

# Your Secret Calm-Down Tool

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Performance breathing is a simple breathing technique used by athletes for hundreds of years. It helps to:

- Calm nerves
- Relax tight muscles
- Slow your heart rate
- Help you focus before a skill, routine, or competition

The best part? You can use it anywhere – on pool side, during training, or before a routine.

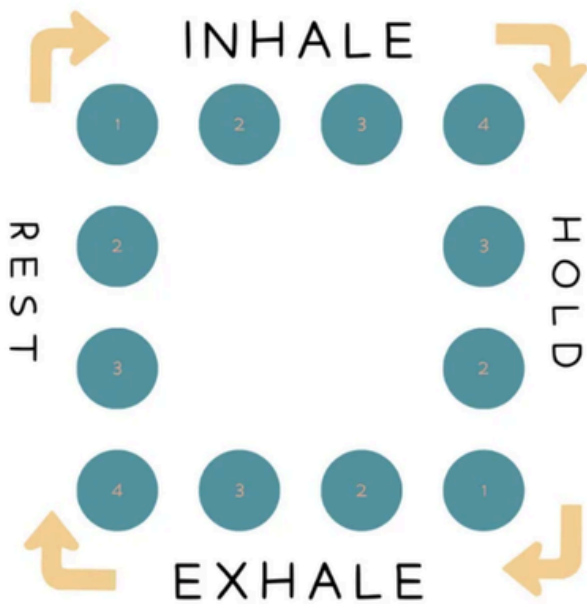
## How to do Performance Breathing

- Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest.
- Breathe in slowly through your nose, pushing your stomach out.
  - Your stomach hand should move.
  - Your chest hand should stay still.
- Hold the breath until you feel ready to breathe out.
- Slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- As you breathe out, say a cue word in your head, such as:
  - “Relax”
  - “Focus”
  - “Ready”
- Repeat until you feel calmer



After you practice this a lot, even one deep breath can help you reset before a routine or difficult figure. Practice this before bed so your brain learns that breathing = calm.

## BOX BREATHING



- Exhale for a count of four.
- Hold your lungs empty for a count of four.
- Inhale for a count of four. Hold the air in your lungs for a count of four.
- Exhale and begin the pattern again.

## Calm Down With Take 5 Breathing

1. Stretch your hand out like a star
2. Get your pointer finger ready to trace your fingers
3. Slide up each finger slowly, slide down the other side
4. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth
5. Put it together and breathe in as you slide up and out as you slide down
6. Keep going until you have finished tracing your hand



## HOT COCOA



Pretend you are holding a mug of hot cocoa, with the mug cradled in front of you, between both of your hands.

Bringing the mug near your face, take a slow breath in, and imagine that you are smelling the yummy, comforting chocolate aroma.

Now slowly, with gentleness, breathe out, as you pretend to blow the steaming hot cocoa to cool it down.

Breathe in, as you smell the hot cocoa aroma.

And breathe out, as you cool it down.

## 5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 things you can taste