

Reality Checks Tutorial

Reality Checks

Reality Checks are a necessary part of the Lucid Dreaming learning curve. Reality Checking is just what it sounds like - it is checking which reality you are in. In this case, "Am I dreaming, or am I awake?" Reality checks provide a clear means of defining and *distinguishing the dream world from the waking world* - which is the majority of the battle when it comes to become lucid. The idea of Reality Checking is that you get into the habit of asking yourself to check if you are dreaming or asking yourself if you are dreaming - you may check upon encountering a known dream sign [see: dream journal] for example. As this becomes a day-to-day task in the waking world, it will become one in the dreaming world.

Examples of common reality checks are provided below - these have been provided by members of the Dreamviews community. If you have your own to contribute, post it in the appropriate forum (currently Attaining Lucidity) and perhaps a moderator will update this tutorial.

1. Look at your watch or a clock

When you are lucid dreaming, the part of your brain in charge of recognizing numbers and letters is still asleep. Therefore, when you check the time, it should be completely random. For example, if you look at your watch and it is "12:25" one minute and "2:33" the next, you know you are dreaming (barring the unlikely situation that your digital watch is extremely broke) and are therefore lucid.

2. Attempt to Write

When you write, it may be illegible or irregular, and the letters may change, as with above. If you notice this occurring, it is a strong hint that you may be dreaming (barring the unlikely situation that somebody spiked your drink.)

3. Attempt to Read

If you have problems reading text, or read it once and when you try again it is different, then you are most likely dreaming.

4. Try to find unusual things in the world

These are things to look out for in a dream. If, for example, the sky is green and an alien is attacking you, it is most certainly a dream. Of course, it is likely to be far more subtle than this, as is normal. When you pick up on this, try to alter your surroundings in some way - a usually easy dream trick. If you can, then you are either dreaming or magic.

5. Turning the lights on/off

When you are dreaming, one of the things some people are unable to do is adjust the light level of the settings you are in. If you try to turn the light switch on/off and nothing happens then there are 2 possibilities:

- a. You are dreaming
- b. The light bulb burnt out the light switch doesn't work for some reason.

6. Trying something considered "impossible"

Another method to test whether you are in a dream or not is to try something that you know is impossible in the waking life. Commonly used examples of this are: Putting your finger through your palm, crossing over through a mirror, levitating, etc. I suggest you don't try

something like flying out your window or such... just to be on the safe side.

7. Memory Check

This is a method where you are "asking" yourself what have happened during the day, or fortunately a dream. Try to think back as far as you can. When you perform this method, you will be aware if you have experienced anything illogical during the day, and you may have blank periods.

8. Mirror Check

Go to a mirror, and look at your self carefully. Ask yourself if you are dreaming. If you are dreaming, it is likely that you will notice something strange in the mirror. For instance, you could have a different hair style from normal, or different clothes. You may also look like you are a completely different person. In this case, you are definitely dreaming.

9. Self Observation Test

This method is similar to the one above. It is a very flexible reality check in that it takes little time, and you could do it almost all the time. Look at your self. If you have, for instance, 7 fingers on one hand, you are dreaming. You could also look at your clothes. If they look strange, you are probably dreaming.

10. Look for a dream sign

Dream signs are common things which frequently appear in your dreams. For example, in some dreams, you may always see a certain person (possibly a dream guide) and the same features (for example, something which does not exist in reality but is always there in your dreams).

11. The Breathing Test

This is a nice all-rounder. Pinch your nose closed and keep breathing. Try not to think about your breathing while doing it, just leave your usual 'automatic' breathing to do its work. If you can breathe whilst pinching your nose, you're dreaming.

12. Emotion Analysis

Pay close attention to how you feel. If something causes you to react a certain way - frustration, bliss, laughter, it would be a good time to determine your state. The feelings generated by a dream are the same as in the waking world, so it's certainly something to keep in check.

13. Constant physical awareness

If you're like me, you've been trained to be rushing from point A to point B throughout life. Life is a race and there's no sense of *now*. Learning to control the feeling of now is a great way to pick up on the inconsistencies. I find that learning to consciously acknowledge the little things in life is a great way to regenerate the mind's analytical ability. I find this to be very strong in kids. They will pick up on something insignificant to my mind, and point it out to me, and I will be thinking 'How did you notice that?' It's that sense of 'now', the feeling that there's not some light waiting at the end of a tunnel, but that the tunnel is filled with light.

14. Use a computer

This one's easy. Do your normal startup programs run? Can you access the internet okay? Go to a lucid dreaming site every day you wake up - it might help trigger an LD. It is basically the same idea as the reading test.

15. Look outside

Is the weather normal for the season? For example, if it's snowing in the middle of summer you're either dreaming or the ice age has started.

16. Look at the layout of your room

Is it how you left it when you went to sleep? If you have shelves, is everything on the shelves that you expected to?

17. Look/use a telephone

Are all the numbers in order? Press the "call" button. Do you get the "boooo" tone?

18. Jump

Just do it. Do you float? Do you stay in the air for an abnormal amount of time? Do you hear the "thump" sound when you land?

19. Say something

Sometimes your voice can be distorted in a dream, so just say something to yourself quietly.

20. Throw something

Throw a soft ball or something of the sort. Does it act as you would expect it to? Does it stay up or move abnormally far?

21. Look at your pets

If you have pets, just look at them. Do they look normal? Stroke them. Do they feel as they should?

22. Talk to somebody

Talk to somebody, preferably somebody you know quite well. Do they act as they usually act?

23. Play some music

Are the lyrics as they should be? Are the singers the people that should be singing? Does it sound distorted?

24. Smell something

Quite easy. Spray something or some perfume or just smell something - does it smell as expected?

Thanks to demerzel for this tutorial.