

Breathing To Music for Wellness and Stress Relief

The research is clear that deep breathes can reduce your fight or flight response. By breathing more deeply you can break the cycle of panic. Breathing exercises can help reduce tension and relieve stress, thanks to an extra boost of oxygen. **While shallow breathing, a marker of stress, stimulates the sympathetic nervous system, deep breathing does the opposite and helps us to calm down.**

What's more, breathing exercises have been proven to support the systems that can be harmed by stress. A moment of silence with just deep breathing can reduce blood pressure and may even be able to change the expression of some genes. Everybody has an overwhelm point. It is different for everyone. Many of us just keep pushing through the stress but our goals of accomplishment and productivity become much harder to achieve in this state. With the simple act of deep breathing, you are combating those stress responses and putting your body in a healthier place to better cope with whatever is to come (Grossman & Grossman et al., 2001).ⁱ

Diaphragmatic Breathing

To perform this exercise while sitting in a chair:

1. Sit comfortably, with your knees bent and your shoulders, head and neck relaxed.
2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other just below your rib cage. This will allow you to feel your diaphragm move as you breathe.
3. Breathe in slowly through your nose so that your stomach moves out against your hand. The hand on your chest should remain as still as possible.
4. Tighten your stomach muscles, letting them fall inward as you exhale through pursed lips. The hand on your upper chest must remain as still as possible.


Note: You may notice an increased effort will be needed to use the diaphragm correctly. At first, you'll probably get tired while doing this exercise. But keep at it, because with continued practice, diaphragmatic breathing will become easy and automatic.

Now Let's Breathe To Music


1. Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can relax (a chair, a quiet room or a sofa)
2. Please refer to the music playlist below in order to stream the chosen songs from your computer or phone.
 - a. Scan the QR Code in order to listen to the song directly from your phone
 - b. Open the camera app on your smart phone
 - c. Hold your device steady for 2-3 seconds towards the QR Code you want to scan.
 - d. Click on the notification to open the content of the QR Code.
3. Play the song and begin:
 - a. Breathe in through your nose for four beats (A beat is how you would tap your foot or toes to the music)
 - b. Hold your breath comfortably for four beats
 - c. Exhale your air through pursed lips for 8 beats or until all of your air is gone
 - d. Repeat for the duration of the song
4. If you find yourself struggling to hold your breath for 4 beats, you may halve the exercise by breathing in for 2, holding for 2, and exhaling for 4 beats.
5. **If you find yourself feeling dizzy at any point, please stop the exercise and resume normal breathing**

Instrumentals to Breathe to (60-80 BPM)



1. Nocturne No. 2 Opus 9 by Chopin 61 bpm 




2. Someone You Loved by Love Falk 74 bpm 



3. Skinny Love by Sarah Coponat 68bpm 



4. Meditation from Thais by Massenet 60 bpm 

ⁱ Grossman, E., A. Grossman, M. H. Schein, R. Zimlichman, and B. Gavish. "Breathing-control 29 Lowers Blood Pressure." *Journal of Human Hypertension* 15.4 (2001): 263-69.