

## 40 Mindfulness Exercises Everyone Needs To Know

In this guide, I will share the best beginners mindfulness exercises for adults, kids and groups.

As a meditation teacher, I know it can be a challenge to [get started with](#) mindfulness.

That is why I created this list of the best beginners mindfulness activities for kids, adults and groups. They are simple ways to focus your mind, to relax, and to start to be mindful. For adults, they include meditative exercises and communication techniques; and for kids they include mindfulness toys and games.

One of the best things about mindfulness exercises is that there are a million ways to do them. And they also tend to be easy. Indeed, compared to traditional meditation, the main benefits of mindfulness exercises is that they are quick, easy, and require zero previous experience.

As Richard J. Davidson, PhD [a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin] told The New York Times:

“In the Buddhist tradition, the word ‘mindfulness is equivalent to a word like ‘sports’ in the U.S. It’s a family of activity, not a single thing.”

There is no one *mindfulness exercise*. There are many. You can be mindful just by focusing on your breath. You can go for a Zen walk or do some mindful writing. There are thousands of ways to get started.

Perhaps the best place to start, however, is with some of the traditional mindfulness activities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EI3RLlgJ2U>

### **Traditional types of mindfulness exercises for beginners**

**Mindful breathing:** Mindful breathing simply means focusing on the movement of the breath around the body.

**Tai chi and QiGong:** Tai Chi and Qigong are Eastern physical exercises that use slow and conscious movements. These are great for slowing the mind.

**Body Scan:** Body scan is a traditional type of meditation. In this exercise we slowly move our consciousness around the body while relaxing our muscles. This is very similar to *progressive muscle relaxation* and is one of the best mindfulness exercises for anxiety and stress. [1].

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction:** Jon Kabat Zinn founded the practice known as Mindfulness-Based *Stress Reduction* in the 1970s [2]. It's a complete system of mindfulness exercises for stress relief.

**Mindful eating:** Mindful eating is all about eating slowly and consciously. This exercise is excellent for anyone who comfort eats or eats mindlessly. You can learn more in my tutorial on [mindful eating](#).

## Beginners Mindfulness Activities For Adults

Along with the traditional mindfulness exercises above, we can also practise basic mindfulness activities. Adults might like to try the following:

- Various ways of practising mindfulness at work
- Doing the dishes
- Walking
- Running (walking and running are my two favourite physical mindfulness exercises).
- Exercising
- Speaking mindfully
- While doing yoga
- Mindful showering
- Listening to music
- Mindful stretching
- Consciously brushing your teeth
- Focusing on the sensations of washing
- Cleaning a room mindfully
- Try my personal favourite mindfulness exercise: [mindful writing](#)

## 31 Beginners Mindfulness Exercises For Adults [Kids Activities Are Below]

### 1: Mindful Thinking

One of the best places to start is with some mindful thinking.

Mindful thinking revolves around the idea of being conscious of our thoughts and correcting them, so they are more rational, more compassionate, and less harmful.

Mindful thoughts should be compassionate, non-judgmental, rational, unbiased, balanced (balancing positive and negative, so we are not biased in either direction) and accepting.

Now and again, take five minutes to listen to your thoughts. Challenge any negative or biased thought. This will boost your mental health and improve your happiness.

### 2: Daily Mindfulness Activities That Adults Do Anyway

One of the best mindfulness activities for adults is simply to do whatever you are doing and focus 100% on the task. In other words: Just do what you're doing.

Walking? Walk.

Breathing? Breathe.

Speaking? Speak

Whatever you do, do it mindfully. A moment lived mindlessly is a moment lost forever.

"The universe created this moment for you. Embrace it. Be grateful for it. Live and love the moments. "

### **3: For gratitude**

The best mindfulness activity for gratitude is to focus on the moment, be aware of the blessings of the present moment, and express gratitude for now.

Recognise that this moment right now is infinite. This moment stretches across space and time. This moment connects us all. We might be in different countries. We might be different people. But we're all *now*.

This moment is what holds you and me and the whole world together. And that's pretty awesome when you think about it.

Show appreciation for the individual moments of your life.

#### **Mindful gratitude script**

1. Close your eyes
2. Listen to the world around you
3. Say (or think): "Thank you for this moment."

This can also be a great mindfulness exercise for families. Simply sit in a circle and take it in turns to state one thing you are grateful for about each person in the group.

### **4: Perceive beauty in everything**

There is beauty in everything. Every person. Every flower. Every teardrop. Every smile. Beauty permeates the very fabric of existence. But you have to be mindful to recognise that beauty.

The science of Positive Psychology has proven that people who can see and appreciate beauty are happier and healthier than others.

Be mindful of the following examples of natural beauty:

For instance:

- flowers
- smiles
- blue skies
- the ocean/water
- the way sunlight dances through green leaves
- What natural beauty is there around you right now?

## **5: Smiling as a mindfulness exercise**

There are so many benefits of smiling.

Smiling:

- Is contagious
- Makes the world a more positive place
- Strengthens the immune system [4]
- Improves your social life
- Releases endorphins [6]
- Is contagious, so you make other people happy too.

You can turn smiling into a simple mindfulness meditation exercise. Simply smile and focus on the positive energy you feel around your mouth and face. This will make you happier.

## **6: Reminders**

It is important to set reminders to be mindful. The very word itself comes from Pali and means "To remember".

Set an alarm to go off every hour. If you have an Alexa / Google Home or similar device you can set the voice to give your reminders to be mindful

Or you could use a more traditional alarm, like a Tibetan Singing Bowl or bird call. When the alarm goes off, take sixty seconds—just sixty seconds—to be mindful. That's all it takes, sixty seconds.

When you have a few reminders, it is a lot easier to remember, and it will help you develop the mindful habit.

## **7: 5 senses mindfulness exercises for anxiety**

We come to life when we live through the senses.

- Scent
- Sight

- Hearing
- Touch
- Taste

Your senses are always working. You're always seeing things, hearing things, smelling things... be aware of those senses.. My favourite way of doing this is with the "5 Senses Mindfulness Exercise".

### **Try this five sense mindful awareness exercise**

Simply read the following five senses script in your head, filling in the blanks:

"I am feeling..."

"I am seeing..."

"I am hearing..."

"I am smelling..."

"I am hearing..."

"I am mindful."

This is one of my favourite outdoor mindfulness activities for adults. I like to go for a walk somewhere peaceful, like in a forest, and perform the exercise above. It's wonderfully relaxing.

## **8: Breathing Mindfulness Exercises**

One of the critical tools we have is our breath. Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh said, "Feelings come and go like clouds in a stormy sky. Mindful breathing is my anchor."

In other words, when we are in the chaos of life, we can return to our breath to restore mindfulness.

When you feel stressed or anxious, take a few deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Meditate on the movement of your breath.

## **9: "Right Speech" [For Groups]**

One of the best Buddhist mindfulness activities for groups is *right speech*—the idea that all speech should be kind, compassionate, and loving.

Enlightened people have mastered the art of right speech. We always speak consciously and with love and kindness.

For newcomers, it can be a challenge.

Try using speech as a mindfulness activity for groups of adults. Find a group of friends and tell each person that they are going to speak mindfully. One person starts talking. The others listen mindfully. When someone says something mindless or "ignorant" the other people in the group ask them to rephrase it in a mindful way (a compassionate, enlightened, rational and non-judgmental way). This is one of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for groups and couples.

## **10: Practice the "Middle Way."**

Did you know Buddhists are more satisfied in life than the average person?

One reason is because of the Buddhist habit of *majjhima patipada*, which is the "middle way". You can use this basic premise as an easy adults mindfulness activity.

The middle way is about moderation. It is about *not indulging* and *not starving yourself*. In other words, living in moderation.

Whenever you are making a decision such as what to eat or what to do in the evening, ask yourself how you can do something that is satisfying but also healthy, fun but also practical. Look for the middle path.

## **11: Eating Mindfulness Exercises**

One of the best mindfulness activities for adults is mindful eating. Here's to do it.

