

## CONTROLLED BREATHING TECHNIQUES

### ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING

**This breathing exercise helps to relax and bring balance to both sides of the brain.**

1. Sit in a comfortable position.
2. Close off your right nostril by placing the thumb of your right hand on your right nostril.
3. Inhale through your left nostril.
4. Close off your left nostril with the ring finger of your right hand.
5. Remove the thumb and exhale through your right nostril.
6. Inhale through your right nostril.
7. Close off your right nostril with your thumb.
8. Exhale through your left nostril.
9. Inhale through your left nostril.

Continue alternating 5 to 10 times.



### OCEAN BREATH

**This breathing exercise helps to relax and also helps warm up the body during yoga practice.**

Learn this breath while seated comfortably. Once you feel confident, begin to use it during yoga practice or during times of stress such as while driving during rush hour traffic.

1. Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply through the mouth.
2. On the exhales, begin to tone the back of the throat, slightly constricting the passage of air. Imagine that you are fogging up a pair of glasses.
3. Once you are comfortable with the exhale, begin to apply the same toning of the throat to the inhales. This is where the name of the breath comes from: it sounds like the ocean. (It also sounds like Darth Vader.)
4. When you are able to control the throat on both the inhale and the exhale, close the mouth and begin breathing through the nose. Continue applying the same toning to the throat that you did when the mouth was open. The breath will still make a loud noise coming in and out of the nose.
5. Now start to use this breath during your practice. If the teacher tells you to move on an inhale, use this Ocean breath. If you need a little extra relaxation while holding a pose, remember this breath.

Another way to think about Ocean Breath is to visualize your throat as a garden hose, with the breath passing through like a trickle of water. If you put your thumb partially over the opening of the hose, you increase the power of the water that is coming through. This is the same thing you are doing with your throat during Ocean breathing. The air that comes in through your constricted throat is a powerful, directed breath that you can send into the parts of your body that need it during yoga.