

# Getting Started with Meditation

A curated starting point for beginners

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There is no shortage of meditation content available — which can itself feel overwhelming when you're just trying to figure out where to begin. This list is intentionally selective. Every resource here has been chosen because it is accessible, well-regarded, and genuinely useful for someone new to a consistent practice.

Start with one category. Try it for a week before adding another. The goal at the beginning is not variety — it is simply getting familiar with what it feels like to pay attention on purpose.

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## Understanding the Basics

### Overview of Meditation Practices

- [Types of Meditation — Healthline](#) — A clear, non-clinical overview of the major meditation styles. Good for understanding what you're choosing between before committing to one approach.

## Breathwork

Breathwork is often the most accessible entry point — it requires no app, no equipment, and can be done anywhere. The resource below covers the foundational techniques.

### Beginner Breathwork

- [A Beginner's Guide to Breathwork Practices — Everyday Health](#) — Covers the core techniques including diaphragmatic breathing, box breathing, and 4-7-8. Start here if you have never followed a structured breathing practice.
- **Box (4x4) Breathing** — Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat 4 times. Simple, portable, and effective for acute stress or pre-sleep wind-down.

## Guided Meditations

Guided meditations are ideal for beginners because they give your attention somewhere specific to go. The three sources below represent different styles — try more than one to find what resonates.

### Guided Meditation Sources

- [David Ji — Guided Meditations](#) — Warm, structured, and well-suited for beginners. Covers breath awareness, visualization, and longer deepening practices.
- [UCLA MARC Institute — Free Guided Meditations](#) — Clinically grounded and research-backed. Produced by UCLA's Mindful Awareness Research Center. Available in English and Spanish.
- [Mooji — YouTube](#) — A more contemplative, inquiry-based style. Less structured than the others — better suited once you have some familiarity with sitting quietly.

## YouTube Channels

These channels offer free, varied content and are well-suited for building a home practice without a paid subscription.

### Recommended Channels

- [The Honest Guys — Meditations & Relaxation](#) — Extensive library of sleep meditations, nature soundscapes, and guided relaxations. One of the most reliable free resources available.
- [Great Meditation](#) — Short, accessible guided sessions ranging from 5 to 20 minutes. Good for building a daily habit without a large time commitment.
- [Generation Calm](#) — Focuses on anxiety, stress, and sleep. Straightforward and practical.

## A Simple Self-Compassion Practice

This brief exercise requires no audio and no timer. It can be done in under five minutes, seated or lying down.

### Self-Compassion Meditation — Instructions

#### Step 1

Close your eyes. Call to mind something about yourself that has been bothering you — a pattern, a failure, something that has made you feel inadequate or not enough. Notice what arises in the body without trying to change it.

#### Step 2

Place one hand over your heart and one over your belly. Let the physical gesture carry the intention of warmth — as if you were offering comfort to someone you care about. Notice what shifts.

#### Step 3

Ask yourself quietly: "How can I be a friend to myself in this moment?" You do not need to answer the question analytically — just let it settle and notice what comes.

## Movement-Based Practices

Meditation does not require stillness. For people who find sitting quietly difficult — especially early on — movement-based practices offer the same attentional benefits with a physical anchor.

### Movement as Meditation

- **Walking Meditation** — Walk slowly and deliberately, focusing attention on the sensation of each step — the lift, the movement forward, the contact with the ground. No destination required; 10 minutes is enough.
- **Gardening** — Repetitive, sensory, and grounding. Attention to soil, texture, and the physical rhythm of the work produces a meditative state without formal practice. Particularly effective for people who find seated meditation frustrating.

## A Note on Getting Started

No single approach works for everyone. The most useful meditation practice is the one you will actually return to — which is usually the simplest one, not the most sophisticated. If something on this list resonates, follow it. If it does not, try another.

If anxiety, stress, or difficulty quieting your mind are persistent and affecting your daily life, it may be worth exploring professional support. A 15-minute consultation with Dr. Dyer is a low-stakes starting point — no obligation. [dyerpsy.com](http://dyerpsy.com).