immediate feedback loop: Hit a poor shot, lose the point. Improve that shot the next time, lose the point. Really improve that shot, win the point. Learn, rinse, and repeat.

As Big Bird, LeVar Burton, and Mrs. McFeely all taught us, learning is fun.



### It's by and large a utopian society.

Speaking of common ground, pickleball has a unique way of blinding you to the even more “stark” differences between you and your fellow players: gender, race, age, sexual orientation, or just about anything else. It is routine to play with the opposite sex and folks 30 years your senior all in the same game.

The sport, particularly in its bedrock principle of “open play” requires us to work together, often with people we have never met, or whose political perspectives we couldn't possibly care less about in the midst of a game. In open play you show up at the courts and play with whoever else shows up at the courts.

Once on the court, we lose all sense for whether someone is left, right, red, or blue. What we care about is not who they voted for, but whether they can hit a buttery third-shot drop that falls dangerously in the deep corner of the kitchen, forcing the opponent to bend themselves in half just to keep the ball in play.



While we are complicit in the polarization of America, deep down we abhor it. It's exhausting to be angry at your fellow human all the time. It's not that much of a stretch to believe that we could apply pickleball's inherent focus on collaboration to our myriad off-court challenges...

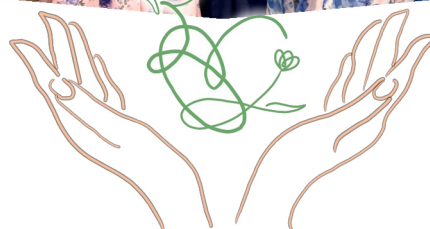
It's liberating to shed our biases, alter our sometimes painful reality, and work together in an illusory oasis. The sport may not solve all of the world's problems, but it sure puts them on pause until one of the teams makes it to 11, win by two.

In other words, pickleball breaks down barriers and places us squarely on the common ground that we wish we were on in “everyday” life.

### So...Funny Name, Major Benefits

Pickleball's gentle learning curve means that everybody can play it. And that's who you see on the court, everybody. But it's not just about seeing them, it's about playing with them side by side.

In addition to the inherently fun, addictive nature of the game, it's these two things that will both hook you and keep the sport growing for a very long time. The benefits of that growth include healthier, more socially connected people, more vibrant communities, and maybe, just maybe a society that's slightly more utopian. ♦



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From L to R: Rollyn, Billy and Chris



# Young People Are the Future of Auto Repair

## HI MAX, CAN YOU PLEASE GIVE US A BRIEF INTRODUCTION?

My name is Max Harris, I'm 18 years old, and I'm a technician at Crown Car Care in Palm City. I've always loved cars, and about a year and a half ago I joined the shop officially. I'm currently certified in alignments and working toward my ASE certifications.

## WHAT IS IT THAT YOU LOVE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO?

I love that every day in the shop is different. Cars are always changing — technology is evolving, diagnostics are

becoming more advanced, and there's always something new to learn. When I put my hands on a vehicle, I know that what I'm doing matters. A good repair keeps families safe and keeps people moving.

I'm also a detail-focused guy, so I really enjoy vehicle inspections — finding the small things early before they turn into big problems.

## WHO ARE THE PEOPLE HELPING SHAPE YOUR CAREER?

Honestly, I'm surrounded by really incredible people.

At Palm City, my biggest teacher is Ron,

who has been with Crown Car Care for 15 years. He's the guy who has seen every type of problem walk through the door, and he's patient in explaining why something is happening, not just how to fix it. Learning beside him is like learning straight from the source.

I also learn a lot from Mike, our Service Manager. He's the bridge between the technicians and the customers. Watching him work teaches me how important communication is — diagnostics and repair are only half the job, the other half is helping customers understand what's going on and making them feel taken care of.





And of course, there's my dad, Todd Harris — he's an ASE Master Mechanic and he also has an MBA. Growing up, I watched him solve problems most people would walk away from, and now I get to train under him. He expects a lot from me, but that's because he believes in what I can do. Learning from your parent at work isn't always common, but I consider it a privilege.

### HAS ANYONE OUTSIDE THE PALM CITY SHOP INSPIRED YOU?

Definitely. Over at our Cove Road location we have an amazing crew — we call them The Dream Team. Billy, Rollyn, and Chris are all young techs and they set the bar high. They work together, they push one another, and they're all coming up fast in the industry. Even though I'm not in the same shop, seeing what they're accomplishing motivates me. That kind of energy is contagious.

