

Read the article and choose which sentence (A–G) fits each gap (1–6) in the text.
You do not need one of the sentences.



Think twice!

Should I skip breakfast and have ten more minutes in bed? Do I wear the new shirt that I've just bought or do I go for my old one? Decisions, decisions; they take up a lot of our thinking time.

It's easy to become overwhelmed by decisions and it's hardly surprising when you look at the statistics. While a child makes around 3,000 decisions a day, as you get older, you make an estimated 35,000. ¹ But apart from deciding what to eat, our heads get crammed with other choices about school, friends and home. At times, it seems like the easiest option is to let someone else make the decision for you whether you like it or not.

But I'm beginning to realise that you can learn how to make good decisions. There are ways to filter your decisions and focus on the important ones. Do you know that Mark Zuckerberg, who is the founder of Facebook, always wears a grey T-shirt? Why? Well, it means he can concentrate on important decisions and not spend ages deciding what to wear. ² Although it might be important to you to wear the right shirt, you could probably simplify your choices (and still look good) and decide what's really important.

There are times when we seem to have little control over the decisions we make. Picture this. ³ Having thought of a reply and typed it in to your phone, you have your finger poised on the send button. You touch the screen and it's gone. You've acted without thinking it through and for a split second it feels good. ⁴ You soon realise that you've been a bit harsh and caused more upset than you really wanted to ... for yourself and others. A person reacting emotionally often isn't in the best position to judge a situation well.

So, how can you avoid making bad decisions? Ideally, take time to 'sleep on it' and consider the consequences. Decisions made in a rush are often regretted later. Then try and work out why you made such a decision. Were you influenced by a friend whose advice was short-sighted or just wrong? ⁵ It's also good to ask yourself how you're feeling while you're making the decision. Being aware of a sense of relief or excitement can be a good sign that you're doing the right thing. If you don't feel anything then beware! ⁶ And my final tip; don't make a decision on an empty stomach or when you've got 'hanger'. Never heard of it? It's that angry feeling you get when you're hungry. After eating, you will be much more in control of your decision-making skills.

Despite all the advice out there, there will be times when you mess it up and make the wrong decision but that shouldn't stop you from being spontaneous and creative. The more decisions you make, the better you get at them, and fingers crossed you won't make the same mistake twice!

- A You've just had a text from a friend that has upset you.
- B If that was so, learn to value your own opinion more.
- C That's a great tip from someone who, faced with huge decisions every day, can't afford to waste time.
- D Perhaps that explains why children need to talk things over with someone else.
- E That could be a warning that you aren't making the correct decision.
- F More than two hundred of those involve decisions that are about food.
- G However, not long afterwards the doubt creeps in.

