

# ACTING: BREATHING EXERCISES

As a performer, it is important to have control of your breath in order to deliver your lines with ease, without hurting your body or voice. This simple breathing exercise will help your breath be supported, powerful, and healthy!

1. Stand with your feet flat on the floor and keep your shoulders back and relaxed. Imagine a string coming out of the top of your head that keeps you standing straight and tall.
2. Place your hands on your stomach. Practice taking a breath from your diaphragm. Imagine your lungs and diaphragm filling up with air like a balloon. Feel your stomach expand and contract as you inhale and exhale. Make sure not to hunch up your shoulders around your ears or gasp. Keep your inhale controlled!
3. Breathe in for a count of four, and then exhale through your teeth with a “sssss” sound for a count of four. When you come to four, stop the exhale crisply. You’ll probably have lots of air left, but the exercise is going to become more challenging!
4. Breathe in for a count of four, and repeat the exhale for a count of eight. Repeat the exercise exhaling for longer counts (ten, twelve, fourteen). The more you practice this exercise, the longer you will be able to hold the sound.
5. This exercise can also have a few variations. You can lay on your back with your knees bent, feet on the ground, and your hand on your stomach. You can also exhale on a “vvvvv” sound, a “mmmmm” sound, or a “zzzzz” sound. Try out different combinations!