### WHY DO YOU THINK YOUNG PEOPLE ARE IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR?

Because cars aren't getting simpler — they're getting smarter. We need more young people stepping in, getting trained, and bringing new ways of thinking into the shop. The older generation has decades of knowledge and experience, but now it's on us to take what they know, combine it with new technology, and carry it forward. The industry can't grow without new hands, curious minds, and people willing to learn.

### WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?

My first step is to complete my ASE certifications. After that, I want to learn more about diagnostics, electrical systems, and performance work. Eventually, I want to be in a position where I can train other young techs — the same way great mentors are training me now.

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU WANT TO GIVE YOUR GENERATION?

Don't overlook the trades. College is great for some people, but there are also amazing careers where you get to work with your hands, solve problems, and make an impact every single day. If you're willing to show up, learn, and apply yourself, this industry has room for you — and it needs you. ♦





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# Live A Healthy Life In The Modern Age

Source: [NEWLIFEVISIONFOUNDATION.ORG](http://NEWLIFEVISIONFOUNDATION.ORG)

**W**hat if you could transform your life today and start feeling better tomorrow? What if it wasn't that big of a deal to do so? And what if you didn't need to spend a fortune to get there either? You know what would also be nice? If you could transform not just your physical appearance, but also the way you think about yourself and your life. This can seem like an overwhelming commitment at first, but once you break it down and think about it as a holistic process rather than a giant leap, it seems much more achievable. After all, we're talking about 5 minutes per day. That's all it takes!

## Exercise daily

Exercise is the ultimate way to increase your metabolic rate and burn fat while improving your health and well-being. Whether

you choose to go to the gym, run around the block, or climb a tree, the most important thing is to do something. The best part is that even if you aren't that great at it, doing something will give you a sense of accomplishment and increase your confidence. There's really no excuse for not being active. All you need is a pair of comfortable shoes and about 30 minutes a day.

There are so many benefits to being active, including:  
Better Sex - Increased Energy - Improved Mood - Improved Mental Health - Lower Risk of Heart Disease - Increased Immunity - Greater Sex Drive - Stronger Bones - Stronger Muscles



### Eat healthy

Eating healthy is crucial for boosting your metabolism, building strong bones and teeth, and preventing heart disease and many cancers. It's also essential for maintaining a healthy weight, and for keeping your energy levels up too. It can be difficult to know what to eat, especially when you're throwing yourself a party. This is why it's important to have a healthy diet that consists of a variety of fresh produce, wholegrains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy products. You should also limit your intake of sugary drinks, processed foods, saturated fats, salt, and sugary snacks. There are so many healthy food options that you can choose from, such as: Fresh Fruit Nuts and Seeds Low-Fat Dairy Products Lean Proteins wholegrains.

### Learn something new

If you think about it, we're all in this thing called life for a reason: to learn, grow, and experience new things. There's no way you're going to be able to do that if you're constantly worried about money and your bills. The best way to learn new things and expand your knowledge is by getting inspired by other people and what they've achieved. There are so many different ways you can do this. You can watch documentaries, read blogs, attend seminars, or simply listen to what other people have to say. The more you do this, the more you'll realize how much you don't know and how much there is still to learn. This will boost your confidence, give you the ability to understand new concepts, and make you feel more optimistic about the future.

### Sleep better

Sleep is essential for regulating hormones and building memory. Not sleeping well can lead to poor diet, fatigue, and a lack of confidence. While it can be difficult to change the number of hours you sleep, it's much easier to adjust the amount of sleep you get. Try and keep a regular sleep schedule so that your body is conditioned to expect the amount of sleep it needs. You should also try to reduce stress in your life and make sure you're not eating anything that's going to keep you up at night. If you're feeling anxious, try and identify what's causing it and try to eliminate it from your life. Make sure you have a regular time to relax and take care of yourself, like when you're sick or when you're just out of the blue feeling down.

### Connect with people

The modern world is incredibly isolating, which isn't great for your mental health or your relationships. You don't have to put yourself out there in a big way either. Just make sure you're grabbing coffee with a friend every now and then, sending a quick text message, or saying hi to someone on the street. Doing this will not only boost your social confidence, but it'll help you get to know the people around you better. It'll also help you to make new friends when you move cities or even just when you decide to open up a little more.

It's always good to have a few people in your life that you can connect with, whether it's a close friend, family member, or even a stranger.

