

# 4 In • 4 Hold • 6 Out

## PURPOSE

This breath is your “softly slow me down” pattern.

It is here to help you:

- Gently turn the volume down on stress and tension.
- Create a sense of steady, grounded presence in your body.
- Help your system let go on the exhale so it's easier to relax, rest, or fall asleep.

## DESCRIPTION

*Inhale for 4 • Hold for 4 • Exhale for 6*

How to do it:

1. Get comfy – sit or lie down, feet supported, shoulders relaxed.
2. Inhale gently through your nose for a count of 4.
3. At the top of the inhale, pause and hold for a count of 4, keeping the body soft.
4. Exhale slowly through the nose (or softly through the mouth) for a count of 6, letting your whole body melt on the out-breath.

## BENEFITS

### For your body:

- Slows your breathing into a longer, softer rhythm.
- Helps your heart rate and blood pressure to settle.
- The longer exhale gently releases built-up tension in the chest, jaw, shoulders, and belly.
- Softly helps to build CO<sub>2</sub> tolerance (less than 4 in 4 out 6 hold)

### For your mind and emotions:

- Helps take the edge off racing thoughts.
- Can make it easier to slide into rest, sleep, or meditation.
- The 4-4-6 rhythm gives your mind a simple, kind focus, which keeps you in the present moment.
- Over time, it teaches your system: “It's safe to pause. I don't have to rush my next breath.”

## IDEAL FOR

Evening wind-down - Pre-sleep ritual - Transition moments  
Before meditation, journaling, or therapy, to arrive in your body and feel more grounded.  
As a gentle daily practice

## SAFETY

The breath should never feel like a fight and the hold is a gentle pause, not a test or a challenge.

If you feel dizzy, trapped, or more anxious:

- Let go of the hold right away.
- Breathe normally.
- Look around the room and name a few things you can see or feel to ground yourself.

In the very intense first minute of a panic spike, start softer and skip the hold until your body starts to settle.

If you have low tolerance to CO<sub>2</sub>, or a history of panic around holding your breath: Shorten the hold to 2-3 counts, or skip the hold completely until you feel safer.

If you are pregnant, or have heart or lung conditions or unstable blood pressure, check in with your healthcare provider before working with longer breath-holds.