

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script

Long version, about 11 minutes. Read slowly. Hold each squeeze for about 7 seconds, then relax for about 30.

Before you begin. Find a comfortable position, sitting or lying down. Close your eyes if that feels okay, or rest them on one spot. You will tense one group of muscles at a time, hold it, then let go. Tense firmly, but never to the point of pain. Take a slow breath in, and a long breath out.

1. **Right hand and forearm.** Bring your attention to your right hand. Make a tight fist with your right hand. Squeeze, and hold. *(7 seconds)* Now let go. Let your fingers fall open and loose. *(30 seconds)*
2. **Right upper arm.** Now your right upper arm. Bend your right elbow and tighten the muscle at the front of your arm. Hold. *(7 seconds)* And release. Let your arm drop and rest. *(30 seconds)*
3. **Left hand and forearm.** Move your attention to your left hand. Make a tight fist with your left hand. Squeeze, and hold. *(7 seconds)* Let go. Let your fingers uncurl and soften. *(30 seconds)*
4. **Left upper arm.** Now your left upper arm. Bend your left elbow and tighten the muscle at the front of your arm. Hold. *(7 seconds)* And release. Let the arm grow heavy and still. *(30 seconds)*
5. **Forehead.** Bring your attention up to your forehead. Raise your eyebrows as high as they go, so your forehead wrinkles. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Let your eyebrows fall. Feel your forehead go smooth. *(30 seconds)*
6. **Eyes and nose.** Now your eyes and the middle of your face. Squeeze your eyes shut and scrunch up your nose. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Release. Let your eyelids rest lightly, and your cheeks go soft. *(30 seconds)*
7. **Jaw and mouth.** Now your jaw. Press your lips together and gently clench your back teeth. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Let go. Let your teeth part a little and your jaw hang loose. *(30 seconds)*

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Script, continued

8. **Neck.** Bring your attention to your neck. Go gently here. Slowly tuck your chin toward your chest until you feel the back of your neck tighten. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Lift your head back to resting. Let your neck soften. *(30 seconds)*
9. **Shoulders.** Now your shoulders. Lift both shoulders up toward your ears. Higher. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Let them drop. Feel them settle down and away from your ears. *(30 seconds)*
10. **Upper back and chest.** Now your upper back and chest. Pull your shoulder blades back and together, and take a deep breath in. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Breathe out slowly and let your back and chest soften. *(30 seconds)*
11. **Stomach.** Bring your attention to your stomach. Tighten your stomach muscles, as if bracing for a light push. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Release. Let your belly soften and rise and fall with your breath. *(30 seconds)*
12. **Hips and thighs.** Now your hips and thighs. Press your knees together and tighten your thighs and seat. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Let go. Let your legs grow heavy and supported. *(30 seconds)*
13. **Lower legs.** Now your lower legs. Point your toes away from you, so your calves tighten. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Release. Let your feet go back to resting, and your calves loosen. *(30 seconds)*
14. **Feet.** And last, your feet. Curl your toes down, as if gripping the floor. Hold. *(7 seconds)* Let go. Let your toes spread and your feet rest. *(30 seconds)*

During each pause, you can add one of these lines:

- Notice the difference between tight and loose.
- Let the muscles keep softening, a little more with each breath out.
- Breathe slowly. There is nothing you need to do right now.
- Notice any warmth, heaviness or tingling as the muscles let go.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to this part of your body.

To finish. That is every muscle group. Notice your whole body now, from your head down to your feet. If any spot still feels tight, let it soften a little more as you breathe out. When you are ready, wiggle your fingers and toes, and open your eyes.

Method: Edmund Jacobson. Script: Crown Counseling. Never tense to the point of pain, and skip any area that is injured or sore.

Short Version and Practice Log

About 4 minutes. Begin and finish as in the long version. Hold about 5 seconds, relax about 20.

1. **Hands and arms.** Make two tight fists and bend your elbows, tightening both arms. Hold. Now let go. Let your hands open and your arms rest.
2. **Face.** Scrunch your whole face: eyes shut, nose wrinkled, lips pressed together. Hold. Release. Let your forehead, eyes and jaw go smooth and loose.
3. **Neck and shoulders.** Lift your shoulders up toward your ears, and feel your neck tighten. Hold. Let them drop. Feel your neck lengthen and your shoulders settle.
4. **Chest and upper back.** Pull your shoulder blades back and together, and take a deep breath in. Hold. Breathe out slowly and let your chest and back soften.
5. **Stomach.** Tighten your stomach muscles. Hold. Release, and let your breath move your belly gently.
6. **Legs.** Straighten your legs, point your toes away from you, and tighten your thighs and calves. Hold. Let go. Let your legs grow heavy and still.
7. **Feet.** Curl your toes down, as if gripping the floor. Hold. Let go. Let your toes spread and your feet rest.

My practice this week

Day	Version	Tension before (0 to 10)	Tension after (0 to 10)	Notes

Squeeze and Let Go

A relaxation script for kids, about 3 minutes. Read it aloud, and do it together.

Start. Let's play a game called squeeze and let go. Get comfy, sitting or lying down. When I say squeeze, squeeze tight, but not so tight that it hurts. When I say let go, let your body go floppy.

1. **Hands.** Pretend you are holding a snowball in each hand. Squeeze them into hard, icy balls. Squeeze! *(Count to 5.)* Now drop the snowballs. Let your hands go loose and warm.
2. **Arms.** Now let's be superheroes. Bend your arms and make big, strong superhero muscles. Hold them! *(Count to 5.)* Now let your arms flop down, floppy like a rag doll.
3. **Shoulders.** Now your shoulders. Lift them way up high, like you are saying, I don't know! Hold! *(Count to 5.)* Now let them drop all the way down. Ahh.
4. **Face.** Now your face. Scrunch it up tight, like you just smelled very stinky socks. Scrunch! *(Count to 5.)* Now let your face go smooth and sleepy.
5. **Tummy.** Now your tummy. Make your tummy hard and tight, like the top of a drum. Hold! *(Count to 5.)* Now let it go soft, like a pillow.
6. **Legs.** Now your legs. Stretch them out straight and stiff, like a robot. Stiff! *(Count to 5.)* Now let them go wobbly, like jelly.
7. **Toes.** Last one: your toes. Curl them up tight, like you are trying to pick up a sock with your feet. Curl! *(Count to 5.)* Drop the sock. Wiggle your toes, then let them rest.

Finish. You did it! Your whole body squeezed and let go. Notice how your body feels now. Floppy? Calm? Sleepy? Take one big, slow breath in, and let it out.