

One-Minute Mindfulness Exercises

1. Take 2 “mindful” bites of your food

Instead of trying to eat everything mindfully, try to mindfully enjoy the first two bites of whatever you are eating (or first sips of something you drink).

2. Notice what one breathing cycle feels like

Notice how it feels to breathe: fill your lungs with oxygen, pause before exhaling, and gradually release your out-breath with mindful awareness.

3. Give your brain a one-minute break

You can do this by focusing in on your environment mindfully. Perhaps you can look out the window and notice the colors, shapes, movements, and sounds around you. Or, pick a cloud, tree, or animal to observe with curiosity and awareness.

4. Notice how the air, or wind, feels on your skin

Just notice the sensations of air against your skin. Perhaps on your face or arms, focus on the pressures and temperatures, and other sensations.

5. Try mindfulness of music

Focus completely on music. Perhaps listen to a song you don't know yet, or a song you know well and wish to experience in a new way. Avoid judging the sounds as good or bad.

6. Play the “3 things” game

Try and notice 3 things that would normally go unnoticed. Engage whichever of your 5 senses can experience it.

7. Scan your body from head to toe (or toe to head!)

Mentally check in with your body, relaxing any tense muscles you find as you scan.

8. Do a daily activity mindfully

Find one brief daily routine, perhaps washing your hands in warm water, combing your hair, or pouring cereal. Mindfully notice colors, shapes, textures, scents, and sensations.

Bonus Activities: Try a longer activity to do mindfully, such as showering (or stretching, shaving, walking) and practice bringing your awareness back, over and over, each time your mind wanders from what you are doing in this moment.

“The next time you’re in the shower, see if you’re in the shower.”

– Jon Kabat-Zinn (2005 Lecture)

Created by David Emmert, Psy.D. Adapted from Alice Boyles,
Ph.D, Psychology Today, 2013 and Pocketmindfulness.com 2013