



Simple Breathing Exercises

When you make one part of the breath cycle, either the inhale or the exhale, longer than the other, and you do this for several minutes, the accumulated effect is that you will either slow the heart rate down or speed it up from where you started. Longer inhales than exhales, for example, by using a two-second inhale and a one-second exhale, and you keep this up for several minutes, the heart rate will go a bit faster. This will stimulate the Sympathetic portion of the ANS.

To stimulate the Parasympathetic portion of the ANS make the exhales longer than the inhales. In this case, use a two-second exhale and a one-second inhale, and you keep this up for several minutes, the heart rate will slow down.

Breathe 1: Simple Deep Breathing

The most basic thing to remember is that your breath begins with a full exhalation (I know this seems counterintuitive, but it's true). You can't inhale fully until you empty your lungs completely. It is also important to breathe in through your nose.

The technique:

- Sit in a comfortable position with your hands on your knees and your feet touching the ground.
- Relax your shoulders.
- On your next exhalation, breathe out slowly through your nose, counting to five. Tense your abdominal muscles, drawing in your diaphragm to help your lungs deflate.
- At the bottom of your breath, pause for two counts,
- then inhale slowly to the count of five. Expand your belly as you breathe in.
- Now close your eyes and repeat 5–10 times.
- Think of your diaphragm as the pump and your breath as the power.

If you find that your mind wanders during this exercise, don't worry. Just refocus on your counting. As your awareness of your breath increases, you'll find that it becomes easier to breathe deeply without so much attention.

Breathe 2: Oxytocin Breathing

Oxytocin is a natural hormone in our bodies (male & female). It's known as the feel-good hormone and it's really easy to activate. I actually tell everyone "I get high on my own supply"...

Here is a link to a video that I created a couple of years ago showing you the best way to Oxytocin Breathe... enjoy.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6IKsiTaaWQ>

Breathe 3: The Bellows or Fire Breath

The bellows breath is a yogic exercise that stimulates energy when you need it, toning the abdomen and massaging the internal organs and lymph system. Though not deep breathing, the bellows does activate the lungs, neck, chest and abdomen so that deeper breathing comes more naturally.

The technique:

- Again, sit in a comfortable position.
- With your mouth closed, breathe in and out through your nose as fast as possible.
- Think of pumping up a balloon or water toy. Try to breathe in and out as equally as possible. Continue for 10–15 seconds, no more at first.
- As you become more accustomed to this technique you can increase the exercise to one full minute.

If you find that your mind wanders during this exercise, don't worry. Just refocus on your counting. As your awareness of your breath increases, you'll find that it becomes easier to breathe deeply without so much attention.