

Progressive muscle relaxation

When we experience anxiety or find ourselves in a heightened state of stress, our muscles can tense up involuntarily. Progressive muscle relaxation can help to alleviate this tension and promote a sense of calm. We can deliberately contract individual muscle groups throughout our body, giving them a firm squeeze, and holding for approximately 10-20 seconds, followed by a deliberate relaxation period of another 10-20 seconds. These muscle contractions should not be overly forceful or painful. If in doubt, please consult with a medical professional before attempting this technique.

Forehead

Scrunch your forehead up, as tight as you can and then relax.

Cheeks

Puff your cheeks out as much as you can, making them as big as you can, then let them go and relax.

Arms

Make your arms really straight and stiff, holding the stretch for a few moments, then relax.

Lower back

Sit up super straight, stretching as tall as you can, and then relax.

Feet

Push your feet into the floor as hard as you can and then relax.

Eyes

Squeeze your eyes shut as tight as you can. Then relax.

Mouth

Explore gently clenching your teeth together briefly, then release, and notice your jaw sinking down

Shoulders

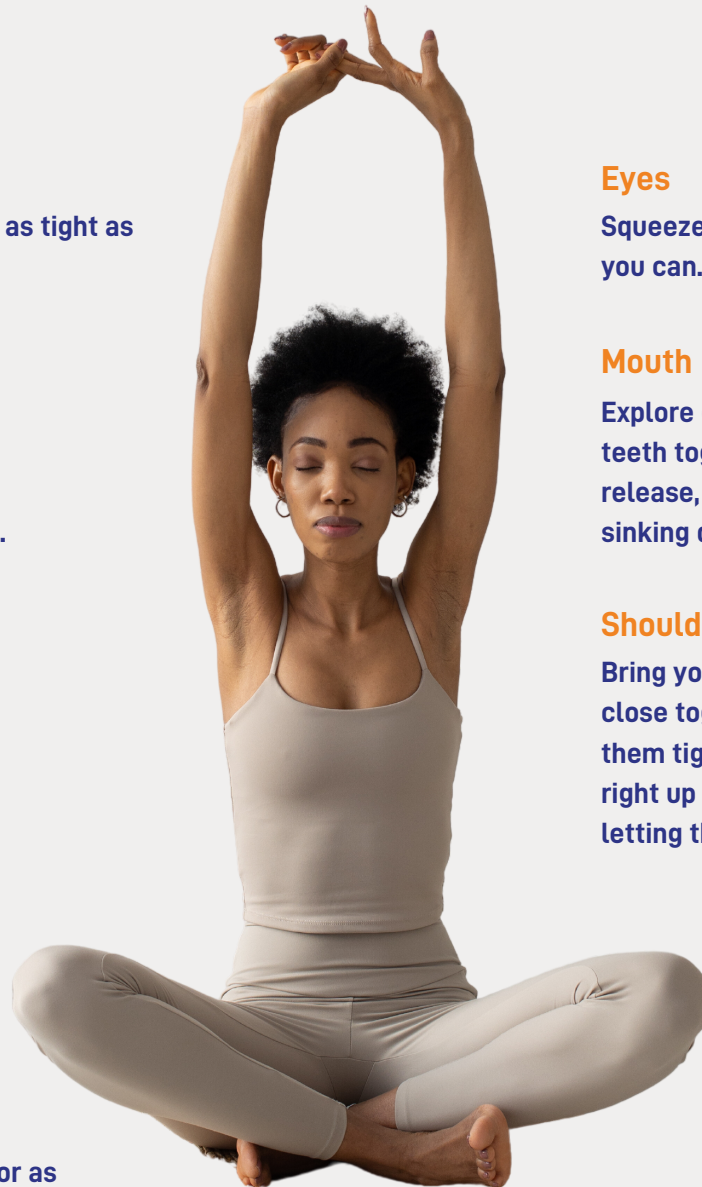
Bring your shoulder blades as close together as you can. Squeeze them tighter, scrunching them right up to your ears. Now, relax, letting them fall all the way down.

Legs

Stretch out your legs, making them as straight as possible, squeezing into the stretch. Now, let them relax.

Toes

Visualize yourself at the beach and scrunch your toes into the sand, as if you're forming small sandcastles. Then release and relax.



Next time you are feeling tense or anxious, you could try some of these exercises. It can be helpful to focus on the part of your body that is feeling most tense at the time.