



Grounding Techniques

Quick ways to steady yourself when anxiety or panic takes over.

When anxiety spikes, attention narrows onto the threat and the body floods with adrenaline. Grounding works by pulling attention back to the present moment and the senses, which interrupts that loop and gives the nervous system a chance to settle. None of these are a cure for anxiety — they're tools to ride out an intense moment until it passes.

The 5-4-3-2-1 method

Move slowly through your senses, naming what you notice out loud or on paper.

Notice	Your senses	What I notice right now

Prompts to fill in the first two columns: 5 things you can see · 4 you can feel/touch · 3 you can hear · 2 you can smell · 1 you can taste.

More tools to try

- Box breathing: breathe in for 4, hold for 4, out for 4, hold for 4. Repeat until your shoulders drop.
- Cool the system: hold something cold, splash cool water on your face, or step into fresh air.
- Anchor your body: press your feet into the floor, push your palms together, or stretch slowly.
- Mental category game: name as many animals (or songs, cities, blue things) as you can in 60 seconds.
- Name it to tame it: say plainly, "This is anxiety. It is uncomfortable, not dangerous, and it will pass."

My go-to grounding plan

When I notice my early warning signs, the techniques that help me most are:

My early warning signs <i>e.g., racing heart, tight chest, going quiet</i>	
What I'll try first <i>Pick 2–3 from above</i>	
Someone I can reach out to <i>Name + how to contact them</i>	

Bring this worksheet to your next appointment.