### Take a deep breath and relax

Life is happening really quickly. You have to make decisions quickly and try to find time for everything. It can be really easy to get hurried, anxious, or stressed out. This is never going to get you anywhere so try to put the brakes on it. Take a few deep breaths, try and identify what's stressing you out, and try to work out a way to deal with it. This doesn't mean that you have to do something that you don't want to do, but you have to have some kind of plan in place. Then, when you're feeling rushed and short of time, you can use that plan to help you to calm down. This doesn't mean you have to let everything get to you. It just means that you have to let yourself have a little more control and that you don't have to be rushed all the time.

### Stay positive

Finally, it's important to remember that you're not going to get anywhere if you're not having fun. If you're feeling down, try and find the funny side of things and try to look at it from a different perspective. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't take things seriously and work hard, but try and find a happy medium. It can be really easy to get trapped in a negative spiral where you're constantly worrying about the things that are stressing you out. You have to find a way to anchor yourself and stop that spiral from continuing. There are many ways you can do this, like writing them down, visualizing them, or talking to a friend or family member. There are many different ways you can anchor yourself and stop the negative spiral from continuing. This will help you to stay positive, optimistic, and relaxed while you're navigating life's challenges. ♦

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## angry kids cont.

If the child is young (usually 7 or younger), try placing them in a time out chair. If they won't stay in the chair, take them to a backup area where they can calm down on their own without anyone else in the room. Again, for this approach to work there shouldn't be any toys or games in the area that might make it rewarding.

Your child should stay in that room for one minute and must be calm before they are allowed out. Then they should come back to the chair for time out. "What this does is gives your child an immediate and consistent consequence for their aggression and it removes all access to reinforcing things in their environment," explains Dr. Lopes.

If you have an older child who is being aggressive and you aren't able to carry them into an isolated area to calm down, Dr. Lopes advises removing yourself from their vicinity. This ensures that they are not getting any attention or reinforcement from you and keeps you safe. In extreme instances, it may be necessary to call 911 to ensure your and your child's safety.

### Help with behavioral techniques

If your child is doing a lot of lashing out — enough that it is frequently frightening you and disrupting your family — it's important to get some professional help. There are good behavioral therapies that can help you and your child get past the aggression, relieve your stress, and improve your relationship.

You can learn techniques for managing their behavior more effectively, and they can learn to rein in disruptive behavior and enjoy a much more positive relationship with you.

- **Parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT).** PCIT has been shown to be very helpful for children between the ages of 2 and 7. The parent and child work together through a set of exercises while a therapist coaches parents through an ear piece. You learn how to pay more attention to your child's positive behavior, ignore minor misbehaviors, and provide consistent consequences for negative and aggressive behavior, all while remaining calm.
- **Parent management training (PMT).** PMT teaches similar techniques as PCIT, though the therapist usually works with parents, not the child.
- **Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS).** CPS is a program based on the idea that explosive or disruptive behavior is the result of lagging skills rather than, say, an attempt to get attention or test limits. The idea is to teach children the skills they lack to respond to a situation in a more effective way than throwing a tantrum.

### Figuring out explosive behavior

Tantrums and meltdowns are especially concerning when they occur more often, more intensely, or past the age in which they're developmentally expected — those terrible twos up through preschool. As a child gets older, aggression becomes more and more dangerous to you, and the child. And it can become a big problem for them at school and with friends, too.

If your child has a pattern of lashing out it may be because of an underlying problem that needs treatment. Some possible reasons for aggressive behavior include:



- **ADHD:** Kids with ADHD are frustrated easily, especially in certain situations, such as when they're supposed to do homework or go to bed.
- **Anxiety:** An anxious child may keep their worries secret, then lash out when the demands at school or at home put pressure on them that they can't handle. Often, a child who "keeps it together" at school loses it with one or both parents.
- **Undiagnosed learning disability:** When your child acts out repeatedly in school or during homework time, it could be because the work is very hard for them.
- **Sensory processing issues:** Some children have trouble processing the information they are taking in through their senses. Things like too much noise, crowds and even "scratchy" clothes can make them anxious, uncomfortable, or overwhelmed. That can lead to actions that leave you mystified, including aggression.
- **Autism:** Children with autism spectrum disorder are often prone to meltdowns when they are frustrated or faced with unexpected change. They also often have sensory issues that make them anxious and agitated.

Given that there are so many possible causes for emotional outbursts and aggression, an accurate diagnosis is key to getting the help you need. You may want to start with your pediatrician. They can rule out medical causes and then refer you to a specialist. A trained, experienced child psychologist or psychiatrist can help determine what, if any, underlying issues are present.

