How to relax

1. [Eat](http://www.wikihow.com/Eat) healthily. Sugar and caffeine are your enemies, as they both cause severe ups and downs, upsetting your body's ability to regulate energy. Instead of sugary, carbohydrate loaded snacks (like cookies or granola bars), eat fresh fruits and whole grain breads or crackers (sugar-free) . Make sure you get plenty of protein, like that found in chicken, lean beef, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.
2. Find a quiet place when you are feeling overwhelmed. Even the stall of a bathroom will work if you have no other place to go.
3. Close your eyes and picture your own personal paradise. Put yourself there and imagine the setting. What do you see around you? Is there a breeze? What do you hear--birds? Waves? Water? Imagine yourself thoroughly enjoying every moment here in your special place.
4. Breathe. Inhale deeply, counting to five, then exhale slowly, counting to five. Do this ten times.
5. [Relax in bed](http://www.wikihow.com/Relax-in-Bed). [Take a bath](http://www.wikihow.com/Take-a-Bath), play soft music, and lay down in bed. Read a book and clear your mind of all the stress and rush of the day.
6. Avoid people who are constantly angry or complain. Stress can be contagious, so avoid transmitters.
7. Stop engaging in behaviors that make you feel guilty. Seek help from a professional if necessary, but don't allow destructive behavior to sabotage your life and your health. Guilt is a potent source of stress, so get rid of the source of guilt by behaving yourself.
8. Exercise every day. You don't need to work out like a body builder or celebrity. At least twenty minutes (or more, if you like) every day of moderate activity, like walking or bike-riding, is the best known, scientifically proven way to significantly reduce stress. Walk on a treadmill every day for twenty minutes, take the stairs instead of the elevator, and park a little further away from the entrance to stores. You will be amazed at how much easier you overcome stress when you exercise regularly.
9. Learn to prioritize. Make a list of tasks you must accomplish that day. Put the most important things at the top and list every task in descending order of importance. Learn to be proactive and take care of things before they become a problem, then your time will be more productive and you will feel less stress.
10. Draw a warm bath, light candles around your tub, dim the lights, add bubbles, lavender, or just keep the water plain.
11. You can curl up on your couch with a blanket, and a good book, maybe even a cup of tea, cocoa, or coffee.
12. Do yoga; it relaxes your body, and helps clear your mind.
13. Go to your local spa for a great massage. You will feel so great afterwards.
14. Lay on your bed or sofa, have some soft music playing in the background (or nature Cd's) and listen to ocean waves, waterfalls, or birds.
15. Go for a walk. If you live near a park with a fountain, or near a beach or lake, the calming sound of water will soothe you. Just a regular walk will also relax you.
16. If you can, go swimming, either at your local pool, a friend or relatives home, or in a lake. Swimming is great for reducing stress.
17. Do the activities or hobbies that relax you (fishing, sewing, singing, painting, taking photographs) , whatever it is that keeps your mind off the things that normally stress you out, or things that you just need a break from every now and then.