

RANJANA YOGA CLASS

Meditation

A Beginner's Guide

Five simple techniques, a 10-minute daily routine,
a four-week plan and answers to common worries

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General education only. Not medical advice. Speak with your doctor before starting any new practice.

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1. What meditation is

Meditation is the practice of training attention. You pick something simple to focus on, such as the breath, a sound or a feeling in the body, and you keep bringing your attention back to it when it wanders. The returning is the exercise.

There are many kinds of meditation from different traditions. This guide covers five simple ones that suit beginners and need no belief or special equipment.

The short answer

Meditation is training your attention by focusing on one thing, like the breath, and gently returning when the mind wanders. Five to ten minutes a day is a good start. It is a skill and a habit, not a medical treatment.

2. Before you begin: safety first

Meditation is gentle and suits most people. But quiet attention can sometimes bring up difficult thoughts or feelings.

Talk to a doctor or qualified professional first if you:

- have a history of trauma, panic attacks, depression or another mental health condition;
- are going through a very difficult period and feel overwhelmed;
- have been advised by a clinician to avoid certain practices.

Stop and open your eyes if you:

- feel anxious, panicky or very sad;
- feel dizzy or unwell;
- feel that things around you seem unreal.

You are always free to stop. Try a shorter session, open your eyes, or do a walking or listening practice instead. If difficult feelings continue, please speak with a professional.

Not a replacement for care

Meditation can be a helpful habit but it is not a treatment for any condition. Do not stop any medical or mental health treatment without speaking to your clinician.

3. Setting up

Item	Notes
A quiet spot	Anywhere you will not be disturbed for 10 minutes.
A seat	A chair with both feet on the floor is perfect. Cushions are optional.
A timer	A soft alarm saves you from watching the clock.
A regular time	After waking or before bed works for many people.

Sit with a tall, relaxed spine. Close your eyes or lower your gaze. Let the hands rest. Comfort matters more than a particular posture.

4. Technique 1: breath counting

- Breathe naturally through the nose.
- Count "one" on the out-breath, "two" on the next, up to ten.
- When you reach ten, or lose count, begin again at one.

Losing count is normal. Notice, smile and start again. Try this for five minutes.

5. Technique 2: body awareness

- Sit or lie comfortably.
- Move your attention slowly from the feet up to the top of the head.
- Notice sensations without judging them: warmth, pressure, tingling, nothing at all.
- If a part of the body is painful, skip it and come back later.

Five to ten minutes. This is a good option when the breath feels hard to focus on.

6. Technique 3: mindful listening

- Sit and close your eyes.
- Listen to the sounds around you. Do not name them or follow stories about them.
- Notice sounds arising and fading. Let them come and go.

Three to five minutes. This is easy to do anywhere, including a busy street.

7. Technique 4: loving-kindness

This practice uses a few quiet phrases to cultivate goodwill.

- Silently repeat, "May I be safe. May I be well. May I be at ease."
- Then think of someone you care about and repeat the phrases for them.
- Finally, think of a neutral person and wish them well too.

Do not force feelings. The aim is to repeat the phrases gently. Skip this practice if it feels uncomfortable or if you are going through a difficult time, and try something else.

8. Technique 5: single-point focus

- Choose one object: a candle flame, a spot on the wall, or the sensation of breath at the nostrils.
- Rest attention there gently.
- When the mind drifts, notice and return.

Keep the effort light. Try three to five minutes.

9. Dealing with a busy mind

Problem	What to try
My mind will not stop	That is normal. Each time you notice and return, you have practised.
I fall asleep	Sit upright, open your eyes slightly, or practise earlier in the day.
I feel restless	Take three slow breaths, then try a shorter session or a walking practice.
I get bored	Try a different technique. Keep sessions short.
I judge myself	Treat it like exercise. A wandering mind is not a failure.
I feel sad or anxious	Open your eyes, stretch, and do something grounding. Speak to a professional if it continues.

10. A 10-minute daily routine

Time	Practice	Notes
1 min	Settle and posture check	Three slow breaths.
5 min	Breath counting	Count to ten and restart.
3 min	Body awareness or listening	Choose one.
1 min	Rest in quiet	Then open the eyes slowly.

11. Your four-week plan

Week	Focus	Length	What to notice
1	Breath counting	3-5 min	How many times does your mind wander? No need to fix it.
2	Add body awareness	5-7 min	Where do you feel sensation most?
3	Add mindful listening	7-10 min	Can you hear without labelling?
4	Choose your favourite and keep going	10 min	Which one fits your day best?

12. Questions people ask

How long should I meditate?

Start with five minutes and build to about ten or twenty. Regular short practice is better than occasional long sessions.

Do I need to clear my mind?

No. Meditation is about noticing where your mind goes and returning. A wandering mind is the normal setting.

When will I notice results?

People differ. Some feel calmer quickly, others need weeks. Treat it as a skill that develops.

Is meditation a religion?

Many traditions use it, but the techniques here are simple attention exercises you can practise without any belief.

13. Glossary

Term	Plain meaning
Mindfulness	Paying attention to the present on purpose, without judgement.
Metta	Loving-kindness practice.
Dhyana	Sustained meditation in yoga.
Body scan	Moving attention through the body part by part.

Reminder

This guide is general education and not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat or cure any condition. If you have a health concern, speak with your doctor before starting a new practice.

Practice log

Print this page and keep a short record. Notes help you see patterns over time.

Day	Minutes	Technique used	How it felt	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				