



# Information sheet: Alexander technique

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## What is the Alexander technique?

Many of us adopt poor postural habits, which we repeat over and over on a daily basis, affecting the way we function. The aim of the Alexander technique is to make us more aware of the way we hold and move our body as we carry out daily activities, so that we can recognise and 'un-learn' poor habits and replace these with more helpful ones.

Once you have learned the technique, you can apply it to any activity – from driving a car or playing an instrument, to picking up your little one or pushing a shopping trolley.

## What does the technique do?

The Alexander technique is usually taught on a one-to-one basis. Simple, everyday movements such as sitting, standing, walking and bending are all explored over a series of lessons, with your teacher gently guiding you throughout, both verbally and physically, to help you create a new awareness of your body and more fluid way of moving.

Many people notice an improvement soon after starting the Alexander technique, but it is important to put into practice what you learn between lessons to see long-term benefits.

## What are the training standards?

The Alexander technique is a Level 6 qualification that requires three's year training (minimum), across nine academic terms. This is a minimum practitioner level requirement.

## Is there regulation?

Teachers of the Alexander technique are not regulated by statute. However, they can volunteer to be listed on an Accredited Register that has been independently approved by the Professional Standards Authority ([PSA](#)), as part of a government-backed programme, if they meet relevant criteria.

## How do I find a teacher?

It is important to find a teacher who is appropriately qualified and insured, and who belongs to a respected professional association, so that you can be confident that they meet industry standards and abide by a strict code of conduct. The Federation of Holistic Therapists ([FHT](#)) is the UK's largest professional association for complementary therapists in the UK. You can find an Alexander technique teacher in your area on the [FHT's Accredited Register](#).

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## Are there any safety concerns for the Alexander technique?

No, if carried out by a professional teacher. Alexander technique should always be used alongside standard medical care and not as an alternative. Other cautions and considerations also apply, which your teacher will discuss with you before your first session.

## Is there an evidence base?

Research into the health benefits of the Alexander technique is not as readily available as it is for more conventional medical treatments. A study published in the BMJ ([Little P et al, 2008](#)) showed that one-to-one lessons in the Alexander technique from registered teachers have long term benefits for patients with chronic back pain, while another study that appeared in Clinical Rehabilitation ([Stallibrass C et al, 2002](#)) suggests the technique may benefit people with Parkinson's disease. For research abstracts, search for 'Alexander technique' at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>