



Body scan

Think about your eyes and eyebrows, your forehead and the space between your eyes.

Allow this area to become smooth. Raise your eyebrows as you breathe in slowly and then let them come to rest as you slowly breathe out.

Eyes resting gently behind closed eyelids.

Let your lips and teeth part, let your tongue fall away from the roof of your mouth, be aware of the space in your mouth.

Let your shoulders drop down... bring your shoulder blades together behind your back and then let go.

Let your hands rest in your lap with your palms facing upwards, fingers gently curled. (If you are on a chair without arms, allow your arms to hang down loosely if you want to.)

Allow the chair to hold and fully support your weight.

Let your feet rest flat on the floor... Focus on where the soles of your feet touch the floor (you might feel that your feet are light or tingling when you do this).

Allow your breathing to be slow and calm. Blow out slowly for a count of 5... Repeat.

One Minute Relaxation (focused breathing)

Inhale slowly to the count of four (count slowly; to the pace of one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand...). Pause to the count of three.

Exhale slowly to the count of five.

The breathing process goes like this:

Inhale... two, three, four... pause... two, three... exhale... two, three, four, five...

Inhale... two, three, four... pause... two, three... exhale... two, three, four, five...

Repeat for a minute.

If your mind wanders off, gently bring it back to your breathing again.



Quick relaxation techniques

Quick stretch relax

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.

As you slowly breathe in stretch your arms out and up, spread your fingers, open your mouth and raise your eyebrows.

Now, as you gently and slowly breathe out, let everything go, hang forwards so that your arms are dangling. Allow all the tension to flow out of the ends of your fingertips.

Breathing awareness

Either lying or sitting, become aware of your breathing and focus on it for a minute. Let one hand rest on your upper chest and one hand rest on your belly (just below your rib cage).

Imagine a balloon in your stomach. Each time you breathe in, the balloon fills with air, as you breathe out - the balloon deflates. Feel your belly rising and falling slowly with each breath. Your upper chest should be still and calm.

Each time you notice your mind wandering, just gently bring your attention back to your breathing.

(Practice this calm breathing as often as you remember throughout the day. Also practice calm slow breathing when changing position or exercising. Breathe with pain - don't hold your breath and tense up. Movement will feel easier.)

Quick panic-fixer - This technique may help reduce feelings of panic in less than one minute.

Take a normal breath in and then - breathe out slowly while you count 5 seconds (think - one...and.... two...and ...three....and.... four ...and ...five).

As your breathing slows down, gently count 6 seconds as you slowly breathe out, then 7 seconds.
Or hum a tune / sing. Or suck a sweet - it's hard to over-breathe with your mouth shut.

(There's no need to take "deep breaths", breathing in will take of itself!!)

Quick imagery

If you close your eyes and think of the word "calm" - what do you see?

See your calm scene in your mind's eye.

As you slow down your breathing, with each out breath, think the word "calm" and imagine your calm place.

Distancing - another quick imagery method of helping you to feel calm when you are feeling anxious or if your mind is over-active.

If you like imagery, you may find these useful.

Gently close your eyes, focus on your slow breathing and then imagine the following:

- A leaf falling from a tree and then floating slowly downstream.
- Clouds moving across the sky.
- Helium filled balloons slowly rising - watch until they disappear from view.