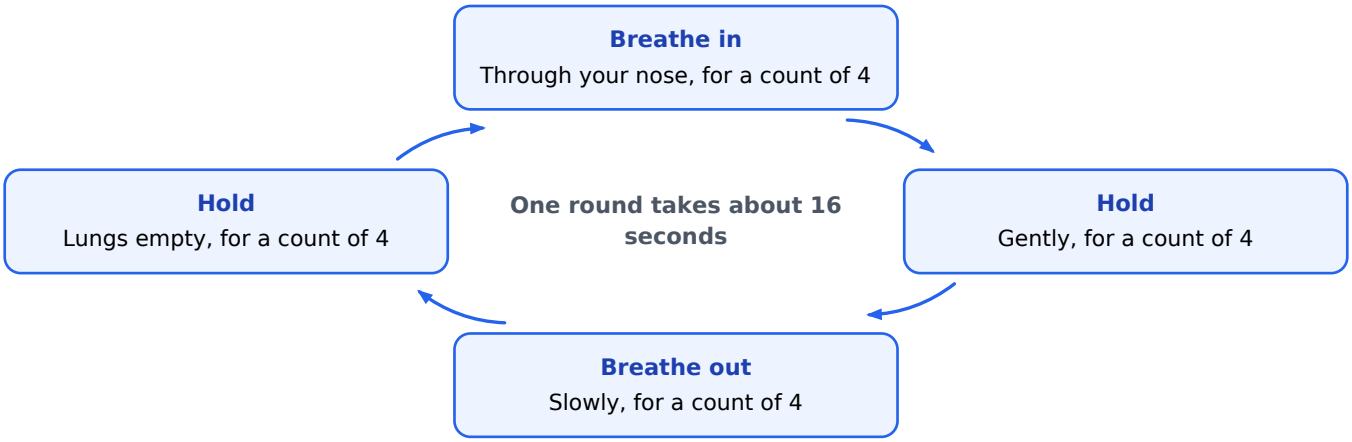
Box breathing

Four equal sides: in, hold, out, hold.

Box breathing slows your breath into four equal parts. Counting gives your mind one simple job, and the slower rhythm tells your body that it can stand down. Most people feel a difference within a minute or two.



How to do it

1. Sit with your feet on the floor, or stand. Let your shoulders drop.
2. Breathe in through your nose for a slow count of 4. Let your belly move, not your chest.
3. Hold for 4, with your throat and jaw loose.
4. Breathe out for 4. Then hold for 4 with your lungs empty.
5. Go round four to six times. Then let your breathing go back to normal.

Tips

- **Picture the box.** Trace a square with a finger: up, across, down, across.
- **Shrink the box if you need to.** Count to 3, or shorten the holds.
- **Practise when calm,** twice a day, so that it is there when you need it.

Day	When I practised	Rounds	How I felt after
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Go gently

Holding your breath does not suit everyone. If you feel dizzy or panicky, stop and breathe normally. If you are pregnant or have a heart or lung condition, leave out the holds, or check with your GP first.

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