



Grounding Exercises

Grounding exercises can be helpful to manage anxiety. When you are feeling restless, overwhelmed, worried and confused, try one or more of these.

- Remind yourself of who you are now. Say your name. Now say your age. Where you are right now? Say what you have done today. Say what you will do next.
“My name is _____, and I am 54 years old. I am in my living room, in my home, in Woolloongabba, in Brisbane, in Queensland. I woke up early today. I had a shower and fed my dog. I just finished my coffee and toast. Soon I am going to walk to the train station and go in to work. I am going to walk down _____ street and then turn left at the bike shop. Then I am going to....”
- Take ten slow breaths. Focus your attention fully on each breath, on the way in and on the way out. Say the number of the breath to yourself as you exhale.
- Splash some water on your face. Notice how it feels. Notice how the towel feels as you dry. Use words in your mind to describe the sensations.
- Sip a cool drink of water.
- Turn your attention to the clothes on your body, whether your arms and legs are covered or not, and the sensation of your clothes as you move in them. Notice how your feet feel to be encased in shoes or socks, or resting on the floor.
- Sit in a chair. Feel the chair under you and the weight of your body and legs pressing down onto it. Notice the pressure of the chair, or floor, or table against your body and limbs.
- Lie down. Feel the contact between your head, your body and your legs, as they touch the surface you are lying on. Starting from your head, notice how each part of your body feels, all the way down to your feet, on the soft or hard surface.
- Stop and listen. Notice and name what sounds you can hear nearby. Start with the closest or loudest sounds. Gradually move your awareness of sounds outward, so you are focusing on what you can hear in the distance.
- Hold a mug of tea, coffee or hot chocolate in both hands and feel its warmth. Inhale its scent. Don't rush drinking it; take small sips, and take your time tasting each mouthful.
- Look around you, notice what is front of you and to each side. Name and notice the qualities of large objects and then smaller ones.
- Pick one interesting object in your field of vision. Trace its outline with your eyes, as if you were drawing its lines.



- Get up and walk around. Take your time to notice each step as you take one, then another.
- Stomp your feet, and notice the sensation and sound as you connect with the ground.
- Clap and rub your hands together. Hear the noise and feel the sensation in your hands and arms.
- If you can, step outside, notice the temperature of the air and how it is different or similar to where you have just come from.
- Stretch.
- Notice five things you can see, five things you can hear, and five things you can feel, taste, or smell.
- If you have a pet, spend some time with them. Notice what is special and different about them.
- Run your hands over something with an interesting texture. Describe it in your mind, as if you have never felt anything like it before.
- Get a sultana, a nut, or some seeds. Focus on how it looks, feels and smells. Put it in your mouth and roll it around, noticing how it feels. Chew it slowly and mindfully, before noticing how it feels to swallow.
- Put on a piece of instrumental music. Give it all of your attention.
- Another option with music is to sit with a piece of paper and a pen. Start drawing a line as the music plays, representing it in the abstract on the page. Follow the music with the pen.
- If you have a garden or some plants, tend to them for a bit. Plants, and actual soil, can be an excellent “grounder!”

Sources: <https://www.livingwell.org.au/well-being/mental-health/grounding-exercises/>