

Abdominal Breathing

Level 1 / Posture 1



Push belly **Out** to breathe in
Squeeze belly to breathe out

Only the belly is moving.
Chest is still

No Hold as such. I recommend you **continue for 1 - 3 minutes.**
Then go faster! Half a dozen times. Then go faster!

This is one of the most important yoga breathing exercises. It makes your breathing fuller, (even when you're not doing the exercise) – which is healthier and more relaxing; it makes you aware of your breathing and more in control of it; it builds your abdominal muscles; and it helps you focus your energy toward your navel. And, it's easy to do! If you do no other exercises in yoga, this and the abdominal lifts will take you far!

Yoga Snack

Waiting in traffic, standing in an elevator, standing in bank line ups, waiting on hold on the phone, washing the dishes. You can do this exercise anywhere, any time!

Common Errors Not lining up the head, body, hips & legs in a straight line before starting. Allowing the chest to do some of the breathing.

Body Parts Used by This Posture: Abdominals

Try Warming up with: Abdominal Lifts

This Posture is Good Before: Yoga Sessions; relaxation; bed

Good After: Yoga Sessions

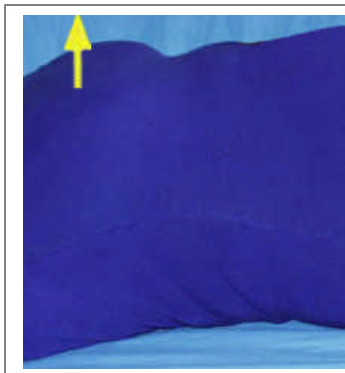
Builds you up for: Breathing with the whole body; postures that require abdominal strength

Energy Center Used Belly Center (Navel)

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Chest Breathing 1

Level 1 / Posture 19



Put your finger tips the front of your chest, just under the bump in your collar bones

Breathe in, toward your fingertips,
(allowing your entire chest to blossom open)

Pause. Allow your chest to collapse toward your fingertips.

Repeat for 1 – 3 minutes

Discovery For 1 – 3 minutes

As you breathe in an out, notice the rise and fall of your rib cage around your finger tips. You don't need to exaggerate the motion or work at this in any way. Just notice which muscles are working, stretching open, to what degree they're feeling loose, where they're tight, etc. Notice how the motion starts at the sternum and radiates outward from there.

Next For 1 – 3 minutes

Breathe in, stretching your rib cage toward your fingers. Take full, deep breaths. Feel the rib cage really stretching toward the fingers. See how many muscles you can feel stretching. Keep breathing and stretching, until you can notice the entire front of the rib cage stretching open. Until you have a really deep breath!

Breathing out, let the rib cage collapse away from your fingers. Feel the shoulders collapsing with them. Feel the sternum collapsing inward.

Pause and repeat for 1 – 3 minutes.

Most Westerners breathe shallowly and quickly, using only their upper chest. To take a really deep breath, you need to open up the entire rib cage, including all the muscles at the front of the rib cage, right down to the last rib before your belly. This exercise will help you become more aware of the entire front of your rib cage and will develop the muscles there, which, by now, may have become sluggish and weakened from lack of use. It will also give you more control so that you will be able to pace your breathing and slow it down by the time you get to Yellow Level.

Yoga Snack

Try this exercise any time you're stuck in traffic; waiting for buses or elevators; do this next time you're in a bank line up; try during lunch breaks, or while you're on hold on the phone.

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