



Breathing Exercises

1. Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)

Instructions:

1. Inhale through your nose for 4 counts.
2. Hold your breath for 4 counts.
3. Exhale slowly through your mouth for 4 counts.
4. Hold again for 4 counts.
5. Repeat 4–6 rounds.

How long: About 2–4 minutes.

When to use: Helpful before a presentation, exam, or stressful conversation.

How it works: Balances oxygen and carbon dioxide in the body, slows heart rate, and reduces stress by engaging the parasympathetic nervous system.

2. 4-7-8 Breathing

Instructions:

1. Inhale gently through your nose for 4 counts.
2. Hold your breath for 7 counts.
3. Exhale through your mouth for 8 counts.
4. Repeat 3–4 rounds.

How long: 2–5 minutes.

When to use: Best before bed, when trying to relax or fall asleep.

How it works: Lengthened exhalation slows down the nervous system and



promotes a sense of calm, making it easier to rest or reduce racing thoughts.

3. Diaphragmatic (Belly) Breathing

Instructions:

1. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.
2. Inhale deeply through your nose, letting your belly rise.
3. Exhale slowly through pursed lips, feeling your belly fall.
4. Continue for 5–10 breaths.

How long: 3–5 minutes.

When to use: When feeling anxious, overwhelmed, or physically tense.

How it works: Activates the diaphragm, promotes full oxygen exchange, and decreases muscle tension, helping the body shift from “fight or flight” to relaxation.

4. Alternate Nostril Breathing (Nadi Shodhana)

Instructions:

1. Sit comfortably and use your right thumb to close your right nostril.
2. Inhale slowly through your left nostril.
3. Close your left nostril with your finger, release the right nostril, and exhale.
4. Inhale through the right nostril, then close it and exhale through the left.
5. Continue alternating for 5–10 rounds.



How long: 3–6 minutes.

When to use: When feeling scattered, unfocused, or needing balance.

How it works: Balances the two hemispheres of the brain, regulates breathing rhythm, and promotes mental clarity and focus.

5. Lion's Breath

Instructions:

1. Sit upright and take a deep inhale through your nose.
2. Open your mouth wide, stick out your tongue, and exhale forcefully while making a “haaa” sound.
3. Repeat 3–5 times.

How long: Less than 2 minutes.

When to use: When feeling frustrated, angry, or needing to release pent-up energy.

How it works: Releases muscular tension in the face and jaw, stimulates the vagus nerve, and provides a physical outlet for emotional energy.