

Body Scan Meditation Guide

A body scan gently brings awareness to each part of the body in turn. It is one of the most well researched ways to release physical tension that builds up quietly, often without us noticing until it is pointed out. This extended version moves slowly through the whole body.

Before you begin

1

Find a comfortable position

Sitting or lying down both work. Support your head and neck if you can.

2

Lower the lights if possible

A dim, quiet space can help you settle more easily.

3

Silence your phone

Set aside anything that might interrupt the next few minutes.

4

Take three slower breaths to begin

There is no need to change anything yet, simply arrive.

The scan

1

Feet and toes

Notice any sensation here, warmth, coolness, tingling or nothing at all. All of these are fine.

2

Calves and shins

Let your attention rest here for a few breaths before moving on.

3

Knees and thighs

Notice whether there is any gripping or tension, and see if it can soften.

4

Hips and lower back

This is a common place to hold tension. There is no need to force it to release.

5

Stomach and chest

Notice the natural rhythm of your breathing without changing it.

6

Hands and arms

Notice your hands resting, and any sensation moving up through your arms.

7

Shoulders

Let them drop away from your ears if that feels possible right now.

8

Neck and throat

Notice whether this area feels tight, and simply observe it.

9

Jaw and face

Unclench your jaw slightly, and soften the muscles around your eyes.

10

Whole body

Take one slower breath and notice your body as a complete, connected whole.

Choosing your duration

A shorter version, moving briskly through each area, takes around five minutes. A slower, fuller version, resting longer on each area, can take fifteen minutes or more. Neither is more correct than the other.

What did you notice during this practice?**Which part of your body held the most tension today?**

Did anything shift, even slightly, by the end of the practice?
