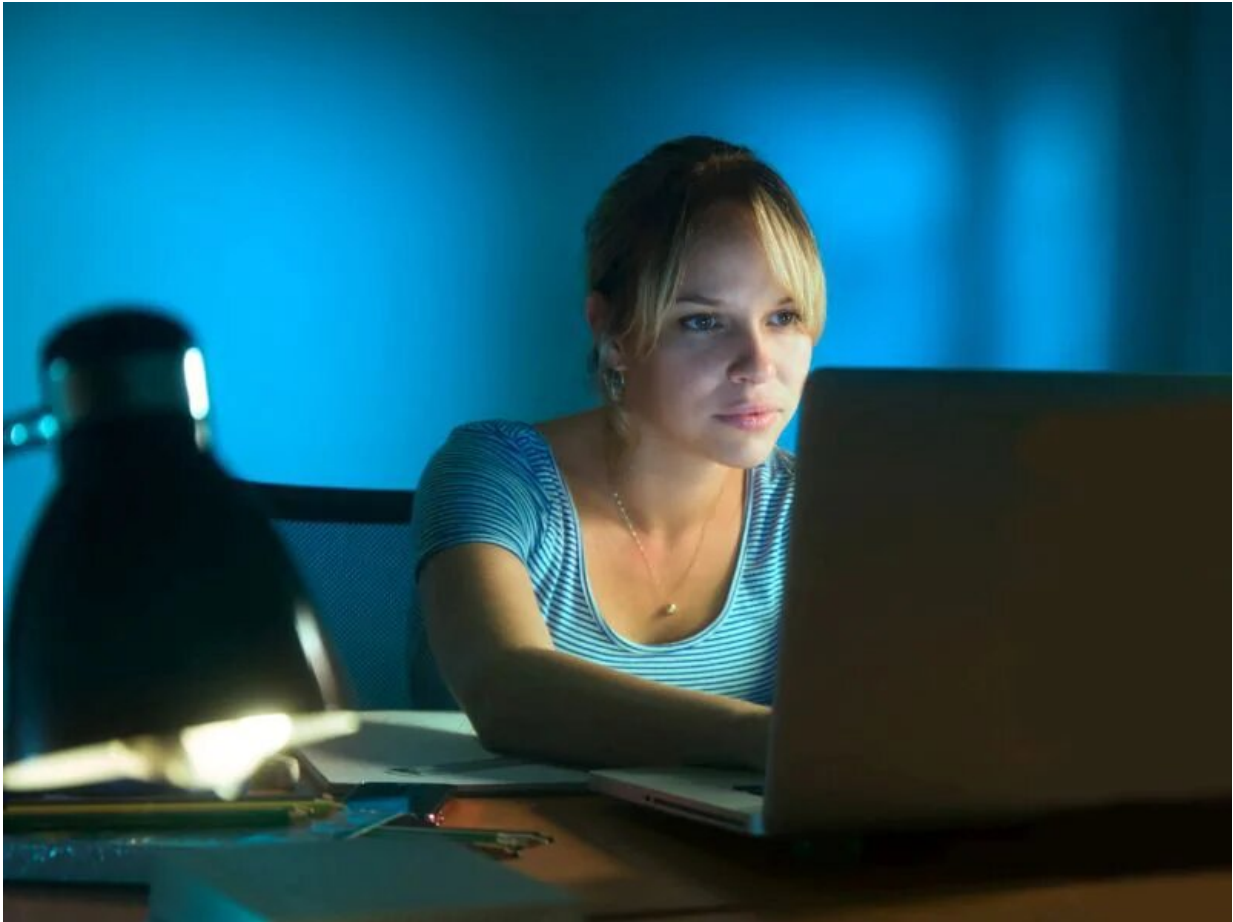


# How to avoid information overload

July 3 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter

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Being able to go online offers a wealth of knowledge, keeps you connected to loved ones and makes all sorts of transactions more convenient. But there's a downside.

In a nationwide survey by the Pew Research Center, more than three-quarters of respondents said they liked having access to a vast wealth of information, and two-thirds said it helped them simplify their lives. Those with many [electronic devices](#) felt that all the gadgets made it easier to manage a steady flow of information.

People commonly search for community news; information about [health care](#) or insurance; school or education; traffic or commuting; [personal finance](#); government services or benefits; work-related topics; and home repair.

But the survey also found that 20% experience what's known as information overload. Some are stressed by all the information they must keep track of, and some find it difficult to find information needed to deal with institutions like their bank, for instance.

Other research has looked at work-related [information overload](#), chiefly from emails, which can eat up your day and leave you overwhelmed and unable to focus. One study found that the more time spent on email, the less productive—and more stressed—people felt.

Regain control by limiting how often you check your inbox and then prioritize. Read only essential emails during the day. Put the less important ones in a folder for later, suggest experts at the Icahn School of Medicine in New York City.

Also, look for ways to clear your mind just as you do your inbox. Take a walk, "unplug" from devices during the day when you need to focus on a task, and limit time spent on social media.

**More information:** Read the entire Pew Research Center survey on [information overload](#) on its website.

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