1. The next time you eat something, choose the food mindfully.
2. Eat mindfully and slowly.
3. Pay attention to what you're eating.
4. Be aware of what it is, where it comes from, what it tastes like... everything.

This is one of the best mindful activities for beginners because not only does it help you to be conscious, it also changes the way you feel about that most important thing: food.

## **12: Mindfulness activities at work**

One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises at work is to do a little bit of yoga in your office chair.

The majority of people live too sedentary lifestyles. Scientific research shows that a sedentary lifestyle contributes to premature death.

To counteract this, do some simple yoga poses and stretches in your office chair, while mindfully meditating on the movement of your body.

### **13: Practice the yoga habit of pratyahara**

Pratyahara is a yoga practice for the mind. In pratyahara yoga, we *reduce negative influences* (such as negative people) and increase positive influences.

We can turn this into a mindfulness activity (for adults). To do so, be mindful of the effect different people, objects, and sources of information (like TV, Facebook etc.).

When you come across negative influences, find ways to reduce them—such as turning off the TV or ending an abusive relationship.

### **14: The easiest mindfulness exercises**

One of the most straightforward mindfulness meditation exercises is just to do whatever you are doing, but slowly and more consciously.

Take the time to slow down each day. One way to make this a habit is to choose specific times when you will slow down (such as at lunch break).

To slow down, you can:

- meditate (try meditative writing)
- listen to relaxing music for meditation (Youtube has tons).
- go for a walk
- do yoga or tai chi
- turn off your devices

### **15: Connect with your body**

This is another simple mindfulness activity for anxiety. It comes from yoga. Take moments to be consciously aware of your body language and your posture. Hold your body with intent, like you would when practising yoga poses.

Why is this one of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for anxiety?

Anxiety can be caused by negative body language, and by correcting your body language, you can reduce anxiety. When we are anxious, we hunch over and slouch. Conversely, when we are confident, we stand tall. Take moments to correct your body language consciously and mindfully observe how you feel when you stand properly.

### **16: Laughter**

There is a kind of alternative yoga called *Laughter Yoga* that can make a fun mindfulness activity for groups.

Get into a group and deliberately start laughing. Now consciously observe the energy of laughing. It is a fun, playful energy. Also listen to other people in the group laughing. This will make you feel happy and playful.

## **17: Showering**

Close your eyes while showering and focus on the sensation of water falling on your body.

Here is how to take a mindful shower.

1. Get the shower to the right temperature
2. Strip
3. Get in the shower.
4. Close your eyes.
5. Be conscious of the sounds, feelings, and scents in the shower.
6. Mindfully wash your body.
7. Express gratitude for the water.

## **18: Naturally, the best mindfulness meditation exercise is meditation itself**

Obviously, the very best mindfulness meditation exercise is meditation. The key to using meditation as a mindfulness exercise is to make it a habit.

I recommend setting an alarm that reminds you to meditate every day.

Start with just consciously breathing. Close your eyes focus on the movement of your breath around your body. Take 108 breaths. Then express gratitude for your meditation.

## **19: Water mindfulness exercise**

Water is one of the most divine things in the world. It's pure, and it's perhaps the number one representation of the power of nature. The next time you're around water, just take a moment to meditate on it. Focus on the flow of the water. Feel the energy and notice how free water is. Ask that sense of freedom to enter your own life.

Rain too. Rain is the healing of the land, the purifying of the world. Rain connects the sky to the earth. It's symbolic of the perpetual cycle of life. Whenever there's rain, be conscious of it. Stand out in the rain and feel the cold droplets cleansing your spirit. This is a wonderfully relaxing rain meditation technique that even absolute beginners can do easily.

One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for relaxation is to simply focus on the sound of water anytime you hear it.

## **20: Zen Walking**



One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises from Buddhism is “Zen Walking”. Take yourself for a walk somewhere relaxing and follow this script:

### **Zen Walking Script:**

Take yourself somewhere relaxing where there is a clear path to walk

Close your eyes and take ten conscious breaths

Begin to walk slowly. Meditate on the sensation of movement in your body.

Be mindful of the energy of movement.

Every 27 breaths, take 10 breaths in which you meditate on the sights and sounds of the scenery around you

Express gratitude for the meditation.

### **22: Read inspiring books / quotes**

Books are beautiful. When you read a book, you experience many of the same states as you do when you meditate. Your mind slows down. You relax. The noise dissipates. Your heart rate lowers.

### **23: Intention**

One of the best mindfulness exercises for adults is *conscious* intent.

It can be easy to turn your day into a blur. You start with ideas of what you want or need to do, and you set about doing them. But the plan doesn't quite work out, so you end up doing two things at once, then three things... and you're not really focusing on any of them. Tell yourself the one thing you're going to do. Do that one thing. Complete it. Then move on.

This is a habit of mindful *intent*. We are choosing to do one thing, and then focusing on that one thing absolutely

### **24: Scents**

The sense of smell is immensely powerful. When we smell things, we bring memories to mind. Therefore, we can use the sense of smell to get in touch with our memories.

#### **Try this scent-based mindfulness meditation exercise**

1. Take yourself somewhere you will be surrounded by pleasant fragrances
2. Mindfully observe one specific scent.
3. Focus on the smell. Meditate on it.

4. Scents bring up thoughts and emotions. Be mindful of these.
5. If a specific memory arises, meditate on it. Ask what it means in the here and now.

## **25: Get in touch with your intuition**

Intuition is very powerful. Science suggests that people are at their wisest when they listen to that little voice inside. Let your inner voice speak to you and listen.



## **27: One Minute Breathing Mindfulness Exercise**

Mindful breathing is the best mindful exercises for anxiety because when we breathe properly, we relax. It's also one of my personal favourite mindfulness exercises to increase focus. It's really quick. You can just take a one minute break at work at focus on your breathing. It gives you a quick boost of concentration.

### **Mindful Breathing Exercise Script**

This exercise is highly versatile. You can do it just about anywhere, whether you're lying in bed or out for a walk. And it only takes sixty seconds.

Simply breathe in through your nose, hold for a count of five, and then breathe out slowly. As you breathe, focus on letting your breath flow naturally and easily.

At times your mind will lose its anchor, and you'll find yourself flooded with thoughts. Simply observe those thoughts. Let them be. Let them go. Watch your breath with your senses. Observe as your breath becomes one with the wider universe.

If you thought you would never be able to meditate, guess what? You're now meditating, and it only took one minute.

## **28: Nature mindfulness activity**

Simply spending 20 minutes mindfully observing nature will make you happier and healthier.

This is a very easy mindfulness meditation exercise, but it's also highly potent and it's one of my personal favourites, too, because it connects us to the beauty of nature.

### **Script**

To do this exercise, start by picking an object of natural beauty; a waterfall, for instance, or a flower.

Once you've chosen a subject to meditate on, begin to observe the object through your senses. You can do this in just a couple of minutes, that's all you need.

I personally love rainbows. Whenever there's a rainbow out, I'll spend five minutes just consciously observing it.

Allow yourself to really appreciate and enjoy the beauty of the thing you're meditating on. Let your spirit connect with the object. You will find this immensely relaxing

## **29: Make the entire day one big mindfulness meditation exercise**

Use this exercise to be mindful all day. This technique uses what I call "Anchors". These are basically reminders to be mindful.

It's easier than it sounds. If you'd like to do this exercise, simply pick a few things that you do every day—for instance, turning the door handle, having a shower, opening the curtains...

When you open the curtains (for example) allow yourself to be completely conscious. Take that moment, those few seconds, to be completely mindful—the same with turning the door handle or having a shower.

Every day you perform these simple tasks, so use them as reminders. Through a process of repetition, you will train your brain to be conscious at those moments naturally. The process will soon become automatic. Then, you'll have mindful moments without even having to try.

I love this one because it allows you to take mundane everyday activities—like turning a door handle—and turn them into your own little moments of consciousness.

## **29: Mindful Listening Exercise**

Practising this mindful listening exercise will make you more aware and more focused on the present moment.

