

BFRB CUE AWARENESS

The 10-Minute Environment Audit for Skin Picking and Hair Pulling

Notice what makes the sequence easier to start - then test one small change.

PURPOSE

Skin picking and hair pulling are not failures of willpower. Some episodes are more automatic; others are focused and may begin with scanning, touching, a sensory cue, or an urge. This audit looks at environmental cues, access, posture, attention, and context.

HOW TO USE IT

Walk through your usual spaces once. Notice one or two patterns that fit, then choose one small, reversible change to test. The goal is to create a pause for awareness and choice.

USE WITHOUT OVER-MONITORING

Do not repeatedly audit every room, remove every trigger, or create a perfectly controlled environment. Environmental modification is one treatment component, not blanket avoidance or a substitute for assessment.

Automatic and focused episodes can look different

MORE AUTOMATIC

Awareness may arrive late. Hand position, location, idle time, or a familiar routine can cue movement before a strong urge is consciously noticed.

MORE FOCUSED

Scanning, touching, a visual or sensory irregularity, emotional activation, or a strong urge may begin or maintain the sequence.

These patterns can overlap. The audit is not a diagnostic test and is not designed to classify every episode. It is a one-time snapshot of conditions that may make the behavior easier to start or continue.

A SIMPLE BEHAVIORAL SEQUENCE

CUE → MOVEMENT → BEHAVIOR → CONSEQUENCE

CONTEXT MATTERS

Mirrors, tools, bright light, grooming routines, and hand positions also have ordinary uses. The question is not whether an object or setting is bad; it is whether a repeated combination reliably pulls you into the behavior and whether a modest change supports choice.

Audit points 1-4

Use a first impression. Note only what seems useful; there is no score to total.

1 Mirror zone

Where does looking turn into scanning, touching, picking, or pulling? Notice distance, angles, magnifying mirrors, and repeated checking.

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

2 Lighting effect

Which lighting conditions sharpen attention to perceived irregularities or lengthen visual inspection?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

3 Tool access

Which tweezers, pins, extraction tools, or nail tools are routinely within reach? Useful tools do not need to be banned; notice when access extends the sequence.

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

4 Hand position

Where do your hands naturally rest during work, reading, driving, meetings, or study?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

Audit points 5-8

Use a first impression. Note only what seems useful; there is no score to total.

5 Idle-time window

When attention is on television, scrolling, reading, or waiting, when can hands move before awareness arrives?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

6 Location pattern

Which repeated settings are most connected with the behavior: bed, bathroom, desk, couch, car, shower, workplace, or elsewhere?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

7 Texture and sensory cue

Do scabs, bumps, coarse hairs, or uneven textures prompt tactile searching or repeated checking?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

8 Transition trigger

Do routines such as showering, dressing, arriving home, studying, winding down, or preparing for bed cue the sequence?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

Audit points 9-12

Use a first impression. Note only what seems useful; there is no score to total.

9 Accessibility pattern

How do posture, hair position, clothing, seating, mirrors, or room setup keep a target area continuously available?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

10 Competing response availability

Is a brief, deliberately selected response available when an urge or early movement appears?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

11 Stress and boredom context

Which settings pair the behavior with overload, boredom, frustration, fatigue, or emotional activation?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

12 Environmental friction

What small, reversible change could interrupt automaticity long enough for awareness and choice?

NOTES / FIRST IMPRESSION

Choose one or two patterns

The useful result is not a complete trigger map. It is a small amount of information that can guide one experiment or a treatment discussion.

THE SETTING, CUE, POSTURE, OR CONTEXT THAT SEEMS MOST REPEATABLE

WHAT USUALLY HAPPENS IMMEDIATELY BEFORE AWARENESS ARRIVES

ONE MODEST FRICTION POINT OR CUE CHANGE TO TEST

ONE COMPETING OR ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE TO DISCUSS OR PRACTICE

WHAT I WANT TO OBSERVE ONCE, WITHOUT GRADING THE RESULT

Add friction, not a fortress

A useful environmental change is small, reversible, and specific. Examples include moving a tool, adjusting a seat or light, covering a magnifying mirror between planned uses, changing where hands rest, or placing a selected competing-response item within reach.

DO NOT OVER-CONTROL THE ENVIRONMENT

Trying to eliminate every texture, mirror, tool, urge, or unstructured moment can become rigid and unworkable. The aim is a pause that makes choice more available, not a guarantee that picking or pulling cannot occur.

MY ONE-WEEK EXPERIMENT

WHAT I WILL REVIEW ONCE AFTER THE EXPERIMENT

WHEN PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT MAY HELP

Persistent skin picking or hair pulling may benefit from clinical assessment and evidence-based behavioral treatment such as Habit Reversal Training and related interventions. Seek medical care for wounds, infection concerns, significant hair loss, or other health complications.

EDUCATIONAL USE

This resource is for psychoeducation and self-reflection. It is not a diagnostic test, substitute for medical or mental-health care, or promise of symptom reduction.