

Cheat Sheet

Vagus Breathing

This simple breathing exercise can reduce stress and anxiety, sometimes within minutes.

Research suggests that it works by stimulating a cranial nerve called the **vagus nerve**, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system and calms the flight-or-fight response.

Core Technique

Breathe Slowly

- ☑ Research suggests that around six breaths per minute is an effective rate.
- ☑ Achieve this rate by counting roughly five seconds on your inhale and five seconds on your exhale.

Breathe from the Belly

- ☑ Expand your lower abdomen, not just your chest, as you breathe.
- ☑ To ensure you're doing this, rest a hand on your stomach.

Optional Enhancements

- ☑ Lengthen your exhale – but not to a degree that feels uncomfortable
- ☑ Add a short, comfortable pause between the inhale and exhale.
- ☑ Bring some attention to the bodily sensations of breathing, at either the nostrils or the abdomen.