Everyone loves a good listener, right? But even better than a good listener is a mindful listener.

This mindful listening exercise is all about listening to people in a non-judgmental fashion. Not only is this excellent for the person you're listening to, but it's fantastic for you too. It is the best mindfulness activity for groups because it improves communication in relationships.

Most of us are highly influenced by the things we hear. It can be quite easy to become irritated when someone says something thoughtless, for instance. But when you practice this method, you stop being affected by words.

### **Script**

When you're listening to someone speaking, just focus on the sound. Don't judge, just listen. Tune in to the sound of their voice and observe it consciously. If what they say causes you to think or feel things, consciously observe those thoughts and feelings and remind yourself that they are *only* thoughts and feelings.

You can also do this listening exercise with music. If you play an instrument, you likely do this already. I've played the piano for thirty years. When I play, I sink into the music. I let it take me. I flow with the sound of the piano.

And if you're not a musician, hey, no sweat, just put a piece of relaxing music on and listen to it mindfully. You'll find this supremely tranquil.

If you'd like to learn more about mindful speaking and listening, I highly recommend *The Art of Communicating* by Thich Nhat Hanh.

### **30: Doing anything at all**

Many of us are starved for time. I know there are often days when I'd do anything for five minutes just to chill in. It can be hard to practice even the most simple mindfulness meditation exercises on days like those. What do you do?

The trick is to take an activity that you'd do anyway. For instance, you have to do the dishes. Why not do the dishes mindfully? Or how about eating. You have to have dinner, why not eat mindfully?

Three awesome things happen when you do chores mindfully: 1) You get a good spot of mindfulness, 2) You complete the task you have to do anyway, and 3) You do that task quicker and better than normal because you're focusing on it.

So, do the thing you need to do, just turn it into a mindfulness activity.

You remember the scene from *The Karate Kid* when Mr Miyagi is teaching Daniel to clean his car, and he says "Wax on, wax off". He's teaching Daniel to clean his car in a mindful way. The trick is to be one with the movements, one with the "wax on" and one with the "wax off". Be mindful.

By performing your regular activities more consciously, you'll get the task done better and quicker, and you'll get some free mindfulness. It's a win/win situation.

### **31: Describe things to yourself**

One of the most simple mindfulness activities for beginners is just to describe things to yourself.

Try mindfully describing the beauty you see. The beautiful sky, for instance. What do you see when you mindfully observe a beautiful sky like?

Talking to yourself is usually considered a sign of insanity. This method flips that notion on its head. It is one of the most simple mindfulness meditation exercises for beginners.

The trick here is to observe the things you're experiencing through your senses.

If you're out for a walk, describe the sky—the colours, the shapes, the feelings it creates in you—describe the scenery, describe the motion of walking, and so on.

This simple technique trains your mind to be aware of your senses. It improves the communication between your conscious mind and your unconscious mind. And all you need do is describe a few things around you.

### **32: Do some mindfulness activities with family pets (horses dogs, cats...)**

Have you ever wanted to do some mindfulness activities with family pets? Simple.

Grab a cat/dog/horse/octopus (hey, whatever works) and snuggle it. Close your eyes. Feel that sense of love and warmth. Be consciously aware of that. This will put some love in your soul.

## **Best Mindfulness Activities For Kids**

In this section, I am going to share with you my favourite mindfulness activities for kids of all ages.

There are so many reasons to start teaching kids to meditate. By practising some mindfulness exercises, kids can focus their minds, improve their health, and feel good about themselves.

There are so many benefits of mindfulness meditation exercises for children. And there are other techniques you might like to try too, such as teaching them some mantras for kids.

### **Some of the benefits of mindfulness activities for kids:**

- improves focus
- makes them smarter
- increases compassion
- boosts positive emotions and feelings, such as happiness, confidence, and inner peace
- reduces negative emotions and feelings like anxiety, depression, and stress
- There is mounting evidence (4) that meditation helps kids with ADHD. A 2004 study showed that kids who practised meditation with their parents in a clinical setting twice a week and then continued to practice at home had improved attention span and focus. In another study, teens and their parents completed a mindfulness program and reported fewer stress levels and fewer ADHD symptoms, such as impulsiveness and emotional reactivity.
- Removes negative thoughts along with worries.
  
- Helps teens overcome the stress associated with peer pressure.
- It boosts present-moment awareness.
- Improves cognitive performance
- Improves overall wellbeing
- Reduces bad behaviour
- Improves sleep
- Helps kids to feel good about themselves
  
- Increases calmness

- Helps with self-regulation
- Heightens awareness
- Improves connection with nature
- Increases motivation
- Boosts confidence
- Improves optimism
- Helps with social skills
- Reduces symptoms of depression
- Improves academic performance
- Increases attention
- Increases personal goals
- Reduces anxiety
- Improves sleep quality
- Makes kids feel closer to their friends
- Reduces loneliness
- Helps regulate blood pressure

## **1: 10-minute mindfulness meditation exercise for kids 10+**

This is an **easy mindfulness exercise for children**, and it's one of the best ways to start teaching kids to meditate.

### **Mindful Breathing For Kids Script**

1. Ask your child to close their eyes and focus on their breathing.
2. Keep an eye on the wall. When two minutes have passed, proceed to the next step.
3. Ask them to focus on what they are hearing. It may help if you ask them to describe, in detail, the sounds they are hearing. This makes them tune in to the sounds around them, which will cause them to focus on the present moment, which decreases rumination and help with any negative thoughts.
4. Ask them to pay attention to the sensation of touch. Have them describe what they can feel (for instance, wind on the face, soft grass at their feet etc.).
5. Ask them to focus on scents. How does the air smell? Are there any other scents they are aware of? Etc.
6. Now move to taste and repeat.
7. Finally, ask them to open their eyes and simply *look* around. You may ask them to focus on light, on shades and on other visuals to make them more aware of sight.

### **Benefits of this mindful breathing for kids and teens**

This mindful meditation exercise makes kids more aware of the present moment and helps them to focus on one thing at a time (in the exercise, they focus on the senses one at a time).



In this age of constant stimulation, many children (and adults) struggle to focus. This technique boosts focus and concentration by asking your kids to just zone in on one thing at a time.

## **2: Mindful Breathing For Kids 5 +**

Here is another great mindful breathing exercise for kids 5+

### **Script**

1. Ask your child to sit comfortably with good posture and to close their eyes.
2. Bring their attention to the sensation of their breath coming and going through the space between their mouth and nose.
3. Ask them to place both their hands on their stomach and to feel their breath rising and falling from there.
4. You may also ask them to repeat a simple word as they breathe in and out, saying "In" on in-breaths and "Out" when exhaling.
5. Work in cycles of five breaths. Have them count five breaths and then ask them to be aware of any thoughts or feelings in their mind.
6. If they are experiencing thoughts or feelings, ask them to let go and to return their attention to their breath.

### **Benefits of this mindfulness activity for kids**

This is a simple mindfulness exercise for kids over 5. It is great for relaxation, and it also improves focus and concentration.

## **3: Listening activity for students 8+**

Many kids struggle with listening skills. If your kids struggle to listen, try the following script, which is a mindful listening exercise for kids 8+

### **Script**

1. Ask students to focus on their breathing for a few minutes.
2. Explain to your students that they are going to hear a sound and that they should focus on the sound as it gets quieter and quieter.
3. Ask them to nod their head when they can no longer hear that sound.
4. Start playing some relaxing sounds. For instance, you might like to use a Tibetan singing bowl or an alternative source of what I call "Zen Sounds"--sounds that produce an inner calm
5. Gradually quieten the sound. When they nod their head (saying they can no longer hear it) have them count five breaths again.
6. Repeat this exercise once for each year of their age.

### **Benefits:**

The purpose of this activity is to increase students' auditory awareness while also quieting their minds. Because they are focusing on listening to a quiet sound, they will naturally stop a lot of the mental noise that they may have (because they need to be inwardly silent in order to listen). This produces mental peace and inner silence. And it is also a good way to improve students' listening skills.

