

Breath Pattern

Audit

Understand how you breathe — and what your body is trying to tell you

A Sol Method self-assessment to identify your default breathing patterns and how they may be influencing your nervous system.

How to use this audit: Work through each section honestly — there are no right or wrong answers. This is not a test. It is a map. The more honestly you respond, the more useful the picture that emerges. Return to this audit after completing the 10-day Breathe Better course to notice what has shifted.

SECTION 1

YOUR PRIMARY BREATH PATHWAY

How do you primarily breathe at rest?

Mostly through my nose

Mostly through my mouth

A mix of both

I'm not sure

Do you notice mouth breathing during:

Sleep

Exercise

Stress

Speaking

I don't notice this

SECTION 2**BREATH MECHANICS — HOW YOUR BODY MOVES**

Place one hand on your chest and one on your ribs or belly. Take a few normal breaths and observe.

What moves first when you inhale?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chest lifts first (vertical breathing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Belly / ribs expand first (horizontal breathing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Everything moves at once | <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal movement |

Where do you feel your breath most?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper chest / collarbones | <input type="checkbox"/> Front of belly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Side ribs | <input type="checkbox"/> Back body |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neck / shoulders | |

Do your shoulders lift when you breathe?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Often | <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

SECTION 3**BREATH RHYTHM & PACE****How would you describe your breathing pace?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Slightly rushed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steady | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Variable / inconsistent | |

Does your breath feel:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth and continuous | <input type="checkbox"/> Jerky or uneven |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Held / restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> Forced or controlled |

Can you comfortably take a slow inhale through your nose?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

SECTION 4

SIGNS OF OVERBREATHING

Check any that apply:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent sighing or yawning | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling like you can't get a full breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tight chest or air hunger | <input type="checkbox"/> Dizziness or lightheadedness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold hands or feet | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety or restlessness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shallow breathing into chest | <input type="checkbox"/> Breathlessness at rest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tension in neck or jaw | |

Note: Ticking several of these items is common and does not mean something is seriously wrong. These are signs that the breathing pattern has drifted from functional — and they respond well to the practices in the Breathe Better course.

SECTION 5

BREATH HOLD CAPACITY — OPTIONAL TEST

Sit quietly and breathe normally for a minute. After a **normal exhale** (not a big one), gently hold your breath. Note the time when you feel the **first urge to breathe** — not when you can't hold any longer, just the first impulse.

How long until you feel the first urge to breathe?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 10 seconds | <input type="checkbox"/> 10–20 seconds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20–30 seconds | <input type="checkbox"/> 30+ seconds |

What this tells you: This is a simple indicator of CO₂ tolerance and breathing efficiency. Less than 10 seconds suggests significant overbreathing. 10–20 is common and improvable. 20–30 is functional. 30+ is good. This number tends to increase noticeably over the 10-day course.

SECTION 6

STRESS & BREATH CONNECTION

When stressed, your breath becomes:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faster | <input type="checkbox"/> Shallower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Held | <input type="checkbox"/> Mouth-based |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not aware of any change | |

Do you notice your breath changing throughout the day?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, often | <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> Never |

SECTION 7**BODY AWARENESS — INTEROCEPTION**

Interoception is the capacity to feel what is happening inside the body. It is a foundational skill in both breath retraining and nervous system regulation.

How easy is it for you to feel your breath in your body?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat easy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel disconnected from my body |

Can you feel your breath in your ribs and back body?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> A little |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

SECTION 8**YOUR PATTERN SUMMARY**

Based on your responses above, tick the patterns that resonate most. You may identify with more than one — that is normal.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper chest breather | <input type="checkbox"/> Mouth breather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fast / over-breather | <input type="checkbox"/> Breath holder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shallow breather | <input type="checkbox"/> Disconnected from breath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Controlled / forced breather | |

Each breath pattern has a nervous system signature. Understanding yours is the first step toward changing it.

Upper chest breather

Chest breathing keeps the nervous system in a state of low-grade activation. It signals to the brain that the body is under stress — even when it isn't. The diaphragm is underused, respiratory efficiency drops, and CO2 tolerance often falls. This pattern is very common and very changeable.

Mouth breather

Mouth breathing bypasses the nose's filtering, warming, and nitric oxide-producing functions. It tends to increase breathing volume, reduce CO2 tolerance, and contribute to both overbreathing and poor sleep quality. Restoring nasal breathing — even partially — creates significant nervous system benefit.

Fast / over-breather

Breathing more than the body needs reduces CO2 levels in the blood, which paradoxically restricts oxygen delivery to the tissues. Over time, this creates a baseline of subtle anxiety, air hunger, and nervous system activation. Slowing and reducing the breath volume is the primary intervention.

Breath holder

Breath holding is a common stress response — the system braces, the breath stops. Over time this becomes a default pattern that keeps the nervous system on alert. Gentle, consistent breath awareness is the key — noticing the hold before it becomes habitual.

Shallow breather

Shallow breathing reduces respiratory capacity, keeps the diaphragm underactive, and limits the nervous system's access to its own regulation tool. Building 360 degree diaphragmatic breath gradually expands both the physical and the nervous system capacity available to you.

Disconnected from breath

Low interoception — difficulty feeling what is happening in the body — is both a symptom and a driver of nervous system dysregulation. The Breathe Better practices are specifically designed to rebuild this connection, beginning with the simplest awareness and building over ten days.

Controlled / forced breather

Effortful breath — trying to make it 'right' — keeps the nervous system in a state of vigilance. The goal of this course is not to control the breath but to attune to it. Learning to trust the breath rather than manage it is one of the most significant shifts you can make.

YOUR REFLECTION

Looking at the patterns you've identified — what stands out most?

Where do you feel the connection between your breath and your nervous system most clearly?

What do you most want to change about how you breathe — and why?

What would it mean for your daily life if your breath became a genuine anchor?

"Your breath is a map. This audit is where you learn to read it. Come back to these pages after Day 10 — and notice what has changed."