### When behavioral plans aren't enough

Professionals agree, the younger you can treat a child, the better. But what about older children and even younger kids who are so dangerous to themselves and others that behavioral techniques aren't enough to keep them and others around them safe?

- **Medication.** Medication for underlying conditions such as ADHD and anxiety may make your child more reachable and

continued next page



teachable. Kids with extreme behavior problems are often treated with antipsychotic medications like Risperdal or Abilify. But these medications should be partnered with behavioral techniques.

- **Holds.** Parent training may, in fact, include learning how to use safe holds on your child so that you can keep both them and yourself out of harm's way.
- **Residential settings.** Children with extreme behaviors may need to spend time in a residential treatment facility — sometimes, but not always, in a hospital setting. There, they receive behavioral and, most likely, pharmaceutical treatment. Therapeutic boarding schools provide consistency and structure around the clock, seven days a week. The goal is for the child to internalize self-control so they can come back home with more appropriate behavior with you and the world at large.
- **Day treatment.** With day treatment, a child with extreme behavioral problems lives at home but attends a school with a strict behavioral plan. Such schools should have trained staff prepared to safely handle crisis situations.

### Explosive children need calm, confident parents

It can be challenging work for parents to learn how to handle an aggressive child with behavioral approaches, but for many kids it can make a big difference. Parents who are confident, calm, and consistent can be very successful in helping children develop the anger management skills they need to regulate their own behavior.

This may require more patience and willingness to try different techniques than you might with a typically developing child, but when the result is a better relationship and happier home, it's well worth the effort. ♦

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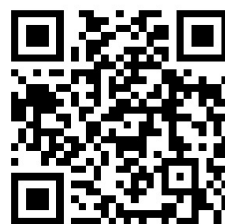
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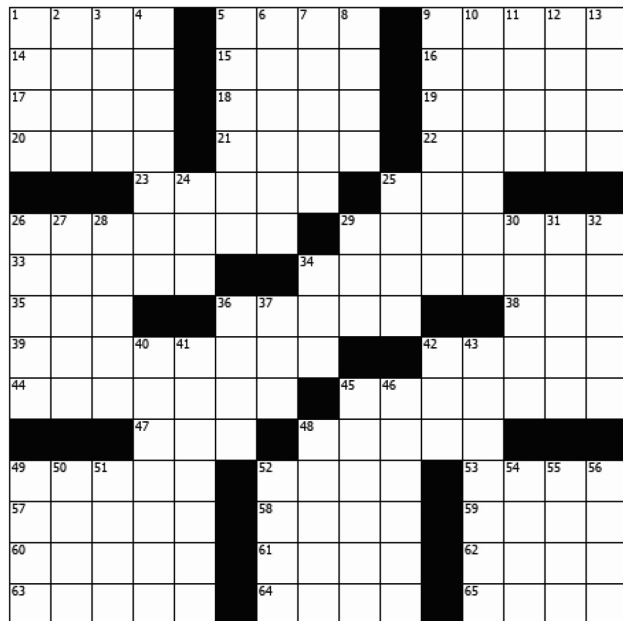
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33. Ventured
34. Regal
35. Rhyming boxer
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59. Tavern drinks
60. Utopian
61. Rave
62. Snip
63. Grouchy
64. Wood source
65. Snaky fishes



## Down

- |                          |                           |                          |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Quote                 | 24. Owned                 | 41. Majestic             |
| 2. Reverberate           | 25. Heidi's mountains     | 42. Compass dir.         |
| 3. Bright sign           | 26. Conform               | 43. Daily grind (2 wds.) |
| 4. Board member          | 27. More ashen            | 45. Unruffled            |
| 5. Homes                 | 28. Vanity                | 46. Landed manor         |
| 6. Stick together        | 29. Medical group (abbr.) | 48. Plane spotter        |
| 7. Bangor's state        | 30. Huge                  | 49. Roasting rod         |
| 8. Greek deity           | 31. AM-FM ____            | 50. Unclothed            |
| 9. Church tower          | 32. More antiquated       | 51. Mine products        |
| 10. Breakfast appliance  | 34. Under the weather     | 52. Soil                 |
| 11. Liberal ____         | 36. Over                  | 54. She, in Nice         |
| 12. Understood! (2 wds.) | 37. Summer shade          | 55. Astronaut ____       |
| 13. Puts on              | 40. Beseech               | 56. Recipe abbr.         |

Find the solution at  
[onlinecrosswords.net/69931](http://onlinecrosswords.net/69931)

## staying on course cont.

SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY HOLY. "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." *1 Thessalonians 5:23*

EVEN THE PLANS AND WORKS THAT GOD HAS DESIGNED FOR YOU TO PERFORM WHILE ON EARTH WILL BE MANIFESTED AND YOU WILL PERFORM IT UNDER GOD'S DIRECTION (Your own plans, will never produce the satisfaction and sense of completion your heart needs and is always longing for): "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

MY FRIEND, JUST HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE THE ALMIGHTY GOD AND BE REAL TO FIND REAL ANSWERS. IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO HUMBLE YOURSELF, BE HONEST AND ASK HIM TO HELP YOU AND HE WILL.

