

Breath Support Made Easy

1. **Count to ten.** In order to gauge your breath support, count out loud to ten. Don't feel like you need to accomplish this on one breath. Notice where in your body you feel the breath originating from as you speak.
2. **Observe your breath.** Find a comfortable position either sitting in a chair or standing up and observe your breath. Place one hand on the external part of your body where you sense the breath dropping in and turning around.
3. **Feel your feet.** Feel the connection your feet make with the floor. Is the weight evenly balanced between the heel of the foot and the ball of the foot? If you are sitting, can you feel the weight evenly balanced between each of your sitting bones? As you begin to notice, and possibly make small adjustments to your physical stance, do you sense any changes in the rhythm or location of the breath?
4. **Open the side ribs.** In order for your lungs to have space to expand, the intercostals muscles must be responsive. Allow your arms to float up toward the ceiling. Clasp your right wrist with the left hand and gently stretch over the left. Make sure that you can still breathe easily in this position. Take several breaths while released over the left side and then float your arms back up towards the ceiling and then down to your sides. Notice if you feel any difference between the right side of the rib case and the right side of the rib case. Repeat on the opposite side.
5. **Roll down your spine.** Since the ribs connect to the spine in the back, it can be helpful to create space between the vertebrae. Come to a standing position and slowly release your chin in to your chest. Feel the weight of your head and imagine that gravity is slowly releasing you down towards the floor, one vertebra at a time. Once you have released from the hip crease, begin to float yourself back up again, one vertebra at a time. Your head is the last thing to come up.
6. **Twist.** Sit in a chair with your weight evenly distributed. Starting at the base of the spine, slowly twist your upper torso to the right. Hold on to your right thigh with your left hand. Take several breaths here, and then release to the centre. Repeat on the opposite side.
7. **Widen the shoulder blades.** Bend your elbows and hold onto the right elbow with the left arm and the left elbow with the right arm. Pull your elbows forward as you arch your upper back. Sense your shoulder blades separating. Take several breaths here and then release your arms to the side.

Breath Support Made Easy (Cont'd)

8. **Expand the breath.** Fold your fingertips into your palms, as if you were making a fist. As you inhale, or inspire, expand and spread your fingertips out wide. When you exhale, fold your fingertips in again. Once you have done this several times, add the movement of the elbows. As you exhale, bring the fists up into your chest and as you inhale open the arms fully as well as the fingers. Continue until the movement and the breath are happening simultaneously. Then slowly relax the arms and note any changes in the breathing.
9. **Whisper.** Whisper from one to ten, taking time to breathe when you feel you need.
10. **Count to ten.** On a full voice, count from one to ten, noting any differences in your breath support.