

# The Importance of Relaxation

Relaxation is important to psychological and physical health. Our bodies and minds are not functioning well when we work too much and live under highly stressful conditions. Everyone needs down time—time to relax. You can accomplish relaxation by either taking short breaks (say 10 minutes every hour or so); longer breaks (an hour in the evening for a walk); or more extended breaks (Saturday afternoons for enjoying a hobby). Busy schedules can make working in time for relaxation a bit challenging. But, if you ignore your stress level and do not taking some down time for yourself you could pay the price and develop health problems. Most health experts recommend a plan for daily relaxation.

The military has some useful things to say about the importance of relaxation for maintaining good physical and mental health. Relaxation skills help in controlling the negative or damaging effects of long term stress. Relaxation can also reduce negative habits like taking drugs (especially painkillers), drinking in excess, and smoking to manage stress. [More](#)

## *Relaxing Activities*

### *Personal Enjoyment*

One type of relaxation involves an activity that you enjoy. This is a personal choice, so it will be different for everyone. To tap into relaxing activities ask yourself what you enjoy doing? What takes your mind off problems? What makes you feel refreshed and energetic? Pay attention to relaxation activities that can have a downside, like gambling. Mix an activity like gambling up with something physical, like hiking. The important goal here is to what helps you relax.

Once you've identified relaxing activities, you will need to make relaxation a priority and schedule it into your daily routine. Don't be afraid to mix it up a bit. You don't want to become bored with your relaxation routine. Pick days to walk, and others to call an old friend or work on restoring an old car, archiving digital photos, or fishing.

You may need to get creative to find time for relaxation. Sharing child care responsibilities with a friend is a great way to gain some down time for yourself and a friend.

### *Relaxation Exercise*

A second type of relaxation involves some kind of relaxation exercise. A relaxation activity generally consist of sitting in a quiet room in a comfortable chair, eyes closed and alternating tensing and relaxing different parts of your body. This technique is called progressive muscle relaxation. [More](#)

Another source for progressive muscle relaxation tips. [More](#)

*Web Sites with Relaxing Photo Images and Sounds*

[Relaxing photos](#)

[Relaxing sounds](#)

### ***Consider Meditation for Good Health***

Stress experts recommend daily relaxation to gain perspective, help recharge energy, and to be in the best shape possible to manage the stress that comes with daily living. Some individuals find regular meditation to be helpful. [More](#)