

Tension and release

First, take a good position where you feel awake. You can stand, sit, or lie down. Breathe in slowly and notice how your stomach expands when inhaling and contracts when exhaling.

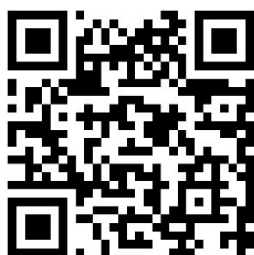
In the exercise, you will tense and relax your muscles one after the other. You can tense your muscles as lightly or intensely as feels right for you. Tense your muscles for roughly 7 seconds and then release the tension for a little longer – roughly 15 seconds. Focus on the sensations in your muscles when releasing the tension. Go through the following phases, tensing and releasing your muscles and focusing on the sensations:

- Clench your fists.
- Bend at your elbows, pull your forearms up towards your shoulders.
- Hold your hands straight at your sides, straighten your elbows.
- Raise your eyebrows as high as you can. – Relax your forehead by imagining it as smooth as possible.
- Close your eyes tightly.
- Open your mouth as wide as you can.
- If you are lying down, lift your chin as high as you can. – If you are sitting, pull your chin as far forward as you can.
- If you are lying down, press your head against the floor or bed. If you are sitting, bend your head back as if you were trying to make your head touch your back.
- Lift your shoulders to your ears.
- Push your shoulder blades towards each other.
- Fill your lungs and hold your breath. Exhale slowly.
- Pull your stomach firmly in, navel towards your spine.
- Arch your lower back.
- Squeeze your buttocks together.
- Squeeze your thighs against each other.
- Lift your toes up towards you.
- Curl your toes.
- Extend your entire body to make it as long as you can.

Take a moment here and breathe. Notice how your body feels right now. When you are ready, you can stop the exercise.

YouTube video of the exercise

<https://youtu.be/YuB4REor-P8>



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