

Eye exercises

1. PALMING



Rub your hands together for 10 to 15 seconds until they feel warm and energized. Then gently place your hands over your eyes, with the fingertips resting on the forehead, the palms over the eyes, and the heels of the hands resting on the cheeks. Don't touch the eyeballs directly, but hollow the hands slightly and allow them to form a curtain of darkness in front of the eyes. Close your eyes, breathe deeply, and relax. Envision the eyes absorbing the darkness like a sponge, while also welcoming healing warmth and energy from the hands. Invite the eyes to grow soft and spacious, and enjoy this break from visual stimulation. Continue this palming action as long as it feels soothing—for just a few seconds or up to five minutes. When you are ready to emerge, gently remove the hands from the face and slowly open the eyes.

This palming technique can also be done after the eye exercises that follow to further rest the eyes.

2. EYE ROLLING



Sit upright with a long spine and relaxed breath. Soften your gaze by relaxing the muscles in your eyes and face. Without moving your head, direct your gaze up toward the ceiling. Then slowly circle your eyes in a clockwise direction, tracing as large a circle as possible. Gently focus on the objects in your periphery as you do this, and invite the movement to feel smooth and fluid. Repeat three times, then close the eyes and relax. When you're ready, perform the same eye-rolling movement three times in a counterclockwise direction.

3. FOCUS SHIFTING



Relax your body and breathe comfortably. Hold one arm straight out in front of you in a loose fist, with the thumb pointing up. Focus on your thumb. While keeping your eyes trained on it, slowly move the thumb toward your nose until you can no longer focus clearly on it. Pause for a breath or two, and then lengthen the arm back to its original outstretched position, while maintaining focus on the thumb. Repeat up to 10 times.

4. DISTANCE GAZING



Rest your gaze on a distant object (if you're indoors, look out a window, if you can). Focus on the object as clearly as possible, while staying relaxed in the eyes and face. Take a deep breath, and then slowly shift your gaze to another distant object around you. Imagine your eyes are gently "drinking in" the image you see. Continue letting your eyes drift about the world around you, momentarily pausing at objects at varying distances away from you. As an extra bonus, if you spy something particularly pleasing, smile, enjoy the vision, and give thanks for your strong, healthy eyes.