

Finding the Magic 5-4-3-2-1

How to do the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique

1. **5 things you can see:**

Look around and name five different objects you see. Pay attention to their colors, shapes, or textures.

2. **4 things you can touch:**

Focus on what you can feel. Notice four different textures, such as the fabric of your clothes, the chair you're sitting on, or the phone in your hand.

3. **3 things you can hear:**

Listen and identify three sounds in your environment. They could be nearby sounds like traffic, or more distant ones like a clock ticking.

4. **2 things you can smell:**

Take a moment to notice two different smells around you. If you can't easily find any, try taking a sniff of something like a flower or a coffee cup.

5. **1 thing you can taste:**

Identify one thing you can taste, such as the lingering taste of food or a drink, or even the natural taste in your mouth.

- **Tip:** If you have trouble finding something for a sense, simply do your best and move on. The goal is to engage your senses, not to be perfect.

Why it works

- **Shifts focus:**

It interrupts a cycle of anxious or overwhelming thoughts by requiring you to concentrate on external, sensory information.

- **Calms the nervous system:**

By engaging your senses and focusing on the present moment, the technique helps to reduce your body's fight-or-flight response.

- **Can be done anywhere:**

This is a versatile technique that can be used discreetly in almost any setting to help you feel more stable and grounded.