

Diaphragmatic Breath

You should breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth for this exercise.

1. Sit up straight, in a chair with the support of pillows behind the back or practice this lying down flat in your bed.

2. Relax your shoulders.

3. Put a hand on your chest and a hand on your stomach.

4. Breathe in through your nose for 2- 5 seconds. You should experience the air moving through your nostrils into your abdomen, making your stomach expand. During this type of breathing make sure your stomach is moving outward while your chest remains relatively still.

5. Purse your lips (as if you're about to drink through a straw), press gently on your stomach and slowly exhale for 3-8 seconds, the breath out should be 1 or 2 counts longer than the breath in. Each person's count may vary.



Repeat these steps for a few rounds, if the mind wanders off bring it back to the count of the breath and follow the breath movements in the body. When you have completed a few rounds exhale fully and come back to a natural breath.

Diaphragmatic Breath can help:

- you relax, lowering the harmful effects of the stress hormone cortisol on your body.
- lower your heart rate.
- lower your blood pressure.
- reduce anxiety and bring clarity and focus to the mind.
- improve your core muscle stability.
- improve your body's ability to tolerate intense exercise.
- lower your chances of injuring or wearing out your muscles.
- slow your rate of breathing so that it expends less energy.

Numbered Breathing



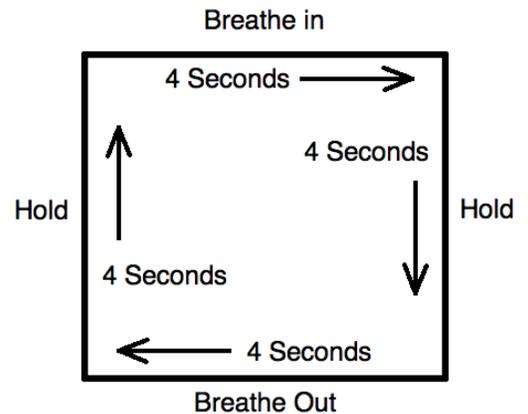
Numbered breathing is a good exercise for gaining control over your breathing patterns. Here's how you can do it:

- 1) Sit up straight, in a chair with the support of pillows behind the back or practice this lying down flat in your bed.
- 2) Relax your shoulders.
- 3) Breathe in through the nose, as you do so count or imagine the number 1. Allow the breath to be deep and expansive.
- 4) Breathe out through the mouth with pursed lips while counting or imagining the number 2. Allow the breath to be smooth and long as you exhale.
- 5) Breathe in again through the nose, counting or imagining the number 3... and so on.

You can choose to count up to five then repeat as you count back down to one, or even try to count to 20 and then reverse the count back down. This helps to provide you with some focus. If the mind wanders off start back at number one. Another good idea is to watch a clock or timer and count numbers along with your breath.

Box Breathing

Before you get started, make sure that you're seated upright in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor. Try to be in a stress-free, quiet environment where you can focus on your breathing. Keep your hands relaxed in your lap with your palms facing up. Focus on your posture, you should be sitting up straight. This will help you to take deep breaths.



- 1) Slowly exhale through your mouth as deeply as you can.
- 2) Now inhale slowly and deeply through your nose to the count of four. In this step, count to four very slowly in your head. Feel the air fill your lungs, one section at a time, until your lungs are completely full and the air moves into your abdomen.
- 3) Hold your breath for another slow count of four.
- 4) Exhale through your mouth for the same slow count of four, expelling the air from your lungs and abdomen. Be conscious of the feeling of the air leaving your lungs.
- 5) Hold your breath for the same slow count of 4 before repeating this process.

Dizziness after a few rounds is normal if you aren't used to breathing like this. If you get dizzy, stay sitting for a minute and resume normal breathing. If this breathing pattern panics you then stop immediately and return to a natural breath. If a count of 4 doesn't feel good start with a lower count but repeat the same method above. Alternatively if it feels too short you can increase the count but keep the method equal throughout.

Repeat the cycle 4 times if you can manage to.