#### **4: Eating exercise (8+)**

This is a kids mindfulness meditation exercise involving food; it will make kids more consciously aware of their diet, which is excellent for their wellbeing.

##### **Script**

1. Gather some food into a plate or bowl.
2. Remove any wrappers.
3. Have your child count to five breaths.
4. Now ask your child to be mindful of the food on the plate, being aware of the feeling, the image and the scent of the food. If they are holding cutlery, you may ask them to be mindful of that too.
5. Ask your child to take a small portion of the food and to eat it slowly while focusing on the taste. Ideally, they will chew slowly and will focus on the activity of eating.
6. Once they have finished eating, ask them to describe the taste and feel of the food.
7. Finally, ask them to take five conscious breaths.

##### **Benefits**

This exercise is highly beneficial. It helps kids to be more mindful. And it makes them more aware and more appreciative of food, which can help with any eating problems.

If you would like to learn more about this, I highly recommend *Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life* by Thich Nhat Hanh and Lilian Cheung.

#### **5: Mindful Walking for kids 8+**

Walking is one of the traditional meditation exercises in Zen Buddhism and is a great exercise.

##### **Script**

1. Take a short walk with your kid(s) somewhere relaxing and safe.
2. Ask them to focus on the sensation of movement in their feet and legs.
3. Continue walking slowly, while focusing on the movement.
4. If your child shows a lack of concentration at any time, stop walking and have them count five breaths.
5. After the five breaths, continue to walk mindfully.
6. After 20 minutes of walking, stop.
7. Ask them to describe how they feel.

This is one of the easiest and most relaxing meditations there is. Try it at the beach or in the park for a truly relaxing experience.

## **6: Play Activities [ages: five-ten years old]**

In this mindfulness meditation exercise, kids play a fun game-like finger-painting, using a sand table, or a similar activity.

1. Start by asking them to take ten conscious breaths to relax and focus.
2. Now tell your child that they can play in whatever way they like but with one condition: they must be mindful of everything they do. Whatever they choose to do during play, they must focus on it absolutely, as we do when meditating.
3. Ask your child to be aware of all five senses, being mindful of taste, touch, sight, sound and hearing.
4. If they lose focus, use five mindful breaths to regain their attention.

### **Benefits**

This exercise boosts children's concentration and is also lots of fun.

## **7: Art-based mindfulness activities for kids 7+**

Many children love painting and drawing, both of which can easily be turned into a meditation practice. Try this simple mindful art exercise.

### **Script**

1. Find an object that your child wants to draw or paint.
2. Now ask them to observe every aspect of the object for 5 minutes.
3. Ask them to describe the shape of the object, the feeling, and so on. This encourages them to practice mindfulness.
4. They can then draw or paint the object, but they must focus absolutely on the object while they create their art.

### **Benefits of this mindfulness meditation exercise:**

This is a great creative exercise that boosts mindfulness and increases awareness.

## **8: Cooking ( 5+ )**

Here is a great mindful cooking exercise for kids who enjoy cooking.

### **Script**

1. Get hold of a fun and simple recipe that your child might like to cook (some healthy cookies, for instance).

2. Gather the ingredients, along with any utensils you need.
3. Go through the recipe. Each time you get to a new item, ask your kids to consciously observe that item.
4. Ask them to watch the effect that each new ingredient has on the colour, taste, touch, and smell of the food.
5. Once the food is ready, have them eat it mindfully (see number 4 in this list)

### **Benefits:**

This mindful cooking exercise boosts present-moment mindfulness, encourages kids to be more mindful of what they are eating, and teaches them to cook, all at the same time.

## **9: Music**

A very enjoyable way to teach kids to meditate is with music. This is actually how I personally learnt mindfulness myself, all those many, many years ago. I played the piano and would meditate on the music I was creating. All kids can do this technique, whether they play an instrument or not.

### **Script**

1. Find a tune that your child can hum or sing (something simple like "Twinkle Twinkle")
2. Play the tune to them for a few minutes and ask them to listen closely. They should learn the tune as they listen.
3. Ask them to recite it to you (either by humming, singing, or playing an instrument)
4. Ask them to focus on the music 100% while they recite it.
5. Afterwards, ask them to describe the way the music makes them feel.

### **Benefits**

This activity makes your kids more aware of sound, and it enhances the mind-body connection. By focusing on the movements of their body while they perform the music, your child connects with their body in the present moment, boosting present moment mindfulness. It also makes them more aware of the way they are feeling, which can help with emotional control.

## **10: Group mindfulness meditation exercise for kids**

This final activity is simple but powerful.

Meditation is much more effective when practised in a group. I highly recommend informing your friends about meditation for children and arranging group sessions. You can use the majority of the methods we have looked at above, and simply do the as a group activity.

I've personally been helping parents to teach meditation to children for years. Not only does it help both parents, teachers and kids to relax and focus, but it creates a strong, supportive group that in itself is immensely beneficial.

## **11: Mindfulness Toys**

As well as the exercises we have looked at above, there are also specific mindfulness toys for toddlers and young kids. They include things like the Breathe With Me Barbie and card games.

**Infographic about teaching meditation to children**

**Infographic about teaching meditation to children**



# WHY KIDS NEED MEDITATION NOW

*The Truth About Your Kids' Health And Meditation*

Sources: Forbes.com, TheGuardian.com, HuffingtonPost.com, KidsHealth.org, Harvard.edu, WebMD.com, PsychologyToday.com, ArtOfLiving.org

## THE FACTS



Some schools in North America and Europe have already begun to teach kids and teens to meditate. It is time other schools joined in. It is not good enough to expose kids and teens to the stress of home life and school unprepared. Meditation offers kids and teens a way to combat stress, anxiety, and depression.

- One in 25 teenagers attempts suicide
- One in 8 teens think about committing suicide
- 44% of kids report inability to sleep
- One in five kids report excessive worrying
- Two thirds of all children report experiencing at least one traumatic event
- 1 in 5 kids are victims of cyber bullying

## MEDITATION CAN HELP

Science shows that meditation offers the following benefits for kids:

- Increases attention
- Helps with ADHD symptoms
- Improve grades
- Helps reduce stress
- Reduces impulsiveness
- Makes kids less reactive
- Improves kids' social relationships
- Combats negative thoughts

## HOW TO START

BEGIN WITH THESE EASY TECHNIQUES

### A SIMPLE MEDITATION



1. Give your kids five minutes to relax
2. Ask them to focus on breathing
3. Ask them to describe their breath
4. If they speak or move, simply ask them to continue to focus on their breathing
5. Continue for ten minutes
6. Afterwards, treat them, so they are motivated to practice again.

### TRY THESE MINDFUL HABITS

1. Relaxing music
2. Mindful cooking
3. Simple mantras: e.g. "I am happy" / "I am calm".
4. Go for a mindful walk
5. Mindful Art
6. Ask them to describe their five senses
7. Spend quiet time with a cat or dog. This produces calmness and promotes compassion.

## Benefits

Some of the top benefits of mindfulness meditation exercises for beginners:

- stops stress
- reduces and prevents depression
- reduces and prevents anxiety
- prevents heart disease
- Improves decision-making skills
- reduction of chronic pain and inflammation
- improved performance
- relieves OCD
- increases confidence
- boost happiness
- increases productivity
- increases emotional control
- stops insomnia
- heightens intimacy
- and so much more

Remember, these are the benefits of mindfulness meditations exercises for *beginners*. You will get even more out of the activities as you continue to practise.

Isn't it amazing? In an age when more people are prescribed anti-depressants than ever before in history, one of the best things we can do for ourselves is just to start doing some simple mindfulness activities.

By performing simple mindfulness meditation exercises, beginners can start to calm their minds and live more consciously. This helps with stress, anxiety and other problems. And it also makes life more enjoyable.

With these simple mindfulness meditation exercises, beginners can get in the habit of living the mindful life.

### Learn more

If you'd like to learn more I definitely recommend *Mindfulness For Beginners* by Jon Kabat Zinn.

What's your personal favourite activity?