START TODAY IF YOU HAVEN'T STARTED YET, BY DIVING IN HIS WORD, YOU ARE DIVING INTO THE SUPERNATURAL AND ETHEREAL... "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." *John 6:63*

Listen to Jesus and receive your salvation today: ACQUIRE HIS NATURE BY PRAYING OUT LOUD: Lord, I do believe that Jesus of Nazareth took my place in the Cross. Lord, I am sorry for all

see "STAYING ON COURSE" on page 30



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# Healthy habits for successfully aging in our 60s and 70s – and beyond

Source: MED.STANFORD.EDU



Anyone in their 60s, 70s or beyond knows what it feels like to notice changes in their body. Maybe they're not quite as steady on their feet or they're forgetting names more often than they used to. Some of these changes are normal with aging; others can be minimized with the right habits to keep us healthy, sharp and mobile.

The choices we make at this stage can have a profound impact on how we age. While we can't turn back the clock, research shows that it's never too late to adopt habits that can help maintain our independence, protect our cognitive health and improve our quality of life well into our 80s and beyond.

"It's never too late to start," said Abby King, PhD, a Stanford Medicine professor of epidemiology and population health and a faculty member at the Stanford

Prevention Research Center, who served as co-chair of the 2018 U.S. Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee. King has spent decades studying health behaviors across the lifespan. "We have a number of studies showing that even people who were very inactive were able to gain fitness and wellbeing benefits by increasing their regular physical activity levels in ways that fit their abilities."

Speaking to King and other Stanford Medicine health experts about the most important habits to prioritize in our 60s and 70s, their recommendations vary from staying mobile and mentally engaged to catching health problems early. Whether someone has been healthy their whole life or they've dealt with chronic conditions, these habits can help maintain independence and vibrance.

## 1. Strength and power training to stay independent

As we age, exercise isn't just about staying fit; it's also about daily functioning and quality of life. The ability to get up from a chair without using our hands, carry groceries or catch ourselves if we stumble can mean the difference between living on our own terms and needing assistance with daily activities.

Even if we've been relatively inactive for most of our life, integrating small bits of movement into our day can make a difference at any age, said Silvia Tee, MD, a clinical associate professor of medicine and a geriatrician at the Stanford Senior Care clinic.

"With age, muscles can get weak very easily," Tee said. Just a few days of inactivity, she pointed out, can trigger long-term mobility challenges. On the flip side, a regular exercise routine can also help people stay healthy and independent.

"There's been a push, particularly for women, to lift heavier weights as they age," said Michael Fredericson, MD, a professor of physical medicine & rehabilitation and director of Stanford Lifestyle Medicine. "But a lot of people don't like lifting heavy weights, and that scares them away from doing any resistance training at all. You can absolutely get the same benefit by lifting lighter weights and doing more reps, provided you push to failure."

For her patients who are unable to carry out more complex exercises, Tee often tells them to try sit-to-stand exercises, in which they lower yourself up and down from a chair 10 to 15 times, gradually making it more challenging by using less hand support or a lower chair.

## 2. Balance training for fall prevention

Even if someone doesn't feel frail, the 60s and 70s are the ideal time to start working on balance. The better our balance, the less likely we are to fall — and falls are a leading cause of injury and loss of independence in older adults. One study showed that people aged 51 to 75 who could stand on one leg for just 10 seconds had an improved mortality rate.

"When I talk to older adults, I recommend to start with simple static balance training exercises, like single-leg stands or corner stands," Tee said. She

continued next page

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suggests to hold the countertop or a chair while standing on one leg and aim for 10 to 20 seconds at a time, switch legs, and repeat 5-10 times per leg. For a corner stand, position yourself with feet together and your back toward the corner of a room — so you have support in multiple directions — with hands on the wall and eyes closed to practice balance.

