

Breath Exercises from

<https://www.webmd.com/balance/stress-management/stress-relief-breathing-techniques#1>

Breathing Techniques for Stress Relief

Take a deep breath in. Now let it out. You may notice a difference in how you feel already. Your breath is a powerful tool to ease [stress](#) and make you feel less anxious. Some simple breathing exercises can make a big difference if you make them part of your regular routine.

Before you get started, keep these tips in mind:

- Choose a place to do your [breathing](#) exercise. It could be in your bed, on your living room floor, or in a comfortable chair.
- Don't force it. This can make you feel more stressed.
- Try to do it at the same time once or twice a day.
- Wear comfortable clothes.

Many breathing exercises take only a few minutes. When you have more time, you can do them for 10 minutes or more to get even greater benefits.

Deep Breathing

Most people take short, shallow breaths into their chest. It can make you feel anxious and zap your energy. With this technique, you'll learn how to take bigger breaths, all the way into your belly.

1. Get comfortable. You can lie on your back in bed or on the floor with a pillow under your head and knees. Or you can sit in a chair with your shoulders, head, and neck supported against the back of the chair.
2. Breathe in through your nose. Let your belly fill with air.
3. Breathe out through your nose.
4. Place one [hand](#) on your belly. Place the other hand on your chest.
5. As you breathe in, feel your belly rise. As you breathe out, feel your belly lower. The hand on your belly should move more than the one that's on your chest.
6. Take three more full, deep breaths. Breathe fully into your belly as it rises and falls with your breath.

Breath Focus

While you do deep breathing, use a picture in your mind and a word or phrase to help you feel more relaxed.

1. Close your [eyes](#) if they're open.
2. Take a few big, deep breaths.
3. Breathe in. As you do that, imagine that the air is filled with a sense of peace and calm. Try to feel it throughout your body.
4. Breathe out. While you're doing it, imagine that the air leaves with your [stress](#) and tension.
5. Now use a word or phrase with your breath. As you breathe in, say in your mind, "I breathe in peace and calm."
6. As you breathe out, say in your mind, "I breathe out stress and tension."
7. Continue for 10 to 20 minutes.

Equal Time for Breathing in and Breathing Out

In this exercise, you'll match how long you breathe in with how long you breathe out. Over time, you'll increase how long you're able to breathe in and out at a time.

1. Sit comfortably on the floor or in a chair.
2. Breathe in through your nose. As you do it, count to five.
3. Breathe out through your nose to the count of five.
4. Repeat several times.

Once you feel comfortable with breaths that last five counts, increase how long you breathe in and breathe out. You can work up to breaths that last up to 10 counts.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

In this technique, you breathe in as you tense a muscle group and breathe out as you release it. Progressive muscle relaxation helps you relax physically and mentally.

1. Lie comfortably on the floor.
2. Take a few deep breaths to relax.
3. Breathe in. Tense the muscles of your [feet](#).
4. Breathe out. Release the tension in your feet.
5. Breathe in. Tense your [calf](#) muscles.
6. Breathe out. Release the tension in your [calves](#).
7. Work your way up your body. Tense each muscle group. This includes your legs, belly, chest, fingers, arms, shoulders, neck, and face.

Modified Lion's Breath

As you do this exercise, imagine that you're a lion. Let all of your breath out with a big, open [mouth](#).

1. Sit comfortably on the floor or in a chair.
2. Breathe in through your nose. Fill your belly all the way up with air.

3. When you can't breathe in any more, open your [mouth](#) as wide as you can. Breathe out with an "Ahh" sound.
4. Repeat several times.