

2 Yoga Breathing Techniques that Improve Focus at Work

Breathing exercises or pranayama is a vital part of any yoga practice. Use these techniques at work when you can't seem to get focused or when you're feeling overwhelmed.

Nadi Shodhana pranayama (Alternate Nostril Breathing)

This breathing exercise is used to cleanse and rejuvenate your *Nadi* or subtle life force channel. It relieves pent-up stress in the body and soothes the nervous system, so you feel calm and can concentrate with laser focus.

Sit up straight and relax your shoulders. Connect the tips of your index and middle fingers of your right hand in between your eyebrows and place your touching ring and little finger on your left nostril and your thumb on your right nostril.

Inhale deeply and then gently press your thumb down on your right nostril so that no air can escape. Now, inhale in through your left nostril and then press the left nostril closed with your ring and little fingers. Remove your thumb from your right nostril and breathe out from the right nostril. Next, breathe in through your right nostril and exhale from the left.

Now you have completed one complete round of Nadi Shodhana pranayama. Complete nine rounds by breathing alternately between the nostrils as you did above. You may wish to keep your eyes closed during this pranayama to further relax your nervous system by closing down stimulation through the eyes. Practice breathing this way deeply and smoothly.

Bhramari pranayama (Bee breath)

This pranayama helps you bring your mind back to the present moment when your mind is scattered or overwhelmed. Bee breath wards off unnecessary thoughts and drives you to the present moment. Being in the present allows you focus on the job at hand instead of thinking about past or future.

You will hum the sound “hmmm” which is part of the “Om” sound—the healing sound of the universe. Practicing this breathing exercise allows you to reset your mind so you can focus on the now. It will leave you feeling refreshed and ready to tackle your next project.

Sit up nice and tall and close your eyes. With your eyes closed, observe the sensations in your body. Go within and find your stillness. After a few minutes, gently place your index fingers on the cartilage on your ears to close them.

Now, take a deep breath in and as you exhale, close up your ears by gently pressing on the cartilage and begin humming with the sound a bee makes in a high pitched tone. Continue breathing in and then on the exhalation, humming. Do this three to five times.