



Video Transcript

Learn Breath Of Fire

Hi, my name is Amanda, and today we're going to be practicing Breath of Fire. You might have heard of this yogic breathing exercise. I was first introduced to this a very long time ago, where it was used at the end of a yoga class to really drive the cleansing practice and process after your yoga asana. This can also be done at the beginning of a yoga practice. It's a great way to really focus the mind and get the prana moving throughout the body, your life force to help give you that energy that you need for your yoga practice. You can also do this any time that maybe you just want to get super focused, create some heat and some energy in the body, maybe before a meditation practice. So go ahead and get comfortable. I'm in a kneeling position on a yoga block, a nice little pad or blanket and mat underneath my knees. You can do this in a seated position, either cross-legged on your mat or in a chair. I wouldn't recommend doing this particular exercise laying down on your back. You need to be able to really draw the energy into the abdomen and force the breath out. So this is also known as Kapala Bhakti breathing, skull shining breath. So you can imagine that we're cleansing the skull by shooting and moving the prana up your central channel, which is your Shashumnanati. You're moving the breath by pumping the abdomen with forceful exhalations and passive inhalations. It sounds a lot more intense than it really is. We're going to start really slow so that you can get the hang of the actions of the abdomen and the breath on the inhale being passive. So it takes a little bit of practice. It takes a little bit of just tapping into the rhythm, but we're going to do it really, really slow. I'm going to explain a little bit more about the breath of fire, Kapala Bhakti breathing. So, when we exhale, you're drawing the abdomen in. There's a lot of benefits to being able to breathe

like this. It really focuses the mind to the task at hand. You can tone your abdominals and your internal organs. It helps cleanse that area.

It's sort of like a little abdominal massage, if you will, of the inner organs and really sort of cleansing and moving the blood around in there, getting that circulation. It helps with your breath capacity. So the breath on the inhale happens naturally, but what that means is the diaphragm drops down. So the way that we breathe is a little different than how we might think that we breathe. So a lot of times when we say draw the breath in, yes, that's happening. The breath comes in, oxygen comes in, but we don't actually work on the inhale. It's actually a passive. The work and the contraction of the diaphragm is a little different than what we think. So the diaphragm does work as it expands and then the breath happens because the air from the outside comes to the lungs on the inside. The lungs are passive. They expand because the ribs are expanding. And then the diaphragm releases. It goes back up to where it lives in the rib cage. So we use our abdominals to help with that. Okay. So I know it sounds really complicated, but we're going to be using our abdominal strength, the diaphragm moves up, therefore the breath is forced out. And then you relax on the inhale. The diaphragm drops down all by itself, just as it naturally does. It's our most powerful breathing muscle. So it drops down, and that's why we want to make room for it. We let the belly expand. And then the lungs inflate. So the breath is then on in, so to speak.

So you want to try and have your abdominals and your abdomen soft. That's a little hard to do if we've been taught to really hold it in, suck it in and hold it in there for good posture and all of that, you know, that look of confidence. That's a really important thing. But with this breathing exercise, we want to be able to soften. So just let it all out. Just let it hang out. That's why sitting in a nice, tall position is important. So you have the length of the spine. You can just let the abdomen relax. So just start by breathing in and out, starting to feel the abdomen. Notice the breath as it comes in and out. And then we'll get into those short staccato exhalations. The breath happens naturally. So let's take a big breath in together, all the breath in, And exhale all the breath out. You can exhale through the mouth or the nose. Exhale, exhale, exhale. Notice that I'm drying my navel in, in, in, in, narrowing, squeezing the breath out.

Inhale.

Let the belly soften, let the breath come in. Exhale, all the breath out. Notice that I'm sitting up tall and drying my navel in all the breath out inhale let it be soft but natural soften the belly exhale all the breath out good so keep practicing that all the breath out squeeze relax the breath comes in So eventually, it looks like this.

We're going to work up to that. So that's just where we're going. Keep exhaling, squeeze all the breath out, out, out, out, and inhale. It just happens all by itself. Exhale, out, out, squeeze let it happen release the breath exhale squeeze the breath out navel in in in out so now we're gonna go a little faster squeeze from

the belly draw the navel in out soften the belly draw the navel in the belly in out with the breath

Soften the belly. Try and move through the nose with the breath. If you have to exhale through the mouth, that's okay. Try and move the breath out through the nose. So out by contracting, soften the belly.

Out, soften the belly. So we start to move a little faster. We're going to go for a round of 10. And Then as you get stronger, we can double up, we can take it to 20, you can take it to 30, 40, 50, or you can do short little repetitions there. All right, so take a deep breath in and exhale all the breath out. Squeeze. Release. Release.

Release the belly. Squeeze. Squeeze.

Navel in and keep going. Let's go for ten.

Return to normal breathing. Inhale, exhale. Might feel that those abdominals are starting to tone, but relax on the inhale. Take another round of normal breathing, and a normal inhale. We're going to do another set of 10. Same pace, just so you can get the hang of it. Take a deep breath in. Exhale, inhale, normal breath. Then start with the contractions, out. All the breath out. Soften the belly breathing. Releasing any tension, release the breath, normal breath in and a normal breath out.

You might start to notice a few shifts, a few changes. That's the prana, starting to be moved upwards, moving the breath, shining the skull, cleansing the mind. We're going to do another set. So you Take a normal breath in, a normal breath out.

Draw the breath in so you feel you have that breath. Then start with the belly pulses. Squeeze all the breath out. Normal breath in. Normal breath out. Let the breath regulate. Inhale. Exhale.

We're going to go for another round, but we're going to go a little bit faster. So prepare by taking a breath in. Breath out. Take a breath in a little bit faster. Start with the contractions. Inhale. And really, exhale. Really, really good. I'm going to do that one more time. This time I'm going to take it up to 15 counts. So take a breath in, fill up the lungs with the breath

or let the lungs expand.
Move the breath out. Gentle contraction, squeeze all the breath out.
Keep the spine tall. Take a breath in, a little more,
and start with those contractions.
All the breath out. Take a normal breath in,
release that breath. Keep the spine tall.
Turn to normal breathing. Let's do one more set, maybe taking it up to 20 counts
or up to any amount of reps that you can handle.
Start by pulsing,
all the breath out. Inhale, slow.
Release on that exhale.
Start to return to normal breathing. Close your eyes and go within.
Notice the prana, really swelling through the body, pulsing through the body. Soften
the tummy, soften the abdominals, inhale,
exhale.
Keep the spine tall and erect. Return to normal breathing.
The The benefits of Kapalabati breathing are it focuses the mind. It strengthens the
abdominals. It aids in the cleansing process of your practice. It helps you learn
how to take in the breath fully and exhale the breath fully. So it aids in this
respiratory function.
Therefore, when the breath is regulated, the mind is regulated.
Once you feel that the breath has returned back to a normal and regulated pace,
you can start your meditation practice, your yoga asana practice, or just let the
breath fill up the body throughout the rest of your day. Thank you for joining me.
Namaste.