Leave a comment and [remember to subscribe](#) to our newsletter

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In this guide, I will share the best beginners mindfulness exercises for adults, kids and groups.

As a meditation teacher, I know it can be a challenge to [get started with](#) mindfulness.

That is why I created this list of the best beginners mindfulness activities for kids, adults and groups. They are simple ways to focus your mind, to relax, and to start to be mindful. For adults, they include meditative exercises and communication techniques; and for kids they include mindfulness toys and games.

One of the best things about mindfulness exercises is that there are a million ways to do them. And they also tend to be easy. Indeed, compared to traditional meditation, the main benefits of mindfulness exercises is that they are quick, easy, and require zero previous experience.

As Richard J. Davidson, PhD [a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin] told The New York Times:



“In the Buddhist tradition, the word ‘mindfulness is equivalent to a word like ‘sports’ in the U.S. It’s a family of activity, not a single thing.”

There is no one *mindfulness exercise*. There are many. You can be mindful just by focusing on your breath. You can go for a Zen walk or do some mindful writing. There are thousands of ways to get started.

Perhaps the best place to start, however, is with some of the traditional mindfulness activities.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EI3RLlgJ2U>

## Traditional types of mindfulness exercises for beginners

**Mindful breathing:** Mindful breathing simply means focusing on the movement of the breath around the body.

**Tai chi and QiGong:** Tai Chi and Qigong are Eastern physical exercises that use slow and conscious movements. These are great for slowing the mind.

**Body Scan:** Body scan is a traditional type of meditation. In this exercise we slowly move our consciousness around the body while relaxing our muscles. This is very similar to *progressive muscle relaxation* and is one of the best mindfulness exercises for anxiety and stress. [1].

**Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction:** Jon Kabat Zinn founded the practice known as Mindfulness-Based *Stress Reduction* in the 1970s [2]. It's a complete system of mindfulness exercises for stress relief.

**Mindful eating:** Mindful eating is all about eating slowly and consciously. This exercise is excellent for anyone who comfort eats or eats mindlessly. You can learn more in my tutorial on [mindful eating](#).

## Beginners Mindfulness Activities For Adults

Along with the traditional mindfulness exercises above, we can also practise basic mindfulness activities. Adults might like to try the following:

- Various ways of practising mindfulness at work
- Doing the dishes
- Walking
- Running (walking and running are my two favourite physical mindfulness exercises).
- Exercising
- Speaking mindfully
- While doing yoga
- Mindful showering

- Listening to music
- Mindful stretching
- Consciously brushing your teeth
- Focusing on the sensations of washing
- Cleaning a room mindfully
- Try my personal favourite mindfulness exercise: [mindful writing](#)

## **31 Beginners Mindfulness Exercises For Adults [Kids Activities Are Below]**

### **1: Mindful Thinking**

One of the best places to start is with some mindful thinking.

Mindful thinking revolves around the idea of being conscious of our thoughts and correcting them, so they are more rational, more compassionate, and less harmful.

Mindful thoughts should be compassionate, non-judgmental, rational, unbiased, balanced (balancing positive and negative, so we are not biased in either direction) and accepting.

Now and again, take five minutes to listen to your thoughts. Challenge any negative or biased thought. This will boost your mental health and improve your happiness.

### **2: Daily Mindfulness Activities That Adults Do Anyway**

One of the best mindfulness activities for adults is simply to do whatever you are doing and focus 100% on the task. In other words: Just do what you're doing.

Walking? Walk.

Breathing? Breathe.

Speaking? Speak

Whatever you do, do it mindfully. A moment lived mindlessly is a moment lost forever.

"The universe created this moment for you. Embrace it. Be grateful for it. Live and love the moments. "

### **3: For gratitude**

The best mindfulness activity for gratitude is to focus on the moment, be aware of the blessings of the present moment, and express gratitude for now.

Recognise that this moment right now is infinite. This moment stretches across space and time. This moment connects us all. We might be in different countries. We might be different people. But we're all *now*.

This moment is what holds you and me and the whole world together. And that's pretty awesome when you think about it.

Show appreciation for the individual moments of your life.

### **Mindful gratitude script**

1. Close your eyes
2. Listen to the world around you
3. Say (or think): "Thank you for this moment."

This can also be a great mindfulness exercise for families. Simply sit in a circle and take it in turns to state one thing you are grateful for about each person in the group.

### **4: Perceive beauty in everything**

There is beauty in everything. Every person. Every flower. Every teardrop. Every smile. Beauty permeates the very fabric of existence. But you have to be mindful to recognise that beauty.

The science of Positive Psychology has proven that people who can see and appreciate beauty are happier and healthier than others.

Be mindful of the following examples of natural beauty:

For instance:

- flowers
- smiles
- blue skies
- the ocean/water
- the way sunlight dances through green leaves
- What natural beauty is there around you right now?

### **5: Smiling as a mindfulness exercise**

There are so many benefits of smiling.

Smiling:

- Is contagious
- Makes the world a more positive place
- Strengthens the immune system [4]

- Improves your social life
- Releases endorphins [6]
- Is contagious, so you make other people happy too.

You can turn smiling into a simple mindfulness meditation exercise. Simply smile and focus on the positive energy you feel around your mouth and face. This will make you happier.

## **6: Reminders**

It is important to set reminders to be mindful. The very word itself comes from Pali and means "To remember".

Set an alarm to go off every hour. If you have an Alexa / Google Home or similar device you can set the voice to give your reminders to be mindful

Or you could use a more traditional alarm, like a Tibetan Singing Bowl or bird call. When the alarm goes off, take sixty seconds—just sixty seconds—to be mindful. That's all it takes, sixty seconds.

When you have a few reminders, it is a lot easier to remember, and it will help you develop the mindful habit.

## **7: 5 senses mindfulness exercises for anxiety**

We come to life when we live through the senses.

- Scent
- Sight
- Hearing
- Touch
- Taste

Your senses are always working. You're always seeing things, hearing things, smelling things... be aware of those senses.. My favourite way of doing this is with the "5 Senses Mindfulness Exercise".

### **Try this five sense mindful awareness exercise**

Simply read the following five senses script in your head, filling in the blanks:

"I am feeling..."

"I am seeing..."

"I am hearing..."

"I am smelling..."

"I am hearing..."

"I am mindful."

This is one of my favourite outdoor mindfulness activities for adults. I like to go for a walk somewhere peaceful, like in a forest, and perform the exercise above. It's wonderfully relaxing.

## **8: Breathing Mindfulness Exercises**

One of the critical tools we have is our breath. Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh said, "Feelings come and go like clouds in a stormy sky. Mindful breathing is my anchor."

In other words, when we are in the chaos of life, we can return to our breath to restore mindfulness.

When you feel stressed or anxious, take a few deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Meditate on the movement of your breath.

## **9: "Right Speech" [For Groups]**

One of the best Buddhist mindfulness activities for groups is *right speech*—the idea that all speech should be kind, compassionate, and loving.

Enlightened people have mastered the art of right speech. We always speak consciously and with love and kindness.

For newcomers, it can be a challenge.

Try using speech as a mindfulness activity for groups of adults. Find a group of friends and tell each person that they are going to speak mindfully. One person starts talking. The others listen mindfully. When someone says something mindless or "ignorant" the other people in the group ask them to rephrase it in a mindful way (a compassionate, enlightened, rational and non-judgmental way). This is one of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for groups and couples.

## **10: Practice the "Middle Way."**

Did you know Buddhists are more satisfied in life than the average person?

One reason is because of the Buddhist habit of *majjhima patipada*, which is the "middle way". You can use this basic premise as an easy adults mindfulness activity.

The middle way is about moderation. It is about *not indulging* and *not starving yourself*. In other words, living in moderation.

Whenever you are making a decision such as what to eat or what to do in the evening, ask yourself how you can do something that is satisfying but also healthy, fun but also practical. Look for the middle path.

## **11: Eating Mindfulness Exercises**

One of the best mindfulness activities for adults is mindful eating. Here's to do it.

