

This Meditation Takes Just a Few Minutes and Helps Me Drift Off to Sleep Every Time



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Like many young adults, my sleep schedule is a bit of a roller coaster. Between an inconsistent work schedule and naturally being a night owl, my bedtime can range anywhere from midnight to 3 a.m. on a good day. And sometimes I still have trouble falling asleep.

There's nothing more frustrating than knowing you have to get up early the next day and not being able to fall asleep. Fortunately, there's one trick I've used since I was little that always puts me out like a light: a body scan meditation.

My mom taught me this method when I was young. The idea behind body scan meditation is to let go of all the tension in your body, which in turn helps you unwind and fall asleep faster. It's a relaxing and quick meditation exercise, and best of all, you can do it from the comfort of your bed.

It works like this: start like you would with any other meditation practice, getting in a comfortable position and taking slow, deep breaths. I prefer to lie down on my back, but others may prefer lying face down or on their side. Just do what feels comfortable to you.

Once you feel calm and relaxed, focus on every part of your body from the bottom of your feet to the top of your head. Starting with the focus on your feet, take deep breaths and let go of all the tension in your feet. Sometimes, you'll notice you're holding tension in parts of your body you didn't even know could get tense.

Once your feet feel relaxed, you move up the body to your legs, torso, arms, neck, and head. I like to focus on smaller segments at a time. For example, relaxing my toes, then feet, then ankles, then lower legs, and so on.

Whenever I feel restless when trying to sleep, I do a body scan meditation, and I often fall asleep before I even finish. You can meditate in silence, play relaxing music in the background, or use meditation apps like Insight Timer or Calm to give yourself some background noise and guidance while meditating. It's totally up to you.