Mountain meditation script

Seated steadiness with optional imagery or physical contact cues. No breath holds.

Choose a steady, supported seat. Let your feet rest flat on the floor and allow the chair or cushion to carry your weight. Leave your breathing at its ordinary pace. You do not need to sit stiffly or hold a special posture; simple, comfortable support is enough.

If you like working with imagery, bring to mind a mountain that you have seen in person, in a photograph, or in your imagination. If visual pictures do not come easily—or if you prefer not to visualize—focus instead on the solid contact between your body and the floor beneath you.

Notice the overall shape of the mountain: a wide, stable base resting on the earth, sloping sides, and a peak reaching upward. Observe how the mountain simply sits where it is, grounded and unhurried.

Now notice how your own seated body shares a little of that steadiness. Your feet and pelvis form a base on the floor and chair; your spine rises comfortably; your head rests at the top, able to notice what is happening around you.

As the day moves across the mountain, light and shadow shift continually. Morning sun warms one slope while the other stays cool; clouds gather around the peak and drift away; afternoon wind or rain passes across the surface; night arrives with quiet darkness and stars. Through all of those changes on the surface, the mountain itself remains seated.

Seasons pass in the same way. Spring brings new growth, summer brings heat, autumn brings wind and falling leaves, and winter covers the slopes in snow and ice. None of these weather patterns surprises the mountain or forces it to become something else.

In a smaller, everyday way, your own thoughts, moods, and tasks move across your day like weather. A busy afternoon, an annoying message, a passing worry, or a moment of fatigue can show up on the surface without defining the whole of who you are. Observing a storm is not the same as ignoring practical needs; you can notice the weather clearly and still decide what sensible action to take next.

Sit for a few ordinary breaths with this sense of grounded support—whether through the image of the mountain or the simple feel of the chair beneath you. Let thoughts and sounds come and go without chasing them.

When you are ready to finish, let the image fade and look around the room. Notice two or three everyday objects nearby, stretch your hands and feet gently, and step back into your day at your own pace.

BEFORE YOU PRACTICE

Use this script at your own pace

1. Choose a supportive chair or cushion where your feet and back feel steady. Keep your eyes open, softly lowered, or closed if you prefer.
2. Preview the script before starting. If visual imagery does not work well for you, focus on the physical weight of your seat instead of picturing a mountain.
3. Leave your breathing completely natural. There is no requirement to slow, count, or hold your breath.
4. Read slowly, pausing for two to four ordinary breaths between paragraphs.
5. Stop or return to the room at any moment if inward attention or imagery feels uncomfortable.

For an unguided sit after reading, open the meditation timer. To learn how mountain meditation fits into the broader eight-week curriculum and listen to a 10- or 20-minute sitting practice, see our MBSR guide.

Who should be careful

Sitting still does not mean enduring physical pain or emotional distress. Adjust your posture whenever you feel stiffness or numbness, and stop the practice if you feel dizzy, disconnected, overwhelmed, or more anxious.

Do not use the "weather on the mountain" metaphor to suppress valid emotions, ignore a medical symptom, or stay passive in an unsafe situation. Never practice while driving. If anxiety, trauma, or persistent stress interferes with your daily functioning, consult a doctor or mental health professional.

NIH / NCCIH: Evidence and safety overview

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