# **Beginning Meditation: Tips to Help You Get Started**

When you first start out practicing meditation, you may feel overwhelmed with all the instructions in your mind: calm your mind, watch your breathing, keep your back straight. Practicing meditation shouldn’t be stressful. Here are the top eight tips to help take the pressure off and allow your practice to unfold naturally.

1. Start with Quick 5-minute Sessions

You don't have to start your practice with a long, 20-minute session. When you are first starting out on your path, it can be overwhelming to try and sustain a more extended session. When first starting out, this can feel brutal. When you’re ready for more, you can move your sessions up to ten minutes.

2. Stretch First

Before you start your meditation session, take some time to stretch or do some yoga. This will allow you to prepare your body for sitting in a single position for a long time. Even taking the time to roll your neck and stretch your back beforehand can help with your comfort levels.

3. Set Your Timer

Setting a timer for your meditation session will keep you from having to check your clock regularly. Doing this removes a huge distraction from your practice. Setting your timer will allow you to relax and enjoy the experience.

4. Remove Distractions

Turn off your cell phone, or better yet, leave it in another room. You don’t want to have any distractions in your space as you meditate. The best place to meditate is a room that has a door that you can close.

5. Don’t Try Too Hard

Meditation, when done correctly should be soothing, relaxing, and effortless. Meditation is nothing more than observation. There should be no effort involved, only observing your breathing with your conscious awareness. So, don’t work too hard at it.

6. Create a Daily Practice

Meditating at the same time every day will allow you to develop a habit that becomes easier to accomplish. If you don’t build your practice into your daily routine, you’ll find yourself forgetting.

7. Get Relaxed Before You Start

You want to be sure to wear comfortable clothing and be in a relaxing environment. Make sure your space is comfortable and take a few deliberate, deep breaths before you start.

8. Try Different Types of Meditation

There are a dozen techniques that you can try from mindfulness meditation to mantra meditation. Try out several different types to see which one best suits your needs.