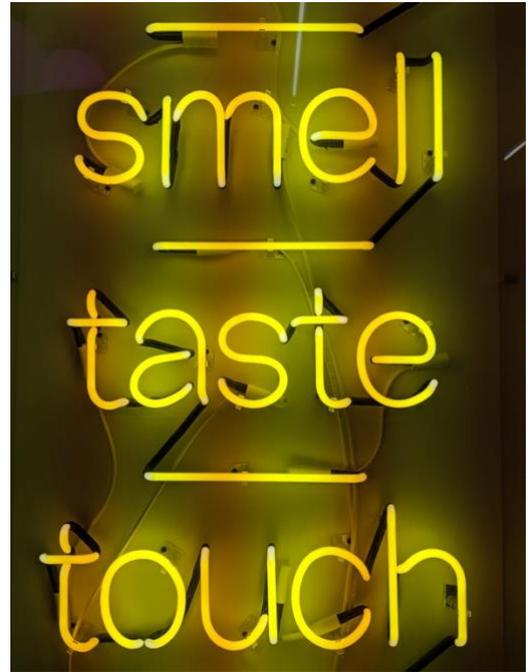


Grounding Techniques

Grounding techniques often use the five senses—sound, touch, smell, taste, and sight—to immediately connect you with the here and now. **Be sure to keep your eyes open** while you're grounding yourself so you're aware of everything that's going on around you.

Sight

- Complete a crossword puzzle, sudoku, word search, or other puzzles.
- Count all the pieces of furniture around you.
- Play a distracting game on your tablet, computer, or smartphone.
- Put on your favorite movie or TV show.
- Read a book or magazine.
- Take a mental inventory of everything around you, such as all the colors and patterns you see, the sounds you hear, and the scents you smell. Saying this out loud is helpful too.



Smell

- Get some essential oils that remind you of good times (freshly cut grass, rain, clean laundry, or sugar cookies, for example) and smell one.
- Light a scented candle or melt scented wax.
- Sniff strong peppermint, which also has the benefit of having a soothing effect.³

Sound

- Call a loved one.
- Put on some nature sounds such as birds chirping or waves crashing.
- Read out loud, whether it's a favorite children's book, a blog article, or the latest novel.
- Talk out loud about what you see, hear, or what you're thinking or doing.⁴
- Turn up the radio or blast your favorite song.

Taste

- Bite into a lemon or lime.
- Let a piece of chocolate melt in your mouth, noticing how it tastes and feels on your tongue.
- Suck on a mint or chew peppermint or cinnamon gum.
- Take a bite of pepper or some hot salsa.

Grounding Techniques

Touch

- Cuddle and pet your dog or cat if you have one.
- Drink a hot or cold beverage.
- Grab an article of clothing, a blanket, or a towel and knead it in your hands or hold it to your cheek. Concentrate on what it feels like.
- Hold an ice cube and let it melt in your hand.
- Massage your temples.
- Pop some bubble wrap.
- Put your hands under running water.
- Rub your hand lightly over the carpet or a piece of furniture, noting the texture.
- Take a hot or cool shower.

Other

- Dance.
- Go for a walk or run.
- Send a letter or card to someone you care about.
- Sit in another room or area for a change of scenery.
- Stretch your arms, neck, and legs.
- Take 10 slow, deep breaths.
- Write in a journal about how you're feeling or keep a list of prompts handy that you can use to decide what to write about.

Grounding Can Be Done Anywhere

The nice thing about using grounding as a coping technique is that many of these techniques can be done in any environment. You might be home alone or out in public, but once you feel that flashback or dissociation coming on, you can use grounding to move your focus back to the present.

Working on grounding takes dedication and it becomes easier over time. If these particular grounding techniques don't work for you, try something else. For example, some people find that a rubber band on their wrist is useful to snap them back to the moment. The ultimate goal is to live in the now and focus on the present when the past starts coming up.