

4-7-8 Breath

The 4-7-8 breathing exercise is simple, takes almost no time, requires no equipment, and can be done anywhere.

Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth and keep it there through the entire exercise. You will be exhaling through your mouth around your tongue; try pursing your lips slightly if this seems awkward.

- ~ Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- ~ Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **four**.
- ~ Hold your breath for a count of **seven**.
- ~ Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **eight**.
- ~ This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

With this breathing technique, you always inhale quietly through your nose and exhale audibly through your mouth. The tip of your tongue stays in position the whole time. Exhalation takes twice as long as inhalation. The absolute time you spend on each phase is not important; the ratio of 4:7:8 is important. If you have trouble holding your breath, speed the exercise up but keep to the ratio of 4:7:8 for the three phases. With practice, you can slow it all down and get used to inhaling and exhaling more and more deeply.

For more tips on breathing to relax, visit:
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