### 3. Optimize nutrition as you age

Nutrition becomes increasingly critical in these years — not for weight loss, but for maintaining our strength, independence and quality of life. As we age, our body's ability to build and maintain muscle declines significantly, meaning we need more protein and nutrients even if we're eating fewer total calories. Nutrients can mean the difference between staying active and independent versus becoming frail and dependent on others.

Research shows that healthy older adults benefit from approximately 1.0 to 1.3 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily. For a 150-pound person, that's about 68-88 grams of protein per day. For individual of this size, you can hit this by eating three meals that contain 20 to 30 grams of protein — a 3-to-4-ounce chicken breast, one cup of Greek yogurt or cottage cheese, a can of tuna, three eggs, or 5 ounces of tofu. Beyond protein, experts recommend following a Mediterranean-style diet, which has consistently been shown to reduce the risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes and cognitive decline.

King also emphasizes moving away from ultra-processed foods that are high in salt, sugar and saturated fats.

"Focus on whole foods," she said. "It doesn't have to be complicated. I'm encouraged by the fact that the food industry is making eating healthier a lot easier than it used to be with things like grab-and-go fresh salads and healthier frozen options."

### 4. Keep your brain sharp with cognitive and social habits

One of the biggest health concerns as people enter these decades is cognitive decline and dementia. While genetics play a role, many of the most important risk factors are ones we can influence with our habits — including exercise, diet, sleep and stress management. But research also shows that staying mentally and socially engaged can make a meaningful difference in protecting brain health.

Mental stimulation through activities like crossword puzzles, learning new skills or engaging in complex conversations appears

to help maintain cognitive function, though the evidence comes primarily from observational studies rather than randomized trials.

Perhaps even more important than doing mental puzzles: staying socially connected. Studies have found that people who are more socially connected have better cognitive function and memory.

When we're socially engaged, we're also mentally engaged. Conversations require us to listen, process information, remember context and respond appropriately — all activities that keep the brain active.

### 5. Prioritize preventive care and monitoring

As we age, preventive screening becomes more personalized, and what our doctor recommends may vary from what they tell others our age. While we may have graduated from some routine screenings, others become even more important, and the decision often depends on our overall health and life expectancy.

"For a lot of screening recommendations, we consider whether we think patients have 10 years or more to live," Tee explained.

Some of her healthiest 80-year-old patients continue with regular colonoscopies or mammograms if they have a strong family history or previous abnormal results and maintain good overall health, she says. But for a 75-year-old with complex medical conditions, she may recommend against such procedures.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends several key screenings for people in their 60s and 70s:

- Annual blood pressure checks — hypertension often has no symptoms but significantly increases your risk for heart disease, stroke and cognitive decline
- Regular cholesterol screening to assess cardiovascular risk
- Diabetes screening, as risk increases with age
- Bone-density screening for osteoporosis, particularly for women over 65 and men over 70 with risk factors
- Vision and hearing tests, as both can significantly impact quality of life and fall risk
- Annual influenza vaccines and updated COVID-19 vaccines

Beyond screenings, scheduling annual physicals with your primary care provider will help with tracking your own health risks and goals. For many older adults with chronic conditions, more frequent visits — every three to six months — may be appropriate to monitor multiple conditions and medications. ♦



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# Real Estate Investing Basics: 8 Types of Investments

Source: BUTTERFLYMX.COM



Real estate investing can be a highly rewarding endeavor that requires both as much and as little effort as you want to put into it. There are many different types of real estate investments and not every investment type will be a great fit for you.

In this article, we'll go over some basic questions that you may have about investing in real estate. Next, we'll go over how you can invest in real estate. Finally, we'll review a few of the different types of real estate that you can invest in.

## What is real estate investing?

Real estate investing can involve either buying, developing, selling, or renting out property to make a return on investment. Real estate investments can be as simple as buying, renovating, and reselling a house.

However, they can also be more complex and time-consuming when buying and managing multiple multifamily and commercial properties in order to earn rental income.

## Is it a good idea to invest in real estate?

Real estate investments are a good idea if you have enough capital to support the phases of your investment. The real estate market is consistently growing.

Furthermore, 36% of Americans rent, which means rental properties will always be in demand. The only reason that real estate investing might be a bad idea is if your personal finance doesn't include the funds to invest.

## Is \$5,000 enough to invest in real estate?

\$5,000 can be enough to invest in some real estate as a down payment, depending on the financial loans you manage to secure. However, you'll likely want to have access to more funding in order to avoid taking unnecessary risks with your personal finance. Owning real estate likely involves more startup funds.

\$5,000 and similar low amounts are probably best put towards real estate projects such as REITs (real estate investment trusts), which we explore a little further along in this article.

