



# In the Moment

## Mindfulness Practices for Students



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SMALL STEPS  
EVERY DAY



You've probably heard advice like "just take a deep breath" or "go for a walk" when you're stressed. Sometimes that helps — but other times, it's not that easy.

When you're feeling anxious, drained, or overwhelmed, whether it's from school, work, family, or relationships, it can be hard to know what will actually help in the moment.

That's where mindfulness comes in. Mindfulness isn't about sitting still for hours or clearing your mind completely. It's a simple way to reset, breathe, and check in with yourself. Whenever your thoughts are racing, your body feels tense, or you just need a break, try one of these ideas.

## Check In With Your Body



Ever catch yourself hunching over your notebook or desk, or clenching your jaw during class without even thinking about it? Stress isn't just in your mind — it shows up in your body, too. This quick body scan helps you notice where you're holding stress in your body, and let it go.

Try this exercise when you can't relax, your mind or body feels wired, anxious, or tense, or when you need a reset.

**Get comfortable.** Sit, stand, or lie down — whatever feels best. Try to limit distractions like your phone, and if you're comfortable, close your eyes.

**Start with your feet.** Are they warm or cool? Tense or relaxed? Wiggle your toes to tune in before moving on to other areas of your body.

**Move up your body.** Slowly shift your focus from your feet to your legs, stomach, chest, arms, shoulder, neck, and head. Notice any tightness, and try to relax that area.

**If your mind wanders, that's okay.** Just gently bring your attention back.



# Balanced Breathing



Your breath is one of the fastest ways to help your body feel calm and your mind feel clear. Whether you're feeling stressed, or just off, this simple breathing exercise can help you reset in a few minutes.

**Box breathing** helps you slow down, reset your focus, and lift your mood. You can do it anywhere, anytime.

To start, find a comfortable position. Sit, stand, or lie down — whatever works. Try to close your eyes if you feel okay doing so. Let your hands rest in your lap.

Picture a square in your mind. Imagine tracing its sides as you breathe.

**Step 1:** Slowly **exhale** through your mouth for 4 seconds, and focus on getting all the oxygen out of your lungs.

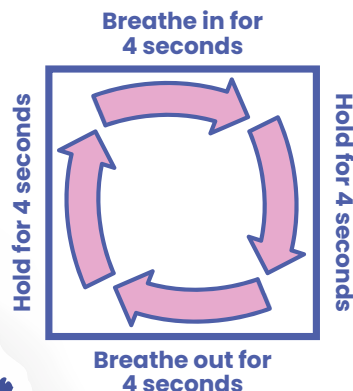
**Step 2:** **Inhale** through your nose and slowly take a deep breath for 4 seconds.

**Step 3:** **Hold** your breath, and count to 4 in your head.

**Step 4:** **Exhale** again, on a count of 4, getting all the breath out of your lungs and belly.

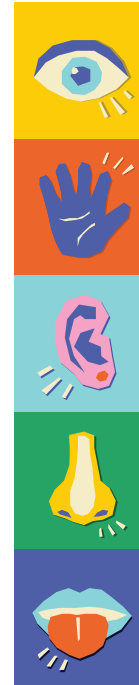
**Step 5:** **Hold** your breath again for a count of 4.

Repeat as often as you need. Go at your own pace, and stop whenever you feel ready.



# 5 Senses Reset

When your thoughts feel messy or overwhelming, this simple five-step exercise helps you focus on what's happening around you. It only takes a minute or two!



**Look for 5 things you can see.** Notice small details, light, or colors, you don't usually pay attention to.

**Notice 4 things you can feel.** It could be the chair beneath you, your clothes, or the breeze outside.

**Listen for 3 sounds.** Try to hear things you usually ignore, like the hum of a fan or rustling leaves.

**Notice 2 things you can smell.** It could be a familiar scent, fresh air, or food nearby.

**Identify 1 thing you can taste.** Take a sip of water, chew gum, or just notice the lack of taste.

Try as many steps as you can!





# Mindful Moves

Sitting in class or scrolling on your phone for a long time can make your body feel stiff. A little movement can make a big difference.

Mindful movement means paying attention to how your body feels while you move, no matter how small the movement is. It can help you shake off stress, reset, and feel more grounded. Here's how to start.

**Pick a movement that feels good.** Stretching, walking, dancing, or even shaking out your arms — all are great!

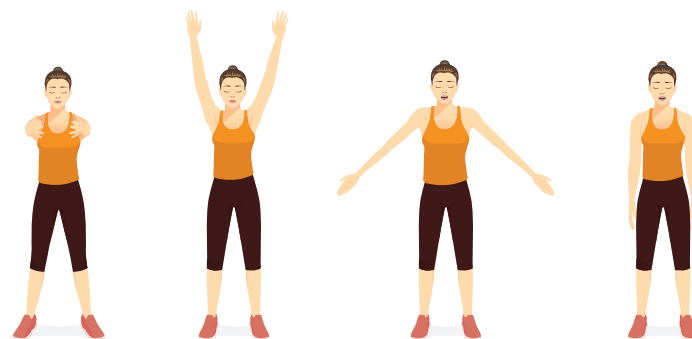
**Unplug and focus.** No need to multitask. Just notice how your body feels as you move.

**Use your breath.** If you're stretching, inhale as you move into the stretch and exhale as you hold it. If you're walking, match your breaths to your steps.

**Check in with yourself.** How does the air feel? How does your heartbeat sound? What sensations do you notice?

Quick moves to try:

**Mountain stretch:** Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Inhale as you reach your arms forward and up. Exhale as you bring them back down to your sides. Repeat 3 times.



Mountain stretch

**Tree pose:** Stand tall. If you want, bend one knee and place your foot lightly on the inside of your opposite leg. If balancing feels hard, keep both feet on the ground. Bring your hands together, take deep breaths, and focus on something still in front of you. Raise your arms overhead if you are able, and stretch from side to side.



Tree pose

progress is  
personal







## More resources

### More ways to practice:

You can also find tons of free guided meditations and mindfulness exercises on YouTube, Spotify, and TikTok. Just search for terms like “mindful movement,” “box breathing” or “four-square breathing,” and “5-4-3-2-1 technique.”

### Need someone to talk to?

If you’re struggling or just need support, you’re not alone. These free resources are available anytime:

The Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

**Call or text 988** anytime to connect with the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — free, confidential, and available 24/7.

Teen Line

**Call (800) 852-8336** (from 6 PM to 10 PM PT) or **text TEEN to 839863** (from 6 PM to 9 PM PT) for anonymous support for teenagers by phone, text or email by trained volunteers.

