

2. Muscle tense and release

This “muscle tense and release” relaxation exercise is about tensing the muscle in one part of your body, holding the tension and then releasing it suddenly. We generally find that once the muscle is released, it is more relaxed than it was prior to tensing it.

Focus first on your hands.

Clench your fists tightly for a few seconds - hold for the count of 3 seconds, counting them out – 1, 2, 3. You may wish to progressively hold for 4 seconds, then 5 or even more. Make sure you can do this reasonably comfortably.

Release the tension all in one go – make sure that the tension is released all at once with a feeling of floppiness at the end.

Repeat this with your hands and lower arms.

Repeat this with your hands and your whole arms.

Repeat this exercise with your feet, then feet and lower legs, then feet and whole of legs.

Finally hold the muscles of your entire body tense, hold for the count of 3 and at 3 release all tension from your body.