1. The next time you eat something, choose the food mindfully.
2. Eat mindfully and slowly.
3. Pay attention to what you're eating.
4. Be aware of what it is, where it comes from, what it tastes like... everything.

This is one of the best mindful activities for beginners because not only does it help you to be conscious, it also changes the way you feel about that most important thing: food.

## **12: Mindfulness activities at work**

One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises at work is to do a little bit of yoga in your office chair.

The majority of people live too sedentary lifestyles. Scientific research shows that a sedentary lifestyle contributes to premature death.

To counteract this, do some simple yoga poses and stretches in your office chair, while mindfully meditating on the movement of your body.

## **13: Practice the yoga habit of pratyahara**

Pratyahara is a yoga practice for the mind. In pratyahara yoga, we *reduce negative influences* (such as negative people) and increase positive influences.

We can turn this into a mindfulness activity (for adults). To do so, be mindful of the effect different people, objects, and sources of information (like TV, Facebook etc.).

When you come across negative influences, find ways to reduce them—such as turning off the TV or ending an abusive relationship.

## **14: The easiest mindfulness exercises**

One of the most straightforward mindfulness meditation exercises is just to do whatever you are doing, but slowly and more consciously.

Take the time to slow down each day. One way to make this a habit is to choose specific times when you will slow down (such as at lunch break).

To slow down, you can:

- meditate (try meditative writing)
- listen to relaxing music for meditation (Youtube has tons).
- go for a walk
- do yoga or tai chi
- turn off your devices

## **15: Connect with your body**

This is another simple mindfulness activity for anxiety. It comes from yoga. Take moments to be consciously aware of your body language and your posture. Hold your body with intent, like you would when practising yoga poses.

Why is this one of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for anxiety?

Anxiety can be caused by negative body language, and by correcting your body language, you can reduce anxiety. When we are anxious, we hunch over and slouch. Conversely, when we are confident, we stand tall. Take moments to correct your body language consciously and mindfully observe how you feel when you stand properly.

## **16: Laughter**

There is a kind of alternative yoga called *Laughter Yoga* that can make a fun mindfulness activity for groups.

Get into a group and deliberately start laughing. Now consciously observe the energy of laughing. It is a fun, playful energy. Also listen to other people in the group laughing. This will make you feel happy and playful.

## **17: Showering**

Close your eyes while showering and focus on the sensation of water falling on your body.

Here is how to take a mindful shower.

1. Get the shower to the right temperature
2. Strip
3. Get in the shower.
4. Close your eyes.
5. Be conscious of the sounds, feelings, and scents in the shower.
6. Mindfully wash your body.
7. Express gratitude for the water.

## **18: Naturally, the best mindfulness meditation exercise is meditation itself**

Obviously, the very best mindfulness meditation exercise is meditation. The key to using meditation as a mindfulness exercise is to make it a habit.

I recommend setting an alarm that reminds you to meditate every day.

Start with just consciously breathing. Close your eyes focus on the movement of your breath around your body. Take 108 breaths. Then express gratitude for your meditation.

## **19: Water mindfulness exercise**

Water is one of the most divine things in the world. It's pure, and it's perhaps the number one representation of the power of nature. The next time you're around water, just take a moment to meditate on it. Focus on the flow of the water. Feel the energy and notice how free water is. Ask that sense of freedom to enter your own life.

Rain too. Rain is the healing of the land, the purifying of the world. Rain connects the sky to the earth. It's symbolic of the perpetual cycle of life. Whenever there's rain, be conscious of it. Stand out in the rain and feel the cold droplets cleansing your spirit. This is a wonderfully relaxing rain meditation technique that even absolute beginners can do easily.

One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises for relaxation is to simply focus on the sound of water anytime you hear it.

## **20: Zen Walking**

One of the best mindfulness meditation exercises from Buddhism is “Zen Walking”. Take yourself for a walk somewhere relaxing and follow this script:

### **Zen Walking Script:**

Take yourself somewhere relaxing where there is a clear path to walk

Close your eyes and take ten conscious breaths

Begin to walk slowly. Meditate on the sensation of movement in your body.

Be mindful of the energy of movement.

Every 27 breaths, take 10 breaths in which you meditate on the sights and sounds of the scenery around you

Express gratitude for the meditation.

## **22: Read inspiring books / quotes**



Books are beautiful. When you read a book, you experience many of the same states as you do when you meditate. Your mind slows down. You relax. The noise dissipates. Your heart rate lowers.

### **23: Intention**

One of the best mindfulness exercises for adults is *conscious* intent.

It can be easy to turn your day into a blur. You start with ideas of what you want or need to do, and you set about doing them. But the plan doesn't quite work out, so you end up doing two things at once, then three things... and you're not really focusing on any of them. Tell yourself the one thing you're going to do. Do that one thing. Complete it. Then move on.

This is a habit of mindful *intent*. We are choosing to do one thing, and then focusing on that one thing absolutely

### **24: Scents**

The sense of smell is immensely powerful. When we smell things, we bring memories to mind. Therefore, we can use the sense of smell to get in touch with our memories.

#### **Try this scent-based mindfulness meditation exercise**

1. Take yourself somewhere you will be surrounded by pleasant fragrances
2. Mindfully observe one specific scent.
3. Focus on the smell. Meditate on it.
4. Scents bring up thoughts and emotions. Be mindful of these.
5. If a specific memory arises, meditate on it. Ask what it means in the here and now.

### **25: Get in touch with your intuition**

Intuition is very powerful. Science suggests that people are at their wisest when they listen to that little voice inside. Let your inner voice speak to you and listen.



## **27: One Minute Breathing Mindfulness Exercise**

Mindful breathing is the best mindful exercises for anxiety because when we breathe properly, we relax. It's also one of my personal favourite mindfulness exercises to increase focus. It's really quick. You can just take a one minute break at work at focus on your breathing. It gives you a quick boost of concentration.

### **Mindful Breathing Exercise Script**

This exercise is highly versatile. You can do it just about anywhere, whether you're lying in bed or out for a walk. And it only takes sixty seconds.

Simply breathe in through your nose, hold for a count of five, and then breathe out slowly. As you breathe, focus on letting your breath flow naturally and easily.

At times your mind will lose its anchor, and you'll find yourself flooded with thoughts. Simply observe those thoughts. Let them be. Let them go. Watch your breath with your senses. Observe as your breath becomes one with the wider universe.

If you thought you would never be able to meditate, guess what? You're now meditating, and it only took one minute.

## **28: Nature mindfulness activity**

Simply spending 20 minutes mindfully observing nature will make you happier and healthier.

This is a very easy mindfulness meditation exercise, but it's also highly potent and it's one of my personal favourites, too, because it connects us to the beauty of nature.

### **Script**

To do this exercise, start by picking an object of natural beauty; a waterfall, for instance, or a flower.

Once you've chosen a subject to meditate on, begin to observe the object through your senses. You can do this in just a couple of minutes, that's all you need.

I personally love rainbows. Whenever there's a rainbow out, I'll spend five minutes just consciously observing it.

Allow yourself to really appreciate and enjoy the beauty of the thing you're meditating on. Let your spirit connect with the object. You will find this immensely relaxing

## **29: Make the entire day one big mindfulness meditation exercise**

Use this exercise to be mindful all day. This technique uses what I call "Anchors". These are basically reminders to be mindful.

It's easier than it sounds. If you'd like to do this exercise, simply pick a few things that you do every day—for instance, turning the door handle, having a shower, opening the curtains...

When you open the curtains (for example) allow yourself to be completely conscious. Take that moment, those few seconds, to be completely mindful—the same with turning the door handle or having a shower.

Every day you perform these simple tasks, so use them as reminders. Through a process of repetition, you will train your brain to be conscious at those moments naturally. The process will soon become automatic. Then, you'll have mindful moments without even having to try.

I love this one because it allows you to take mundane everyday activities—like turning a door handle—and turn them into your own little moments of consciousness.

## **29: Mindful Listening Exercise**

Practising this mindful listening exercise will make you more aware and more focused on the present moment.

Everyone loves a good listener, right? But even better than a good listener is a mindful listener.

