

# Dealing With Digital Distraction

Don't make a ban — have a plan! Devices in your classroom can take learning in powerful new directions. But along with these tools comes digital distraction. Outright device bans are tempting but can create more conflicts than they're worth. Instead, advocate that students use digital tools and model productive 21st-century learning. Here you'll find tips and tools to help you dodge the distractions and harness the power of technology in learning.

## Tips for Managing Digital Distraction in Your Classroom



- **Give kids meaningful things to do on their devices.**
  - Capitalize on tools that promote higher-order thinking and learning.
  - Look for platforms that encourage digital creation, online collaboration, communication beyond the classroom, and new perspectives for critical thinking.
- **Set appropriate boundaries for in-class device use.**
  - Find the right middle ground for you and your students, and make these boundaries clear.
  - Consider the needs of your classroom as a whole, and differentiate boundaries for students with specific learning differences.
- **Build lessons that have a predictable flow of tech and nontech activities.**
  - Incorporate both screen-based and traditional activities in your daily lessons.
  - Consider taking “tech breaks” — a time when students can check their devices.
  - Or if you're using tech a lot, make sure to build in device-free activities.

## Suggested Tools



### Shadow Puppet Edu

Resource-rich video slide show creator is a gem for elementary school classrooms.

[www.commonsense.org/education/app/shadow-puppet-edu](http://www.commonsense.org/education/app/shadow-puppet-edu)



### VoiceThread

Easily collaborate and create with voice, video, or image.

[www.commonsense.org/education/website/voicethread](http://www.commonsense.org/education/website/voicethread)



### Explain Everything

Powerhouse tool for creating stellar multimedia presentations.

[www.commonsense.org/education/app/explain-everything](http://www.commonsense.org/education/app/explain-everything)