

How Social Media Is Hurting Your Memory

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Each day, hundreds of millions of people document and share their experiences on social media, from packed parties to the most intimate family moments. Social platforms let us stay in touch with friends and forge new relationships like never before, but those increases in communication and social connection may come at a cost. In a [new paper published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*](#), researchers showed that those who documented and shared their experiences on social media formed less precise memories of those events.

In a series of three studies led by Diana Tamir of Princeton University, researchers explored how taking photos and videos for social media affects people's enjoyment, engagement and memory of those experiences. Participants watched engaging TED talks or went on self-guided tours of a church on Stanford University's campus. They were asked to record their experiences in several different ways: to take photographs or notes of the event, to record the event but not save it, to share the event on social media or to reflect internally. They were then asked how much they enjoyed the experience, how much they maintained focus or if their mind wandered, and then took a quiz to test their memory.

Tamir and her team found that sharing experiences on social media did not seem to affect how much people felt that they had enjoyed the experience or were engaged. However, those who wrote down, recorded or shared their experiences performed about 10% worse on memory tests across all experiments.