This mindful listening exercise is all about listening to people in a non-judgmental fashion. Not only is this excellent for the person you're listening to, but it's fantastic for you too. It is the best mindfulness activity for groups because it improves communication in relationships.

Most of us are highly influenced by the things we hear. It can be quite easy to become irritated when someone says something thoughtless, for instance. But when you practice this method, you stop being affected by words.

### **Script**

When you're listening to someone speaking, just focus on the sound. Don't judge, just listen. Tune in to the sound of their voice and observe it consciously. If what they say causes you to think or feel things, consciously observe those thoughts and feelings and remind yourself that they are *only* thoughts and feelings.

You can also do this listening exercise with music. If you play an instrument, you likely do this already. I've played the piano for thirty years. When I play, I sink into the music. I let it take me. I flow with the sound of the piano.

And if you're not a musician, hey, no sweat, just put a piece of relaxing music on and listen to it mindfully. You'll find this supremely tranquil.

If you'd like to learn more about mindful speaking and listening, I highly recommend *The Art of Communicating* by Thich Nhat Hanh.

### **30: Doing anything at all**

Many of us are starved for time. I know there are often days when I'd do anything for five minutes just to chill in. It can be hard to practice even the most simple mindfulness meditation exercises on days like those. What do you do?

The trick is to take an activity that you'd do anyway. For instance, you have to do the dishes. Why not do the dishes mindfully? Or how about eating. You have to have dinner, why not eat mindfully?

Three awesome things happen when you do chores mindfully: 1) You get a good spot of mindfulness, 2) You complete the task you have to do anyway, and 3) You do that task quicker and better than normal because you're focusing on it.

So, do the thing you need to do, just turn it into a mindfulness activity.

You remember the scene from *The Karate Kid* when Mr Miyagi is teaching Daniel to clean his car, and he says "Wax on, wax off". He's teaching Daniel to clean his car in a mindful way. The trick is to be one with the movements, one with the "wax on" and one with the "wax off". Be mindful.

By performing your regular activities more consciously, you'll get the task done better and quicker, and you'll get some free mindfulness. It's a win/win situation.

### **31: Describe things to yourself**

One of the most simple mindfulness activities for beginners is just to describe things to yourself.

Try mindfully describing the beauty you see. The beautiful sky, for instance. What do you see when you mindfully observe a beautiful sky like?

Talking to yourself is usually considered a sign of insanity. This method flips that notion on its head. It is one of the most simple mindfulness meditation exercises for beginners.

The trick here is to observe the things you're experiencing through your senses.

If you're out for a walk, describe the sky—the colours, the shapes, the feelings it creates in you—describe the scenery, describe the motion of walking, and so on.

This simple technique trains your mind to be aware of your senses. It improves the communication between your conscious mind and your unconscious mind. And all you need do is describe a few things around you.

### **32: Do some mindfulness activities with family pets (horses dogs, cats...)**

Have you ever wanted to do some mindfulness activities with family pets? Simple.

Grab a cat/dog/horse/octopus (hey, whatever works) and snuggle it. Close your eyes. Feel that sense of love and warmth. Be consciously aware of that. This will put some love in your soul.

## **Best Mindfulness Activities For Kids**

In this section, I am going to share with you my favourite mindfulness activities for kids of all ages.

There are so many reasons to start teaching kids to meditate. By practising some mindfulness exercises, kids can focus their minds, improve their health, and feel good about themselves.

There are so many benefits of mindfulness meditation exercises for children. And there are other techniques you might like to try too, such as teaching them some mantras for kids.

### **Some of the benefits of mindfulness activities for kids:**

- improves focus
- makes them smarter
- increases compassion
- boosts positive emotions and feelings, such as happiness, confidence, and inner peace
- reduces negative emotions and feelings like anxiety, depression, and stress
- There is mounting evidence (4) that meditation helps kids with ADHD. A 2004 study showed that kids who practised meditation with their parents in a clinical setting twice a week and then continued to practice at home had improved attention span and focus. In another study, teens and their parents completed a mindfulness program and reported fewer stress levels and fewer ADHD symptoms, such as impulsiveness and emotional reactivity.
- Removes negative thoughts along with worries.
  
- Helps teens overcome the stress associated with peer pressure.
- It boosts present-moment awareness.
- Improves cognitive performance
- Improves overall wellbeing
- Reduces bad behaviour
- Improves sleep
- Helps kids to feel good about themselves
  
- Increases calmness

- Helps with self-regulation
- Heightens awareness
- Improves connection with nature
- Increases motivation
- Boosts confidence
- Improves optimism
- Helps with social skills
- Reduces symptoms of depression
- Improves academic performance
- Increases attention
- Increases personal goals
- Reduces anxiety
- Improves sleep quality
- Makes kids feel closer to their friends
- Reduces loneliness
- Helps regulate blood pressure

## **1: 10-minute mindfulness meditation exercise for kids 10+**

This is an **easy mindfulness exercise for children**, and it's one of the best ways to start teaching kids to meditate.

### **Mindful Breathing For Kids Script**

1. Ask your child to close their eyes and focus on their breathing.
2. Keep an eye on the wall. When two minutes have passed, proceed to the next step.
3. Ask them to focus on what they are hearing. It may help if you ask them to describe, in detail, the sounds they are hearing. This makes them tune in to the sounds around them, which will cause them to focus on the present moment, which decreases rumination and help with any negative thoughts.
4. Ask them to pay attention to the sensation of touch. Have them describe what they can feel (for instance, wind on the face, soft grass at their feet etc.).
5. Ask them to focus on scents. How does the air smell? Are there any other scents they are aware of? Etc.
6. Now move to taste and repeat.
7. Finally, ask them to open their eyes and simply *look* around. You may ask them to focus on light, on shades and on other visuals to make them more aware of sight.

### **Benefits of this mindful breathing for kids and teens**

This mindful meditation exercise makes kids more aware of the present moment and helps them to focus on one thing at a time (in the exercise, they focus on the senses one at a time).

In this age of constant stimulation, many children (and adults) struggle to focus. This technique boosts focus and concentration by asking your kids to just zone in on one thing at a time.

## **2: Mindful Breathing For Kids 5 +**

Here is another great mindful breathing exercise for kids 5+

### **Script**

1. Ask your child to sit comfortably with good posture and to close their eyes.
2. Bring their attention to the sensation of their breath coming and going through the space between their mouth and nose.
3. Ask them to place both their hands on their stomach and to feel their breath rising and falling from there.
4. You may also ask them to repeat a simple word as they breathe in and out, saying "In" on in-breaths and "Out" when exhaling.
5. Work in cycles of five breaths. Have them count five breaths and then ask them to be aware of any thoughts or feelings in their mind.
6. If they are experiencing thoughts or feelings, ask them to let go and to return their attention to their breath.

### **Benefits of this mindfulness activity for kids**

This is a simple mindfulness exercise for kids over 5. It is great for relaxation, and it also improves focus and concentration.

## **3: Listening activity for students 8+**

Many kids struggle with listening skills. If your kids struggle to listen, try the following script, which is a mindful listening exercise for kids 8+

### **Script**

1. Ask students to focus on their breathing for a few minutes.
2. Explain to your students that they are going to hear a sound and that they should focus on the sound as it gets quieter and quieter.
3. Ask them to nod their head when they can no longer hear that sound.
4. Start playing some relaxing sounds. For instance, you might like to use a Tibetan singing bowl or an alternative source of what I call "Zen Sounds"--sounds that produce an inner calm
5. Gradually quieten the sound. When they nod their head (saying they can no longer hear it) have them count five breaths again.
6. Repeat this exercise once for each year of their age.

### **Benefits:**



The purpose of this activity is to increase students' auditory awareness while also quieting their minds. Because they are focusing on listening to a quiet sound, they will naturally stop a lot of the mental noise that they may have (because they need to be inwardly silent in order to listen). This produces mental peace and inner silence. And it is also a good way to improve students' listening skills.

