

Grounding Cheat Sheet

Quick, calming techniques you can use anywhere — including 5-4-3-2-1
Kate Ramsay Counselling · www.kateramsay.net

Print this out, save it to your phone, or keep it in a bag or wallet. Start with slow breathing, then anchor your senses.

The 5-4-3-2-1 Technique

Name things around you out loud or in your head. Go slowly — there are no wrong answers.

5

things you can SEE

Look around and name five things — a door, a plant, the light.

4

things you can FEEL

Notice touch — your feet on the floor, fabric, a cool surface.

3

things you can HEAR

Traffic, a clock, your own breathing. Listen for the quietest one.

2

things you can SMELL

Air, coffee, soap. If nothing, name two smells you like.

1

thing you can TASTE

Sip water, or notice the taste already in your mouth.

Breathe first

Box breathing

In for 4 · hold 4 · out for 4 · hold 4. Repeat 4–6 rounds.

Longer exhale

In for 4, out for 6–8. A slow out-breath signals safety.

Hand on chest

One hand on your chest, one on your belly. Feel the belly rise.

Sigh it out

Two short inhales through the nose, one long sigh out of the mouth.

4-7-8 breathing

In for 4, hold for 7, out for 8. Good for settling before sleep.

Count your breaths

Count each out-breath up to ten, then start again at one.

Anchor your body

Feet on the floor

Press both feet down. Notice the support underneath you.

Temperature

Hold something cold, splash cool water on your wrists or face.

Name it to tame it

“I am feeling anxious, and I am safe right now.”

Move gently

Stretch, shake out your hands, or walk slowly for one minute.

Look around

Name five colours you can see, or count backwards from 20 in 3s.

Carry an anchor

Keep a smooth stone or keyring to hold and focus on when needed.

If things feel overwhelming

Grounding is a way to steady yourself — it is not a replacement for support. If you are struggling, please reach out. Samaritans 116 123 (free, 24/7) · Shout: text SHOUT to 85258 · CALM 0800 58 58 58 · In an emergency call 999. More free exercises, guides and audio: www.kateramsay.net/guides