

# Sitting Meditation



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The **Primary Object** is the object that the yogi uses as the main object to develop mindfulness and concentration.

The **Primary Object**, first used in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* Meditation taught by the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw, is usually the **Rising/Falling** of the abdomen. Sometimes the In/Out of the breath at the nose is used instead, when the **Rising/Falling** object is not suitable. Both are natural bodily processes, which are part of the Contemplation of the Body (*kāyānupassanā*) and they correspond to the “grosser materiality” (*olārikarūpa*): 5 sensitive organs (sensitive part of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body) and 7 sense data (visible-object, sound, smell, taste, hardness, temperature, and pressure/movement).

The **Secondary Object** is used instead of the **Primary Object** when:

1. The **Primary Object** is insignificant, difficult to perceive or absent
2. The **Secondary Object** is stronger and more dominating. If this occurs for an extended period of time, then it becomes the **Primary Object**.

**Secondary Objects** usually do not last in the presence of **Primary Objects**; they either disappear or fade to the background. When this happens, the **Secondary Object** can be ignored. Defilements/hindrances are unwholesome and should not be taken as **Secondary Objects**. If defilements/hindrances continue to increase, this indicates the absence or weakness of mindfulness and so firm action should be taken.

When the **Primary Object** and **Secondary Object** are of equal strength, the **Primary Object** is followed chiefly while keeping an eye on the **Secondary Object**. As long as the **Primary Object** can be followed satisfactorily, it is still held onto, even if it may be weaker than the **Secondary Object**. It is only when the **Secondary Object** draws attention too strongly and too often that we note it.

**Sitting/Touching** refers to bodily sensations used in mindful observation. **Sitting** refers to internal sensations such as tension in the spine and limbs that maintain the posture. **Sitting** is alternated with **Touching**, which refers to sensations at the body surface such as when the hands touch each other or when the buttocks touch the floor. Different teachers promote different approaches to **Sitting/Touching**.

**Pain** becomes the **Primary Object** when it becomes strong and persistent and so it has to be attended to. You should watch **Pain** as long as you can maintain mindfulness satisfactorily. When mindfulness is weak or absent, it is better to change posture to continue being mindful.

**Consciousness** becomes the **Primary Object** when all other objects become insignificant (not prominent) or unclear.

**Paramattha** are “Ultimate Realities” that exist because of their own intrinsic nature. These phenomena are experienced directly as specific characteristics/qualities by one whose mindfulness is sharp, discerning and non-conceptual.

**Dhamma** is used as the **Primary Object** when you use a phenomenon other than body, feelings, or consciousness. **Dhamma** is used as the **Primary Object** when you have advanced to the first insight knowledge of *anattā* and beyond.