

Remember that calming and alerting doesn't always mean good or bad. We don't want calming sensory input if we are already very calm or alerting sensory input if we are already very alert. We want to find the just right balance. You can do this with multiple senses at once or focus on just one

In general, sensory input that is **calming** is often mild/soft, slow, rhythmic, simple, familiar, predictable, soothing, and undemanding.

Sensory input that is **alerting** is often strong/pronounced, fast paced, complex, novel, unpredictable, irritating, and demanding.

Smell

| Calming | Alerting |
|---|--|
| ~ Candles with a soothing smell like rose or vanilla ~Mild fragrances ~Smells with a positive association | ~Candles with a strong smell like lemon or peppermint ~Strong fragrances ~Smells with a negative association |

Vision

| Calming | Alerting |
|---|--|
| ~Natural or dim lighting ~Soft pastel colours ~Movement of fish in an aquarium ~Bubble or lava lamps ~Limited clutter | ~Artificial or bright lighting ~Bright colours ~Rapidly changing or flashing lights ~Video games ~Messy or cluttered space |

Hearing

| Calming | Alerting |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Little to no speech~Soft, slow, rhythmic music~Quiet humming or singing~Repetitive background sounds (white noise or wave sounds)~Simple, melodic music~Indoor fountains and bubbling sounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Lots of talking~Offbeat, loud, quick music~Singing loudly~Unfamiliar background noises (alarms or construction)~Rock music~Whistling and hand held instruments |

Taste

| Calming | Alerting |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Sweet, hard candy~Tea~Oatmeal~Apple juice~Sweet fruits~Chocolate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Lemon drops or peppermints~Strong, sour, or bitter foods~Chili or other spicy foods~Lemonade~Pickles~Cinnamon candies |

Oral Motor (Mix of Taste and Touch)

| Calming (Sucking or Chewy) | Alerting (Crunchy) |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Hard Candy~Thick liquid through a straw~Lollipop~Gum~Dried Fruit | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Crushed Ice~Popcorn~Pretzels~Raw vegetables~Crunchy cereal or granola |

Touch

| Calming (Deep Pressure) | Alerting (Light Touch) |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Strong hugs or back rubs~Heavy blanket~Spandex wraps~Bean bag tapping~Deep massage~Stress ball or clay | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Tickling~Walking on grass~Feeling cold water~Feeling something prickly or squishy~Touch from something unexpected~Brushing lightly with a brush or feather |

Proprioception (Movement)

| Calming | Alerting |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Chewing gum~Walking or hiking~Heavy, sustained resistance~Yoga~Lifting, carrying, or pushing~Joint compressions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Quick, jerky movements~Fast dancing~Jogging~Stamping feet~Jumping or skipping~Loudly clapping |

Vestibular (Balance)

| Calming | Alerting |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Rocking slowly in a chair~Swinging gently~Slow dancing~Slow head rolls~Bouncing lightly and rhythmically | <ul style="list-style-type: none">~Spinning in circles~Fast carnival rides~Fast dancing~Rapid movements of the head~Rolling and moving on a therapy ball |