

10 Ways To Take A Break In 10 Minutes



~Wellness@Mac

1. BINDER & BAG CLEAN UP

- Studies show that reorganizing leads to better mental health
- A clean work space equals a clean mind

Allow students a few minutes to organize their binder or bag so when they open it up it is not cluttered and it easy to work with

2. HEADS DOWN, LIGHTS OFF

- Students tend to be more motivated and ready to learn when they take small pauses and unwind for a couple of minutes during their lessons
- Turn the lights off, clear desks and allow students to put their heads down and relax

3. STRETCHING

- Sitting for too long is draining mentally and physically
- Pausing for a few minutes to stretch can help students feel less constricted and refocus
- Below are easy stretches students can do in their seats if there is limited space in the classroom

☐ SCALENES



Hold your chair seat and bend your neck to the side until you feel a *gentle* stretch. Repeat on opposite side.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

☐ ANTERIOR SCALENES



Holding your chair seat, angle your head back to the opposite side until you feel a *gentle* stretch. Repeat on opposite side.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

☐ LEVATOR SCAPULAE



Turn head to the left. Then bend your head down to feel a stretch above your right shoulder blade. Repeat on opposite side.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

☐ POSTERIOR CERVICALS



Gently bend your neck down to feel a stretch in the back of your lower neck.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

☐ ANTERIOR CERVICALS



Pull your collar bones down and *gently* bend your neck back.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

☐ UPPER TRAPEZIUS

Hold chair seat with your right hand. Nod down to the left. Turn chin slightly to the right. With left hand *gently* push back of



head downward to the left. You should feel a stretch in right side of neck and the top of right shoulder. Repeat on opposite side.

HOLD _____
REPEAT _____

4. ACTIVE EXERCISE IN THE CLASSROOM

- If the classroom the students are in happens to be bigger in size, doing a more active exercise could lead to better results with de-stressing
- <https://www.natural-health-news.com/various-types-of-stretches-part-ii/>



5. MEDITATION

Part A: Guided Meditation

(Source: The Honest Guys)

- Guided meditation can help the body and mind clear itself of stress
- The body decreases production of stress hormones while increasing neurotransmitters associated with calm and well-being
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p_yaNFSYao&disable_polymer=true

Part B: Meditate (Progressive Muscle Relaxation)

(Source: Edutopia)

- <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/help-students-de-stress-success>
- Encourage a minute or two of meditation in class
- Hold all positions below for 5 seconds, then relax. Count with students to guide them.
- Raise your eyebrows and wrinkle your forehead. Try to touch your hairline with your eyebrows.
- Close eyes tightly. Draw corners of closed mouth back.
- Stretch your arms out in front of you. Close fists tightly.
- Stretch your arms out to the side. Pretend you are pushing against a wall with your hands.
- Bend your elbows and create tension in your upper arm. Feel the tension leave arms.
- Pull your shoulders towards your ears.
- Arch your back away from the back of your chair or floor.

6. TEARING & CRUMPLING PAPER

- Using discarded paper, permit students to spend a few minutes ripping the sheet into shreds or crumpling it to relieve themselves of any inward pressure
- Have students dispose of the paper in the recycling bin

7. DRAWING

- Taking a minute to let your pencil flow onto the page can help reduce current stress
- Try drawing to music, sketching abstract shapes or designs
 - Relaxing forms of music including ROCK AND ROLL and classical music
- Try some of these themes to give to the class:
 - Nature, inspiring quotes, animals, patterns etc.

8. IDENTIFYING YOUR SOURCES OF STRESS

- Identifying sources of stress can help clear the mind, feel more organized and in control
- Have students jot down their causes for stress
- Later, advise students to eliminate one by one each source of stress as it gradually means less to them or the task has been completed, and students will report feeling more in control of their lives

9. VISUALIZATION

- Stimulate students' senses and encourage their well being by allowing them to picture an idea or location that best resembles their individual 'happy place'
- A few minutes set aside before a lesson to clear the mind and minimize pressure by visualizing positive situations has a great effect on students by cleaning out negative thoughts in order to better focus during class
- Visualizing doing well on a test can actually improve your results

10. LISTEN TO MUSIC

- Music has been proven to help one relax
- Be sure to bring earbuds / headphones
- For quiet work periods only