

Box Breathing

Slow, deep, intentional breathing can be a great way to **calm an anxious mind and body**. **Pausing for a few minutes** to practice this breathing technique can help us **pay attention** to our bodies and **re-center** our thoughts so that we can focus on what is most important to us.

The diagram illustrates the Box Breathing technique using a 4x4 grid. The top row is labeled 'hold' and contains numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The right side is labeled 'exhale' and contains numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The bottom row is labeled 'pause' and contains numbers 4, 3, 2, and 1. The left side is labeled 'inhale' and contains numbers 4, 3, 2, and 1. The central content area is divided into four horizontal sections, each corresponding to a row of the grid. Each section contains instructions for that step, with horizontal lines indicating where to draw the sides of the box.

hold 1 2 3 4

4 **How To Do It:**
Sit or stand with your feet flat on the floor. Relax your shoulders. Let your hands hang down at your sides or rest in your lap.
Breathe out through your mouth and slowly empty your lungs.

3 **Breathe In** slowly and deeply through your nose. As you count 1... 2... 3... 4 feel the air filling your lungs as you inhale.

2 **Hold that Breath** as you count 1... 2... 3... 4

1 **Breathe Out** and count 1... 2... 3... 4 as you exhale through your mouth. Feel the air leaving your lungs.

inhale 1 2 3 4 **Pause** as you count 1... 2... 3... 4

Repeat a few times until you feel more relaxed. If it helps, you can trace your finger along the square drawn here.

Why it works: When we're upset our thoughts race, our breathing speeds up, and our pulse quickens. Deep breathing can calm our autonomic nervous system (ANS) and relax our body and mind.

4 3 2 1 **pause**