

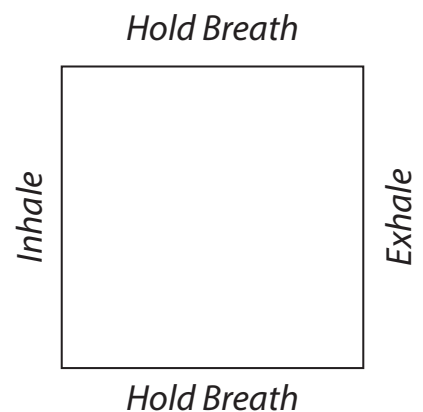
Strategy #10: Deep Breathing: Boxed Breathing

Try the following exercise to make sure you are taking deep belly breaths.

- Sitting in a chair, standing, or lying on your back, place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach.
- Take a minute to breathe as you normally do.
- Check whether your chest is rising or your belly is rising.
- If your chest is rising and your belly is not moving, you are shallow breathing.
- If your belly is rising, you are taking full, deep breaths and will trigger relaxation in your body.
- Focus your attention on your breath until you are taking deep breaths and your stomach is rising.
- If you are sitting in a chair or lying down, you may feel your lower back press against the surface when you do deep breathing.
- You may have to play around and push your stomach out if this type of breathing is new to you. Aim for smooth, deep breaths.
- Practice until you can tell the difference between a deep breath and a shallow breath and you know how to shift into deep breathing as soon as you notice your warning signs.

Deepening the breath

- Once you fill your belly with air, begin to open space in your chest and even up to your throat. Belly extends first, then chest, then neck/throat.
- Hold your breath.
- Exhale fully down from the throat/neck, through the chest, then from the belly.
- Hold your breath; repeat.
- Try a count of four for each and then extend to five or six as you deepen your capacity.
- Visualize the counting like a box.



Practice this five times per day for two minutes when you are not stressed, and practice as soon as you notice your stress warning signs.



AUDIO FILE

Audio file #3: Deep Breathing: Boxed Breathing (www.brushededucation.ca/stress)