

# Hide Your Phone When You're Trying to Work. Seriously.

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As I type this, my iPhone is tucked away inside my desk drawer under lock and key. It's been there all day, completely out of sight. I'm slightly anxious about the notifications I might be missing, but only slightly; it's a manageable level that's not distracting.

Yes, it's a little extreme to lock your phone in a drawer. But I've learned that it's the only way I can truly focus and be as productive as I want to be. And unfortunately, the same is true for you, even if you don't realize it — or want to believe it. (Airplane mode, sadly, won't help — more on that later.)

[A 2017 study](#) in The Journal of the Association of Consumer Research found that the mere presence of your phone — even if it's powered off, and even if you're actively and successfully ignoring it — “reduces available cognitive capacity,” which the study's authors call “brain drain.”

Worse still: The more you depend on your phone, the more your cognitive abilities suffer when it's around.

“If it's in the environment, it's almost like it's calling out to us,” said Adrian Ward, assistant professor in the marketing department at the University of Texas at Austin. “We're automatically drawn to it.”