

1. Stretch

Sitting in the same position for most of the day can cause your neck, back, and shoulders to become stiff and tight. Your upper body is also more likely to slouch and hold tension when you are stressed. Stretching can help release this tension, improve your posture, and leave both your body and mind feeling more relaxed.

Try this set of relaxing stretches particularly useful for taking a break from the computer: <https://youtu.be/Wg7cYY4Std4>

2. Journal

Sometimes it is helpful to get your thoughts out of your head and onto paper. Journaling can be an effective, private way to process your stress and improve your overall mental health. There are no rules to what you should write about—you could write about your stress if it would help you process, or you could write about something like the weather or your daily routine. However, journaling about stress or fear can allow you to name your worries and give you space to reflect and think of a way forward.

You also don't need to structure or organize your journal in any certain way. Some people enjoy decorating the pages with colourful pens, and others enjoy writing in the margins. There are no wrong answers here.

Try these journaling prompts to get you started: <https://playivities.com/mindful-journalprompts-for-teens/>

3. Colour or Draw

Colouring or drawing is for everyone regardless of skill level, and there are a wide variety of designs to fit all kinds of interests. The activity can help shift your focus to creativity, which lets your brain take a much-needed break. If you don't want to buy a colouring book but you have a printer, you can find single page designs online and print them out. Or, if colouring pre-drawn designs doesn't appeal to you, you could doodle your own designs on a blank piece of paper.

This video on mindful drawing is a great place to start: <https://youtu.be/FO67ZF3Yh4U>

4. Put on Music and Dance

It may sound silly and cliché, but dancing to your favourite music can really boost your mood. Put your headphones on or turn your speakers up and just start moving! Follow your body's lead and don't worry about how good (or not good) your dance moves might be. Dancing to music engages both your mind and your body, raises your heart rate, releases endorphins, and can ease anxiety.

I'm not going to suggest a playlist. Just turn on whatever you love to listen to and let yourself go!

5. Watch Live Animal Cams

Some days, you just need to be distracted by kittens being kittens. With [Explore.org's live animal cams](#), you can see what the world's animals are up to in real time. Have you ever seen a bald eagle feed her babies or watched a manatee float gracefully through the water? Maybe you would rather watch horses grazing in a field or wait patiently for an elephant to come to the water hole at the Tembe Elephant Park. The live cams are constantly updated to include new and exciting opportunities to relax and observe life outside of our own.

6. Meditate

Perhaps you're used to meditating or maybe you've never tried it before. Meditation is a great way to get out of your head and into your body. It's a way to slow down and just be present. You can meditate either by listening to music such as this <https://youtu.be/b4Bjxrlp8o> or to a guided meditation like this one <https://youtu.be/TRgVlslcSeo>

There's no 'right' way to meditate. You may feel like you've fallen asleep, and that's ok too. Maybe your body and mind just needed a break! Give it a go and see what happens.

7. Go on a Google Maps Adventure

Did you know you could explore the world from your living room with Google Street View? [MapCrunch.com](#) is a website that randomly generates a new street view every time you click "Go!" You can customize your settings to drop you in specific continents, countries, or even urban or indoor settings. You might find yourself in a vineyard in Slovenia, on a rural road in Rio de Janeiro, or in a quiet neighbourhood in Greece. Randomize the street view as often as you want or "walk" down one street until you're ready for a new location. You can even submit your favourite views to MapCrunch's gallery and see the places other people have virtually visited.