

YOUR FREE GUIDE

# The Five-Minute Step Outside Guide: Seven days of Simple

Seven tiny invitations to slow down and feel better outside

Nature Rx CANADA

RECONNECT WITH NATURE

# Welcome




Picture the end of a long screen day. Your eyes are tired, your shoulders are up near your ears, and somewhere in the back of your mind is a small voice saying, I should really get outside more. Then you wonder where on earth to begin.

This guide is where to begin. It asks for five minutes a day, for seven days. You need no gear, no special shoes and no fitness level. Each day has one small invitation, a square to tick, and a line to jot down what you noticed.

Print it, put it where you will see it (beside your keyboard, on the fridge, tucked into your coat pocket) and start today. I have spent more than thirty years helping people of all ages notice the living world, and I can tell you this: small and steady beats big and rare. Time outdoors is good medicine, and the first dose can be tiny.

# 1 Seven Tiny Invitations, One Per Day

Here is your week. Each invitation takes about five minutes, and you can do it at any hour. In the morning, before the inbox gets opened, works well. So does a lunch break, or the moment you get home.

Do them in order, or skip around. If a day gets away from you, simply do that day tomorrow. Nobody is grading this experiment.



> **Keep in mind:** Leave your phone in your pocket, or at least face down. The point is to let your eyes and ears do the work for a few minutes.

- [ ] Day 1: Feel the air on your face. Step outside, close your eyes if it feels safe, and notice whether the air is warm, cool, damp or dry.
- [ ] Day 2: Find one green thing. A leaf, a blade of grass, a bit of moss in a sidewalk crack. Look at it properly.
- [ ] Day 3: Listen for the farthest sound. Stand still and reach your ears out past the traffic. What is the most distant thing you can hear?
- [ ] Day 4: Look up for one full minute. Sky, clouds, bare branches, rooftops with sky behind them. Let your eyes rest on something far away.
- [ ] Day 5: Touch something that grows. Bark, a leaf, a cedar hedge, a pot of herbs. Notice its texture and temperature.
- [ ] Day 6: Find one living thing that moves. A sparrow, a squirrel, a leaf trembling in the wind. Watch it until it is gone.
- [ ] Day 7: Sit still for the whole five minutes. No phone, no task. Just see what comes to you.

## 2 Tick the Box, Jot One Line



Beside each day in your guide you will find an empty square and a ruled line. When you have taken your five minutes, tick the square. Then write one line about what you noticed. One line is plenty.

The ticking matters more than you might think. It is a small, honest bit of proof that you showed up for yourself. The jotting matters too, because noticing gets sharper when you write it down. By Day 7 you may be surprised at how much more you see than you did on Day 1.

Your notes can be plain. They do not need to be clever, and they are for nobody but you.

- Day 2: The green was a tiny fern growing out of the brick by the bus stop.
- Day 3: Far away, a train. Closer, a door. I never heard the train before.
- Day 6: A crow walking, not flying, across the parking lot like it owned it.

> **Keep in mind:** Not sure what to write? Name a colour, a sound or a feeling. That is enough.

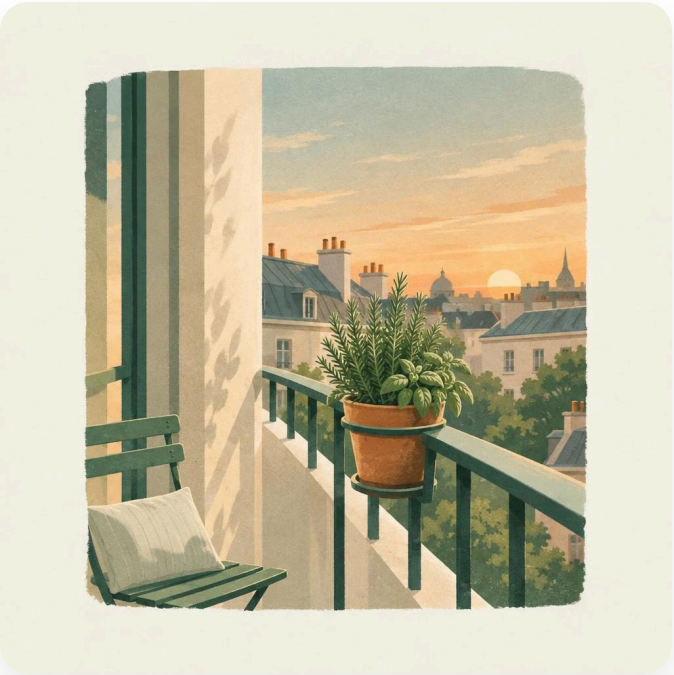
**Today I noticed...**

**One word for how I felt when I came back inside**

**The day I would happily do again**

## 3 Every Dose Works From Wherever You Are

Nature belongs to everyone, not only the people with the right boots, the right car or a trail nearby. A balcony counts. A windowsill with one plant on it counts. A patch of grass beside a sidewalk counts. Standing at a bus stop and looking at the sky counts.



So if you live in a high-rise, or the weather is poor, or your energy is low, you can still do every day in this guide. Open a window, step onto the balcony, or stand in the doorway. Let the outside reach you.

Research on nature and wellbeing is growing, and it is encouraging: time outdoors is linked with lower stress, a brighter mood and a greater sense of calm. Every person responds a little differently, so treat these five minutes as your own experiment and notice what shifts for you. It costs nothing to try, and many people simply feel a little lighter afterwards.

> **Keep in mind:** No gear. No fitness level. No special place. Just five minutes and a door, a window or a balcony.

**My spot for my five minutes will be...**

# 4 See a Bird and Call It Friend

When your week is done, here is my invitation: the next time a bird lands near you, stop for a moment. See it, and call it friend. It sounds small, and it is. It is also how many people begin to feel at home outside again, one familiar neighbour at a time.

If you enjoyed this week and want a gentle, guided month that turns a nudge into a habit, my 30-Day Daily Dose Workbook is waiting for you. Until then, step outside.



## My bird friend

Draw or describe it here

**Where I met it...**

**What it was doing...**

# Where to go from here

Do this first: print the guide today and put it where you will see it tomorrow morning. Then do Day 1, which is simply to step outside and feel the air on your face. That is the whole task.

When you are ready for more simple challenges and structure, The 30-Day Daily Dose Workbook: Slow Down, Look Closer, Feel Better is the next gentle step, with a month of small invitations to help the habit stay.

## Ready to make it stick?

The 30-Day Daily Dose Workbook turns five minutes outside into a daily habit, one gentle practice at a time.

$29

### About Laura Yakutchik

Laura Yakutchik is the founder of Nature Rx Canada, based in Stouffville, Ontario. She is a teacher and outdoor educator who has spent more than thirty years designing nature programs in parks, conservation areas, botanical gardens and outdoor education centres. Her daily nature posts and resources invite people to slow down, look closer and feel better outside.




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