

# Senses

The first grounding technique is called “5 Senses.”

All you need to do is scan each of your 5 senses and identify everything you observe for each one.

Take a moment and focus on each sense:

- **Sight** – What do you see?
- **Sound** – What do you hear?
- **Touch** – What do you feel?
- **Smell** – What do you smell?
- **Taste** – What do you taste?

This is a quick and simple mindfulness exercise that takes no more than 5 minutes (if you really engage with each sense).

There’s also a similar grounding technique known as the “**5-4-3-2-1**” **method**. It’s the same idea, just a different structure: identify 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you feel, 2 things you smell, and one thing you taste.

In general, I enjoy this technique because it’s a great way to step back and focus more on the little things that make up our experiences. It always seems to center me and remind me that I’m alive and safe.

## 10 Deep Breaths

One of the easiest ways to “ground” yourself into the present moment is to focus on your breathing. The [breath is an anchor](#) to the present moment. No matter where you go, it’s always with you. This makes it one of the most reliable focal points for relaxation and meditation.

**Taking a step back and taking 10 deep breaths into your belly can be a great way to slow yourself down and regroup yourself when you’re feeling stressed or overwhelmed.**

It’s such a simple thing, but it’s true.

## Mindful Stretching

Mindful stretching helps with relieving built up stress and tension in your muscles and joints – relaxing you on both a mental and physical level.

We often aren’t aware of how much stress and tension we are carrying in our bodies. A [progressive muscle relaxation](#) is one of the best ways to explore this and release this tension.

## Nature Bathing

Being around nature is a great way to “ground yourself” into the present moment.

The Japanese have a wonderful term *shinrin-yoku* which translates to “forest bathing” (or “nature bathing”). The basic idea is that just by being around nature, or taking a walk through a forest, we are “bathing” in the energy of nature and soaking up the atmosphere.

**When you feel stressed, step back and focus on nature, even if it’s just stepping outside and identifying 3 living things (tree, bird, squirrel...)**

You don’t need to go hiking or camping to experience the benefits of nature. Studies show that paying more attention to [everyday nature](#) that is right in front of you can also boost mental health and well-being.

## A Pet or Stuffed Animal

Spending time with a pet can be one of the best ways to ground yourself in the present moment and shift your attention away from whatever is troubling you.

In general, pets have a comforting and relaxing effect and give us a sense of connection and meaning in life. More research is continuing to come out about how [pets help with anxiety, loneliness, and depression](#).

I know having a dog has definitely boosted my mental health and well-being in the long-term, especially as someone who lives alone. And when I'm feeling a bit too stressed or overwhelmed about something, taking a step back and spending some time with her is one of the best ways to ground myself.

If a pet is too much of a responsibility, stuffed animals can also have a similar effect.

If you are very tactile person, having a cuddly stuffed animal (or cozy blanket to wrap yourself up in) can be a great way to create a [safety signal](#) when you need to calm yourself down.

## Feel-Good Smells

Smells can also be a great way to anchor pleasant and relaxing feelings.

One new [study](#) showed that aromatherapy can help reduce stress among nurses. The researchers found that participants felt significantly less stressed, anxious, fatigued and overwhelmed after wearing “aromatherapy patches” that were scented with a citrusy blend of essential oils: lemon, orange, mandarin, pink grapefruit, lemongrass, lime and peppermint.

There have also been [studies](#) demonstrating the relaxing effects of lavender.

**In general, choose smells that you enjoy and calm you down, especially if you already have a positive association with them (such as they remind you of a special person, time, or place in your life).**

I know a couple people who use scented lip balm or moisturizer whenever they are feeling stressed in a situation. The nice smells calm them down and make them feel a bit better.

## Sound Meditation

A [sound meditation](#) is one great way to explore sound more in-depth, but even a simple 30 seconds closing your eyes and making a mental note of all you hear can be a great way to “step back” and ground yourself in the present.

In truth, any sense – sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste – can become a type of grounding exercise all by itself. All you need to do is stop and focus.

<https://www.themotionmachine.com/7-grounding-exercises-a-powerful-tool-for-when-you-feel-overwhelmed/>