

PRACTICE GUIDE

Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)

Calm your nervous system in two minutes

*"The Lord God formed a man... and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life."
-- Genesis 2:7*

Box breathing is used by Navy SEALs, therapists, and contemplatives alike. The equal-count pattern activates the parasympathetic nervous system -- your body's built-in off-switch for the stress response.

THE PRACTICE

- 1 Inhale through the nose**
4 seconds. Let your belly expand, not just your chest.
- 2 Hold**
4 seconds. Stay still. Don't force it.
- 3 Exhale through the mouth**
4 seconds. Slow and steady -- let everything release.
- 4 Hold**
4 seconds. Notice the quiet before the next breath.

TIP

Repeat 4-6 rounds (~2 minutes). If you feel dizzy, return to normal breathing -- that's fine and normal at first.