

THE BREATH TRAINING CHEATSHEET

*This cheatsheet outlines the breathing techniques
and resources covered in [“Breath”](#) by James Nestor*

Presented By:



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THE BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Alternate Nostril Breathing (also called Nadi Shodhana)

Useful for relaxation before a stressful situation.

1. Thumb on your right nostril and ring finger on your left nostril.
2. Close the right nostril and slowly inhale through the left nostril
3. Close your left nostril and briefly hold the inhale.
4. Lift the thumb and exhale through the right nostril
5. Briefly hold both nostrils
6. Inhale through the right nostril
7. And continue the cycle 5 - 10 times

Breath Coordination

Useful for exercising the diaphragm for better flexibility

1. Sit up straight
2. Breath into the nose
3. Then on the exhale count from 1 to 10 repeatedly (in a soft voice)
4. At the end of the exhale keep counting (in a whisper) until the lungs feel empty
5. Repeat the cycle 10 - 30 times

Advanced: Do this exercise while doing light exercise.

Resonant Breathing

Align the respiratory and circulatory system.

1. Sit up straight.



2. Exhale.
3. Inhale for 5.5 seconds, while making the belly grow with the lungs.
4. Exhale for 5.5 seconds, while bringing the belly in.
5. Repeat 10 or more times.

James recommends the following breathing apps that can provide visual guidance for resonant breathing practices:

Paced Breathing

My Cardiac Coherence

Buteyko Breathing

Useful for training the body to alter breathing based on what the moment calls for. There are several Buteyko breathing exercises:

(a) Control Pause

Helps you gauge respiratory health.

1. Grab an analog watch or a stopwatch
2. Sit up straight
3. Close both nostrils with a thumb and forefinger
4. Exhale slowly through your mouth
5. Start the stopwatch (or mark your starting point with the watch) and hold your breath
6. When you feel you can't hold the breath comfortably much longer, stop the watch (or mark your end time)

James says if the inhale after this exercise leaves you gasping, then you held your breath too long. You should wait a few minutes and try again.



(b) Mini Breathholds

Trains you to breathe less automatically.

1. Exhale slowly
2. Hold your breath for half the time you held it with the control pause method.
3. Repeat 100 - 500 times a day.

(c) Nose Songs

Humming increases nitric oxide 15x.


1. Breathe normally through the nose and hum a song or sound.
2. Repeat for at least 5 minutes each day

(d) Walking/Running

A light form of hypoventilation training.

1. Walk or run for a minute while breathing normally through the nose.
2. Exhale.
3. Close your nostril with your fingers. Keep the same pace.
4. Inhale for 10 - 15 seconds when you feel a decent urge to, but only inhale half of what you're use to.
5. Breathe regularly for 30 seconds
6. Repeat 10 times

(e) Nose Decongestion

1. Sit up straight
 2. Exhale slowly
 3. Pinch nostrils closed
 4. Do some sort of quick movement (e.g., shake your head, run, or jump)
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5. When you feel a big urge to breath, slowly inhale and exhale through your nose for 30 to 60 seconds

* Breathe slowly through pursed lips if your nose is still congested.

6. Repeat 6 times.

Tummo

Some Tummo techniques work to activate the sympathetic nervous system (alert), while others work to activate the parasympathetic (calm).

(a) Wim Hof (sympathetic)

1. Lay down with a pillow under your head
2. Inhale and exhale deep and fast, 30 times (move the air through your chest and stomach)
3. Exhale naturally and hold your breath for as long as you can
4. Inhale then hold your breath for 15 seconds.
5. Exhale and repeat at least 3 times

You can follow guided Wim Hof breathing session that happen weekly here:

www.meetup.com/Wim-Hof-Method-Bay-Area/

You can find a parasympathic Tummo meditation exercise here:

www.thewayofmeditation.com.au/revealing-the-secrets-of-tibetan-inner-fire-meditation

Sudarshan Kriya

James says Sudarshan Kriya is the most powerful breathing technique he's done, though he admits it's also the hardest to get through.



There are 4 phases that consist of om chants, breath restriction, paced breathing, and 40 minutes of heavy breathing.

The pacing goes as such:

1. Inhale for 4 seconds, and hold for 4 seconds.
2. Exhale for 6 seconds, and hold for 2 seconds.

Other Breathing Techniques

(a) Yogic Breathing


Phase 1:

1. Sit upright in a chair or on the floor
2. Place a hand over your naval
3. Breathe into the belly 3 -5 times.
4. Move the hand up so it covers the bottom rib cage.
5. Breathe into the bottom rib cage for 3 - 5 times.
6. Move the hand to the upper rib cage.
7. Breathe into the upper rib cage for 3 - 5 times.

Phase 2:

1. Inhale into the stomach, lower rib cage, then chest
2. Exhale from the chest, the lower rib cage, then stomach
3. Repeat the cycle 12 times

(b) Box Breathing

1. Inhale for 4 seconds
 2. Hold for 4 seconds
 3. Exhale for 4 seconds
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4. Hold for 4 seconds.

5. Repeat 6 or more times.

If you want to activate your parasympathetic system more, you can exhale for 6 seconds.

(c) Breathhold Walking

Useful for increase carbon dioxide in the body, which increases circulation.

1. Exhale and hold.

2. Walk slowly and count your steps

3. Once you feel the urge to breathe, stop counting and breath slowly (keep walking).

4. Breathe slowly for a minute

5. Repeat.

Your goal should be to increase the number of steps you can take with your breath held.

(d) 4-7-8 Breathing

Useful for deep relaxation.

1. Exhale through your mouth with a whoosh sound

2. Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds

3. Hold for 7 seconds

4. Exhale through your mouth with a whoosh sound for 8 seconds

5. Repeat at least 4 times



CHEWING

Expand the mouth by building the bones in the face. Remember, chewing activates facial stem cells, which produces the bone growth.

(a) Gum

Try to choose a harder kind. James recommends mastic gum (find it [here](#)), as well as the brand Falim (find it [here](#)).

(b) Oral Devices

The FDA recently approved the POD (Preventive Oral Device). It's a retainer that simulates the stress you'd get from chewing. You can learn more at: www.discoverthepod.com

(c) Palate Expansion

James says there are several tools that expand the palate, but you should consult an orthodontist, because there are pros and cons to each.



THE RESOURCES

- [Breath by James Nestor \(Full Book\)](#)
- [Deep: Freediving, Renegade Science, and What the Ocean Tells Us about Ourselves by James Nestor](#)
- [The Breath of Life by George Catlin](#)
- [The Eye of Revelation by Peter Keider](#)
- [The Healing Power of the Breath by Patricia L. Gerbarg and Richard P. Brown](#)
- [3M Nexcare Durepore \(For Mouth Taping\)](#)



Other Summaries That Might Interest You:

Why We Sleep by Dr. Matthew Walker

Like breathing, sleep plays such a foundational role in health. It's not just about how many hours you get, but also the quality of sleep.

Learn more [here](#).

Fat for Fuel by Dr. Joesph Mercola

Transform your physiology to help you lose weight, combat illness, and gain energy through a simple dietary protocol.

You can learn about it [here](#).

The Longevity Diet by Dr. Valter Longo

Confucius wasn't kidding when he said: “thy food is thy medicine”. Learn how you can slow aging and revamp your cells to help protect you from degenerative diseases. You can find out [here](#).

The Complete Guide to Fasting by Dr. Jason Fung

Fasting is becoming a hot topic in the functional health movement, but why? Because it works! Learn why it works and how you can incorporate it into your lifestyle [here](#).

