

# Shape Breathing

When you are upset about something, especially if you are angry or frustrated, deep breathing can help. It can also help if you are feeling fidgety and having a hard time focusing.

When you are doing your homework or schoolwork, taking a break and practicing deep breathing for a few minutes can help you work longer. Sometimes we call deep breathing "belly breathing" because you breathe from your belly instead of your chest.

Put your hand on your belly as you breathe in for a count of five. Then hold your breath for a count of two, and breathe out for a count of five. Can you feel your stomach rise and fall? Do you feel yourself starting to relax as you breathe?

Shape breathing is a fun way to practice deep breathing, relaxation, and focusing.

Sit quietly for a minute. Then, using the star on the next page, move your finger around the shape. Breathe in for a count of five, hold your breath for a count of two, and breathe out for a count of five. Do this as your finger traces the entire star.

When you are done going around the star, take a minute to think about how you feel. Do you feel calm? Do you feel relaxed? Do you feel focused? If you like, you can go around the star again, practicing your breathing until you feel calm, relaxed, and focused.

