6 Must-have Apps For A Stress-free Summer

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Between the heat, the busy weekends, and the school-free kids, summer can be more stressful than stress-free. Don't worry, like every problem these days, there's an app for that. For the sake of sanity, we've compiled a list of the best apps to keep your summer from feeling like a punishment.

1. For your email
Nothing kills a day at the beach like an unexpected, hostile Facebook message from your mom or depressing text from work about a failed project. Stress @ Work [1] is a new app that color-codes incoming texts, tweets, and messages based on their content. Messages that are positive like a tweet about having a good time on a vacation or wishing someone a happy weekend would be in green. Messages that would be considered "neutral" like news items or movie releases would appear in blue. Red is reserved for disappointing news (i.e. bad weather coming) or a tweet about taking a wrong turn. It's designed to eliminate the stress of being caught off-guard.
Price: Not yet available

2. For your kid
If you want to let your child play with your iPad, but in an educational way, check out the Reading Rainbow [2] app. Like the show you watched as a child, it's designed to encourage children to read but in a 21st century way. The app offers 150 interactive books, plus video footage, and a rewards program. Kids can travel to different themed "worlds" offering fiction and non-fiction reads.
Price: $9.99 for 1 month subscription; $29.99 for 6 months

3. For your attire
With the crazy weather we've been having—at least in the Northeast—it's raining one day and 105 degrees in the shade the next. Luckily, Cloth [3]—originally a fashion app—has joined with Wunderground for real-time weather updates that can tell you your best clothing option for the day—based on items from your own wardrobe. The downside is you have to snap a few photos of your outfits so the app can review your clothes before it offers an opinion.
Price: Free (plus a $0.99 cent upgrade for the weather feature)

4. For your finances
The last thing you want to be stressing about during your vacation is budgets and money. Mint.com [4] makes it easy to view checking, savings, credit cards, investments, and retirement funds on the go, plus it automatically organizes all your transactions. It will create a customized budget based on how much money you're actually spending and you can manually add cash expenditures as you go along so you have an idea of how much cash is going out. If you're visually inclined, the app can create graphs of money flow.
Price: Free

5. For your car
If you're hitting the open road for a trip, you'll want to check out Gas Buddy [5]. Since you'll be in unfamiliar territory, you might not know where to get the cheapest gas. Gas Buddy will round up information about prices for gas stations near you, so you can save a few pennies on gas to spend at the theme park. For every price you report, you earn points towards a giveaway.
Price: Free

6. For the unavoidable
Nobody wants to think about emergencies on vacation, but it's better to be safe than sorry. First Aid by American Red Cross [6] is a must-have for every smartphone. It offers step-by-step first aid instructions, integrated 9-1-1 calling capabilities, first aid videos, weather safety tips, quizzes on the information, and it's all preloaded so you don't need a wireless signal.
Price: Free

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