



ATHLETE'S BREATHING TECHNIQUES WORKBOOK



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Diaphragmatic Breathing Fundamentals

How to Perform Diaphragmatic Breathing Belly Breathing Drill

1. Positioning:

- Lie on your back on a comfortable surface.
- Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly, just below your ribcage.

2. Breathing Technique:

- Inhale: Slowly breathe in through your nose, directing the air into your belly. You should feel your belly rise while keeping your chest as still as possible.
- Exhale: Purse your lips and slowly breathe out, feeling your belly lower back down. Focus on making the exhale longer than the inhale to engage your diaphragm fully.

3. Repetitions:

- Practice this for 5-10 slow, controlled breaths.
- Aim to practice for at least 5 minutes daily to strengthen your diaphragm and promote efficient breathing patterns.



Additional Drills to Enhance Diaphragmatic Breathing

1. Seated Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Sit in a comfortable chair with your back straight.
- Place your hands in the same position – one on your chest, the other on your belly.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, expanding your belly.
- Exhale slowly through pursed lips, keeping your chest still.
- Perform for 5 minutes, increasing duration as your comfort improves.

2. Standing Diaphragmatic Breathing

- Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- Place your hands on your hips or use the same chest-and-belly positioning.
- Inhale deeply through your nose, focusing on expanding your belly.
- Exhale through your mouth, ensuring your chest remains stable.
- Repeat for 5 minutes, focusing on staying relaxed and maintaining posture.



Progress Tracking Tools

Date	Breathing Technique Used	Duration (Minutes)	Stress Level Before (1-10)	Stress Level After (1-10)	Observations/Improvements
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					

Key:

- **Stress Level Before:** Rate how stressed or anxious you felt before starting a breathing technique (1 = no stress, 10 = extreme stress).
- **Stress Level After:** Rate how you felt after completing the exercise. Look for patterns over time to see if certain techniques are more effective at reducing stress.



Pre-Workout Activation

Breath of Fire: Energize and Prepare for Performance

What is Breath of Fire?

- Breath of Fire is a rhythmic, rapid breathing technique that generates heat in your body and increases blood flow. It is designed to activate your energy quickly, promoting a state of alertness that prepares both your body and mind for the workout ahead.
- This technique specifically engages the diaphragm and abdominal muscles, improving oxygen circulation and mental clarity.

How to Perform Breath of Fire

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Get into position:

- Sit in a comfortable position, either cross-legged on the floor or in a chair with your feet flat on the ground.
- Keep your spine straight, chest open, and shoulders relaxed.

2. Start with deep breaths:

- Take a few deep breaths through your nose to prepare. Inhale deeply, expanding your belly, and exhale fully to empty your lungs.



Pre-Workout Activation

3. Begin Breath of Fire:

- Inhale passively through your nose (allow the belly to naturally expand).
- Exhale sharply and forcefully through your nose, pulling your belly button inward toward your spine. This is an active exhale driven by the diaphragm.
- Inhalation is passive, requiring no effort — simply let your belly expand naturally as you breathe in.

4. Rhythm and speed:

- Aim for 2-3 rapid breaths per second. The focus should be on the forceful exhalation and passive inhalation.

5. Duration:

- Continue this rapid breathing for 30-60 seconds.
- You can increase the duration as you become more comfortable with the technique, up to 1-2 minutes.



Box Breathing: Activate Recovery and Calm the Body

What is Box Breathing?

Box breathing is a simple yet powerful technique that involves breathing in a rhythm where each part of the breath cycle (inhale, hold, exhale, hold) is of equal length.

This practice calms the mind, helps regulate stress, and promotes the activation of the parasympathetic nervous system. Originally used by Navy SEALs for stress management, box breathing is now widely used by athletes to recover faster after intense training or competition.



How to Perform Box Breathing

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Get into position:

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position, ensuring your back is straight, and your shoulders are relaxed.

2. Inhale (4 seconds):

- Slowly inhale through your nose for a count of 4, allowing your lungs to fill completely.
- Focus on expanding your diaphragm, ensuring that your belly rises before your chest.

3. Hold (4 seconds):

- Hold the air in your lungs for a count of 4, remaining relaxed and calm.

4. Exhale (4 seconds):

- Slowly exhale through your mouth for a count of 4, emptying your lungs completely.

5. Hold (4 seconds):

- Hold the empty space in your lungs for a count of 4 before inhaling again.

6. Repeat:

- Continue this pattern of 4-second cycles for 3-5 minutes. You can adjust the length of each phase as you become more comfortable with the technique (e.g., increasing to 5 or 6 seconds per phase).



7-11 Breathing for Deep Relaxation

What is 7-11 Breathing? 7-11 breathing is a technique designed to calm the nervous system by extending the exhalation phase, which signals the body to enter a state of relaxation. This method is particularly effective for reducing stress after a workout and improving sleep quality.

How to Perform 7-11 Breathing:

1. Inhale slowly through your nose for a count of 7, expanding your belly.
2. Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of 11, making the exhalation longer than the inhalation.
3. Repeat for 3-5 minutes, focusing on calming your mind and body.

Benefits:

- Encourages deep relaxation.
- Helps reduce cortisol levels and muscle tension.
- Improves sleep quality when practiced before bedtime.



Mindful Breathing

What is Mindful Breathing? Mindful breathing involves focusing your full attention on each breath as it enters and leaves your body. This practice helps to center your thoughts, reduce stress, and bring a sense of calm to your daily life.

How to Perform Mindful Breathing:

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight and eyes closed.
2. Bring your attention to your breath, noticing the sensation of air entering and leaving your body.
3. If your mind starts to wander, gently bring your focus back to your breath without judgment.
4. Practice for 5-10 minutes, allowing yourself to fully relax and focus on the present moment.

Benefits:

- Helps reduce stress and anxiety.
- Promotes mental clarity and focus.
- Increases awareness and mindfulness in everyday life.



Takeaways:

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