## How to invest in rental property

One of the best ways to invest in a rental property is to purchase either a single-family, multifamily, or commercial property and rent out individual units for a monthly or yearly rent. Your ROI (return on investment) will come from rental income.

When investing in rental property, there are a number of crucial steps to take:

- Find a worthwhile property
- Secure financing
- Purchase/develop your property
- Managing your property

## How to invest in real estate with no money

When investing in real estate with very little start-up capital, you will have to become a savvy investor and rely on creative financing if you want to start investing. Creative financing can involve:

- Real estate crowdfunding
- Borrowing substantial capital from private lenders
- Forming partnerships with multiple real estate investors and embarking on fractional ownership

## How to invest in real estate for passive income

Rental properties of all types, such as college-town rentals, are one of the best ways to earn passive income when real estate investing. If you hire a property manager, you won't have to worry about the day-to-day operations at your property.

Investing in real estate stocks such as REITs is also a great way to earn passive income.

## Real estate investing groups

There are ways to get involved in real estate investing without having to physically purchase — or handle — any property at all. One of the best investment strategies is to go through a real estate investing group.

The two most common ways to do this are through:

- Real estate syndications.
- REITs (real estate investment trusts).

see "INVESTING BASICS" on page 28



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## investing basics cont.

### How to invest in real estate through stocks

Investing in real estate through stocks most commonly involves buying stock in REITs. Recent data shows that REIT companies own over 535,000 properties and over 15 million acres of land.

### Online real estate platforms for investing

Platforms for real estate on the internet often take the form of software that provides you with tools to extensively research the real estate market.

Online platforms such as **Flipperforce**, **Property Evaluator** and **Popstream** are beneficial because they:

- Show you how to calculate a good initial investment.
- Help you decide on which development projects are worth pursuing.
- Provide beginner knowledge for new investors and real estate developers who are looking to start investing in real estate assets.
- Provide high-quality data such as up and-coming areas, real estate values, local market data, undervalued properties, price appreciation, and prospects for potential renters.

### 8 types of real estate investments

Different types of investment properties come with their own risk and reward systems. Some properties are better for beginner investors, while others are better suited for investors with more experience. Almost all of the following properties provide great tax benefits and are an essential step if you want to build wealth.

#### 1. Senior housing

Senior housing includes a number of different property types that house senior citizens. Types of senior housing include:

- Assisted living facilities
- Retirement homes
- Nursing homes

#### Benefits of senior housing include:

- Consistent demand.
- Safe investment.

*Senior housing does have a few cons, including:*

- Staffing. Most senior housing properties require highly trained professionals.

Keeping these professionals staffed at all times can be challenging.

- Regulations. Because many senior housing properties are also medical facilities, they face heavy regulations that you, as the property owner, must be aware of.

#### 2. Short-term rental

Short-term investment rentals are properties that are rented nightly or weekly, with Airbnb rentals being a top example. They are a great idea when investing in a rental property for beginners.

Short-term rentals can involve investing in real estate with no money if you rent out a spare room at your otherwise single-family residence. They can also be more complex if you purchase or develop a four-bedroom beachfront property and rent out each room individually.

The primary cons of short-term rentals are that you have to deal with a high volume of different renters, often with minimal background checks. This can lead to residents who don't respect your property or rules and cause damage. However, the easy profits that you stand to make can offset this potential risk.

#### 3. Multifamily properties

Multifamily properties are one of the top properties for many investors. Why?

- Rental income
- Constant demand
- Endless renovations

Multifamily properties can consist of two-unit duplexes and also 200-unit high-rise apartments. There are tons of legal loopholes that can work multifamily properties in your favor, such as making a unit in a multifamily building your primary residence. No matter your financial situation, you can surely invest in a multifamily investment property on some level.

#### 4. Commercial buildings

Similar to multifamily properties, most commercial real estate buildings offer units (or floors) for rent to companies for offices. Companies pay rent on a set basis. Because of how much bigger commercial spaces are compared to apartments, you can typically charge much more for rent.

A con of commercial spaces, however, is that they're less in demand than multifamily

rental units. This is especially true with remote work being more popular than ever. However, there will always be businesses that need in-person employees. Bigger commercial deals can result in a ton of capital gains if planned out accordingly.

