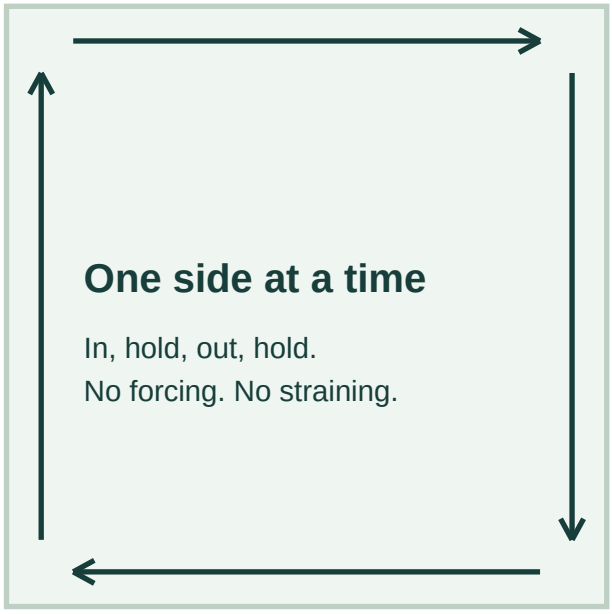
Box breathing in four steps

Sit comfortably. Use gentle breaths. The count is a guide; stop whenever you need to breathe normally.

1. BREATHE IN - 4 counts

4. HOLD

4 counts



2. HOLD

4 counts

3. BREATHE OUT - 4 counts

Make the pattern comfortable

Try one cycle first. Continue only if comfortable, up to four cycles. Use two equal counts per stage if four feels too long. If holds are uncomfortable, stop and choose gentle breathing without holds instead.

When to stop

Stop for dizziness, tingling, increased breathlessness or anxiety. Return to ordinary breathing. Seek advice if symptoms persist or concern you. Chest pain, fainting or severe breathing difficulty needs urgent medical help.

Ask a clinician about suitability if you have a relevant condition or symptoms. Follow any existing medical action plan. Use while safely resting, never while driving or in water. This is general relaxation information, not treatment.

Companion article: healthymindlab.com/box-breathing/

Sources: Veterans Health Library, Relieving Tension in Your Back; South Tees NHS, Brief techniques to manage anxiety. Full source links are in the companion article.