#### **4: Eating exercise (8+)**

This is a kids mindfulness meditation exercise involving food; it will make kids more consciously aware of their diet, which is excellent for their wellbeing.

##### **Script**

1. Gather some food into a plate or bowl.
2. Remove any wrappers.
3. Have your child count to five breaths.
4. Now ask your child to be mindful of the food on the plate, being aware of the feeling, the image and the scent of the food. If they are holding cutlery, you may ask them to be mindful of that too.
5. Ask your child to take a small portion of the food and to eat it slowly while focusing on the taste. Ideally, they will chew slowly and will focus on the activity of eating.
6. Once they have finished eating, ask them to describe the taste and feel of the food.
7. Finally, ask them to take five conscious breaths.

##### **Benefits**

This exercise is highly beneficial. It helps kids to be more mindful. And it makes them more aware and more appreciative of food, which can help with any eating problems.

If you would like to learn more about this, I highly recommend *Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life* by Thich Nhat Hanh and Lilian Cheung.

#### **5: Mindful Walking for kids 8+**

Walking is one of the traditional meditation exercises in Zen Buddhism and is a great exercise.

##### **Script**

1. Take a short walk with your kid(s) somewhere relaxing and safe.
2. Ask them to focus on the sensation of movement in their feet and legs.
3. Continue walking slowly, while focusing on the movement.
4. If your child shows a lack of concentration at any time, stop walking and have them count five breaths.
5. After the five breaths, continue to walk mindfully.
6. After 20 minutes of walking, stop.
7. Ask them to describe how they feel.

This is one of the easiest and most relaxing meditations there is. Try it at the beach or in the park for a truly relaxing experience.

## **6: Play Activities [ages: five-ten years old]**

In this mindfulness meditation exercise, kids play a fun game-like finger-painting, using a sand table, or a similar activity.

1. Start by asking them to take ten conscious breaths to relax and focus.
2. Now tell your child that they can play in whatever way they like but with one condition: they must be mindful of everything they do. Whatever they choose to do during play, they must focus on it absolutely, as we do when meditating.
3. Ask your child to be aware of all five senses, being mindful of taste, touch, sight, sound and hearing.
4. If they lose focus, use five mindful breaths to regain their attention.

### **Benefits**

This exercise boosts children's concentration and is also lots of fun.

## **7: Art-based mindfulness activities for kids 7+**

Many children love painting and drawing, both of which can easily be turned into a meditation practice. Try this simple mindful art exercise.

### **Script**

1. Find an object that your child wants to draw or paint.
2. Now ask them to observe every aspect of the object for 5 minutes.
3. Ask them to describe the shape of the object, the feeling, and so on. This encourages them to practice mindfulness.
4. They can then draw or paint the object, but they must focus absolutely on the object while they create their art.

### **Benefits of this mindfulness meditation exercise:**

This is a great creative exercise that boosts mindfulness and increases awareness.

## **8: Cooking ( 5+ )**

Here is a great mindful cooking exercise for kids who enjoy cooking.

### **Script**

1. Get hold of a fun and simple recipe that your child might like to cook (some healthy cookies, for instance).

2. Gather the ingredients, along with any utensils you need.
3. Go through the recipe. Each time you get to a new item, ask your kids to consciously observe that item.
4. Ask them to watch the effect that each new ingredient has on the colour, taste, touch, and smell of the food.
5. Once the food is ready, have them eat it mindfully (see number 4 in this list)

### **Benefits:**

This mindful cooking exercise boosts present-moment mindfulness, encourages kids to be more mindful of what they are eating, and teaches them to cook, all at the same time.

## **9: Music**

A very enjoyable way to teach kids to meditate is with music. This is actually how I personally learnt mindfulness myself, all those many, many years ago. I played the piano and would meditate on the music I was creating. All kids can do this technique, whether they play an instrument or not.

### **Script**

1. Find a tune that your child can hum or sing (something simple like "Twinkle Twinkle")
2. Play the tune to them for a few minutes and ask them to listen closely. They should learn the tune as they listen.
3. Ask them to recite it to you (either by humming, singing, or playing an instrument)
4. Ask them to focus on the music 100% while they recite it.
5. Afterwards, ask them to describe the way the music makes them feel.

### **Benefits**

This activity makes your kids more aware of sound, and it enhances the mind-body connection. By focusing on the movements of their body while they perform the music, your child connects with their body in the present moment, boosting present moment mindfulness. It also makes them more aware of the way they are feeling, which can help with emotional control.

## **10: Group mindfulness meditation exercise for kids**

This final activity is simple but powerful.

Meditation is much more effective when practised in a group. I highly recommend informing your friends about meditation for children and arranging group sessions. You can use the majority of the methods we have looked at above, and simply do the as a group activity.

I've personally been helping parents to teach meditation to children for years. Not only does it help both parents, teachers and kids to relax and focus, but it creates a strong, supportive group that in itself is immensely beneficial.

## **11: Mindfulness Toys**

As well as the exercises we have looked at above, there are also specific mindfulness toys for toddlers and young kids. They include things like the Breathe With Me Barbie and card games.

**Infographic about teaching meditation to children**

**Infographic about teaching meditation to children**



# WHY KIDS NEED MEDITATION NOW

*The Truth About Your Kids' Health And Meditation*

Sources: Forbes.com, TheGuardian.com, HuffingtonPost.com, KidsHealth.org, Harvard.edu, WebMD.com, PsychologyToday.com, ArtOfLiving.org

## THE FACTS



Some schools in North America and Europe have already begun to teach kids and teens to meditate. It is time other schools joined in. It is not good enough to expose kids and teens to the stress of home life and school unprepared. Meditation offers kids and teens a way to combat stress, anxiety, and depression.

- One in 25 teenagers attempts suicide
- One in 8 teens think about committing suicide
- 44% of kids report inability to sleep
- One in five kids report excessive worrying
- Two thirds of all children report experiencing at least one traumatic event
- 1 in 5 kids are victims of cyber bullying

## MEDITATION CAN HELP

Science shows that meditation offers the following benefits for kids:

- Increases attention
- Helps with ADHD symptoms
- Improve grades
- Helps reduce stress
- Reduces impulsiveness
- Makes kids less reactive
- Improves kids' social relationships
- Combats negative thoughts

## HOW TO START

### BEGIN WITH THESE EASY TECHNIQUES

#### A SIMPLE MEDITATION



1. Give your kids five minutes to relax
2. Ask them to focus on breathing
3. Ask them to describe their breath
4. If they speak or move, simply ask them to continue to focus on their breathing
5. Continue for ten minutes
6. Afterwards, treat them, so they are motivated to practice again.

#### TRY THESE MINDFUL HABITS

1. Relaxing music
2. Mindful cooking
3. Simple mantras: e.g. "I am happy" / "I am calm".
4. Go for a mindful walk
5. Mindful Art
6. Ask them to describe their five senses
7. Spend quiet time with a cat or dog. This produces calmness and promotes compassion.

## Benefits

Some of the top benefits of mindfulness meditation exercises for beginners:

- stops stress
- reduces and prevents depression
- reduces and prevents anxiety
- prevents heart disease
- Improves decision-making skills
- reduction of chronic pain and inflammation
- improved performance
- relieves OCD
- increases confidence
- boost happiness
- increases productivity
- increases emotional control
- stops insomnia
- heightens intimacy
- and so much more

Remember, these are the benefits of mindfulness meditations exercises for *beginners*. You will get even more out of the activities as you continue to practise.

Isn't it amazing? In an age when more people are prescribed anti-depressants than ever before in history, one of the best things we can do for ourselves is just to start doing some simple mindfulness activities.

By performing simple mindfulness meditation exercises, beginners can start to calm their minds and live more consciously. This helps with stress, anxiety and other problems. And it also makes life more enjoyable.

With these simple mindfulness meditation exercises, beginners can get in the habit of living the mindful life.

### Learn more

If you'd like to learn more I definitely recommend *Mindfulness For Beginners* by Jon Kabat Zinn.

What's your personal favourite activity?

Leave a comment and [remember to subscribe](#) to our newsletter

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