#### 5. Student housing

Thanks to record attendance at colleges and universities around the country, student housing is in constant demand. Student housing investments are similar to multifamily investments in that they involve purchasing a property with multiple rental units. However, the benefits of catering specifically to students are massive. The benefits of investing in student housing include:

- Consistent students seeking to rent as classes graduate and new students take their place.
- Most students have their parents co-sign their lease, guaranteeing steady income.
- Organized lease cycles that start with students beginning their lease in the fall and end with them graduating in late spring.
- Students don't require luxurious spaces.

#### 6. Tiny homes

Tiny homes are a form of investment that doesn't require a lot of management. As the name suggests, tiny homes are small properties similar in size to mobile homes. They can be rented out as short-term rentals or for more long-term residents.

What's great about tiny homes is that, because of their small stature, they're very cheap to purchase and maintain. As a result, they're great for first-time investors.

#### 7. Mobile home park investing

Mobile home parks are a surprisingly simple investment. They involve purchasing or developing land that's zoned for mobile homes (or tiny homes). You earn on this investment by charging rent for each occupied lot.

Residents pay for the upkeep and maintenance costs of their own trailers, while all you have to worry about is maintaining the grounds themselves and the electric/sewage hookups for each mobile home.

see "INVESTING BASICS" on page 30



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## investing basics cont.

The low maintenance is a great deal for mobile home parks, which makes them an easier investment than most other property types.

### 8. Sale leaseback agreements

A sale leaseback real estate agreement is one in which a company sells its property to an investor before then entering a lease with that new property owner. In other words, the owner sells the property to an investor while continuing to occupy it. As a result, the seller becomes the lessee and the buyer becomes the lessor.

Benefits of entering into sale leaseback agreements include increasing working capital, maintaining property control, and creating long-term investment relationships. However, drawbacks include tax liabilities and a possible loss of benefits.

As with all real estate financial decisions, you should consult with a broker before entering into a sale leaseback agreement. ♦

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## staying on course cont.

my sins against you and against my own life, please forgive me. I believe Jesus was raised on the third day for my justification. Jesus, I receive you as my Lord and Savior. Your Holy blood cleanses my soul right now and BY YOUR STRIPES I RECEIVE COMPLETE HEALING OF MY BODY, And God gives me a new heart and eternal life. Now my name is written in the book of life, guaranteed by the following written law:

“That if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” *Romans 10:9-10*

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## detoxing cont.

- **Time spent in front of the screen:** Ironically, you can use the screen time tracking tools on your phone to find out how much time you spend on your screen each day.
- **Check out how technology makes you feel:** Which digital habits are good for you? Which ones lead to stress, guilt, burnout, or feelings of inadequacy?
- **Determine problems caused by the use of technology:** Insufficient sleep, weakened social relationships, procrastination, neglecting self-care, or physical health issues... These are important clues showing how digital habits affect your quality of life.
- **Priorities in life:** Are the things you value most compatible with the time you spend in front of a screen? For example, spending time outside with friends may be more valuable to you than spending time on your phone or in front of a screen. However, despite this, you may still spend more time in the digital world. Taking a step back and evaluating is an important step towards more conscious technology use.

After understanding your technology use pattern, the next step is to set goals because change begins with clear yet achievable goals. Completely disconnecting from technology is neither possible nor necessary for most of us. Therefore, choosing one behavior and focusing on changing that behavior might be more goal-oriented and achievable. For example, setting a concrete and achievable goal such as “I will not use my phone after 9:00 PM” makes the process easier. Here are the next steps for your plan:

- Writing down your goal can increase your motivation.
- You can consider the following suggestions:
  - You can turn off all screens at a specific time.
  - Leave your phone in another room while you work.
  - Reduce the time you spend on social media apps or delete some of them.
  - You can set a limit on your daily screen time.
- Note what benefits you expect from this change.
- Determine the detox period according to your needs: one week, two weeks, or a month. However, be patient, as it may take time for habits to change permanently.
- At the end of the detox period, it is very valuable to evaluate the process, even you accomplish your goal or not. You can ask yourself the following questions:
  - Which changes were good for me?
  - What were the difficult points?
  - Did I achieve a balance in my relationship with technology?
  - Did I see improvements in my sleep, mental health, and overall well-being?

### Take-away:

- Digital devices and social media apps don’t just reshape our daily routines, our inner worlds, and our relationships; they also reshape our brains by altering our reward systems and melatonin production.
- Digital detox may be worth considering if you experience negative well-being outcomes after using digital devices most of the time. Yet, please note that completely disconnecting from technology is neither possible nor necessary for most of us.
- Not every digital detox plan might align with your reality and your needs. Therefore you might need to better understand your habits and set realistic goals. ♦



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