

of social comparison that happens. When you look at other people's lives, particularly on Instagram, it's easy to conclude that everyone else's life is cooler or better than yours."

Because this particular work only looked at Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, it's not clear whether it applies broadly to other social-media platforms. Hunt also hesitates to say that these findings would replicate for other age groups or in different settings. Those are questions she still hopes to answer, including in an upcoming study about the use of dating apps by college students.

Despite those caveats, and although the study didn't determine the optimal time users should spend on these platforms or the best way to use them, Hunt says the findings do offer two related conclusions it couldn't hurt any social-media user to follow.

For one, reduce opportunities for [social comparison](#), she says. "When you're not busy getting sucked into clickbait [social media](#), you're actually spending more time on things that are more likely to make you feel better about your life." Secondly, she adds, because these tools are here to stay, it's incumbent on society to figure out how to use them in a way that limits damaging effects. "In general, I would say, put your phone down and be with the people in your life."

More information: Melissa G. Hunt et al, No More FOMO: Limiting Social Media Decreases Loneliness and Depression, *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* (2018). DOI: [10.1521/jscp.2018.37.10.751](https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2018.37.10.751)

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