

How To Practice Mindfulness In 5 Simple Steps (With A Free Audio)

Mindfulness is a very simple yet profound form of meditation. It invites us to be fully present in the moment and embody a kind of equanimity towards what is unfolding, both inside ourselves and out. It's been shown to reduce stress and improve the quality of your life. If you are wondering how to practice mindfulness, it's not really complicated. The following guidelines ([and this free audio](#)) can get you started.

1. Setting Up Right

First, find a place in your home where you can be undisturbed for a while. Preferably some place reasonably quiet. You may want to use a timer, so that you can set aside a certain amount of time for your practice. Ten to fifteen minutes is sufficient to begin with.

Take a seat either on a chair, on a cushion on the floor or a meditation stool. You don't have to sit cross-legged on the floor like the images you may have seen in magazines but you can if it's comfortable for you.

Establish a posture with an upright spine and the crown of the head extending towards the ceiling. You want to avoid slumping, but you don't want unnecessary tension either. Find a way of sitting that feels alert and yet steady but not tense. Place your hands on the knees, palms facing downward. Or in another position of your choosing that is comfortable.

If the constraints of your body prevent you from sitting in this way, then simply find a position you can stay in for this time. When you've found your posture, lightly close your eyes.

2. Focus on the Breath

Mindfulness can be established in various ways, but a typical (and very powerful) method is breath awareness. To practice this way now, take the focus of your attention to the sensations of the breath moving in your body.

There is no need to change or control the breath in any way. The body has been breathing for you since the day you were born so continue to let it breathe as you simply *feel into* the sensations of breath in your body. Noticing how these sensations constantly change and move. Staying with the awareness of these sensations in your body as they unfold in the present moment.

3. Keep Coming Back to the Breath

After focusing on your breath for a time you will likely find that the mind has a mind of its own! It may frequently wander off on thinking about various concerns, worries, anticipation and random thoughts. This is a normal part of the practice (you haven't failed).

As soon as you notice that the mind has wandered, simply bring your attention back to feeling your breath. Aim to do this 'bringing back' with a kindly warm attitude.

Don't judge yourself if you find that you forget about your breathing. This is natural. Return your awareness to the breath, as many times as you have to.

4. Allow The Practice To Unfold

As you practice mindfulness, try to drop any expectations about how you think it *should* be and simply allow your experience to be as you find it. For example, many people have the idea that they should in a state of relaxation or bliss when they practice mindfulness. Others think that their minds should go completely quiet. This is not the case. Mindfulness is simply about being fully present with what is arising, moment by moment, breath by breath, without wanting it to be different.

You may find different thoughts and feelings come up at various times. There is no need to try to suppress, fight or push away anything. Simply notice what is arising and (with that kindly non-judging attitude) come back to the breath.

Having a sense of letting the present moment be as it is, letting yourself be as you are, as you continue to follow the sensations of your breathing.

5. Taking It With You

If you are using a timer or app, this will alert you when your session is over. Otherwise, you can simply open your eyes when the time seems right. Take a moment to notice how you're feeling and any potential effects of your practice before you stretch and move and go about your daily activities again.

As you make the transition back into daily life, see if you can have a sense of taking mindfulness with you. The same awareness you cultivated while following the breath can be with you while you do the dishes, cook, travel to work and wait in line at the grocery store.

It's certainly natural, in this busy modern world that we live in, to lose track of your awareness throughout the day. However, in any moment you can always take a few mindful breaths to bring you back to yourself and the miracle of life unfolding in the present moment.

If you practice mindfulness on a regular basis, you will find it easier and easier to remain aware and awake no matter what you are doing.

If you'd like some guidance as you practice, go ahead and use [this free audio](#)

This five step process can help you to begin your mindfulness practice. If you'd like to enjoy the benefits of a regular practice here is a guide to [setting your home meditation practice](#).