

# Breathing Exercises For Every Musician: A Compilation of Breathing Exercises for Beginner Wind Players

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Methodology: As a 6<sup>th</sup> grade band student, I always had difficulty taking in enough air to play my flute. I was always told to take in a deep breath, but never taught *how* to do so. Breathing can be overlooked in the beginner band classroom, so I decided to do some research and make a compilation of different exercises that all musicians can do. Below are some of the exercises:

**THE SECRET REVEALED!** Yawning... That is the secret to taking a deep breath. When you yawn, three things that are essential for taking a deep breath happen: you drop your jaw, it opens your throat, and it fills up your entire lungs. Here are some exercises to test out these aspects:

<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/zi4tNp15qg/hqdefault.jpg>



## Simple Breathing

1. Breath in for 4 beats, out for 4 beats
2. Breath in for 4, out for 8
3. Breath in for 2, out for 6
4. Breath in for 2, out for 12
5. Breath in for 1, out for 16

This exercise allows musicians to practice taking in a deep breath in a certain amount of time, and using that air to blow through a specific amount of beats. Yawn first to get the feel of the open mouth, open throat, and a full intake of air, and then try out this exercise.

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## Stick it to the Wall

1. Get a piece of paper
2. Hold the paper against the wall, stand an inch. away, take a deep breath and blow at the piece of paper
3. Let go of the paper and see how long you can keep the paper on the wall

Not only do you want to be able to take a deep breath and use the air properly, you want to keep the air speed steady so that your intonation (tuning) does not change.



<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/ca/fd/59/cafd59bdc4c85a0e1dfdf232158ee33c.jpg>

## The Ragdoll

1. Stand up and flop your body over like a ragdoll
2. Breath in for 4 beats only filling up your chest, and out for 8
3. Now take a deep breath in for 4, filling up your front, sides, and back, and out for 8

By filling up only your chest, you see that there is not much body movement and you run out of air faster. This exercise shows you just how much space your lungs have to take in air.



<https://cdn.meme.com/images/11590722.jpg>

## Sip, Sip (Breathing Extension)

1. Breath in for 4 beats, filling up as much as you can, hold your breath for 2, take in 2 sips of air, then breath out for 4

If you were able to take in those 2 sips easily, you did not take in enough air to begin with. When you take in air during the first 4 beats, fill up your lungs as if you were yawning, and repeat the exercise. The sips should be a little more difficult to take in. You can also change it up: breath in for 4, hold for 2, take in two sips, breath out for 8, 12, 16, etc.

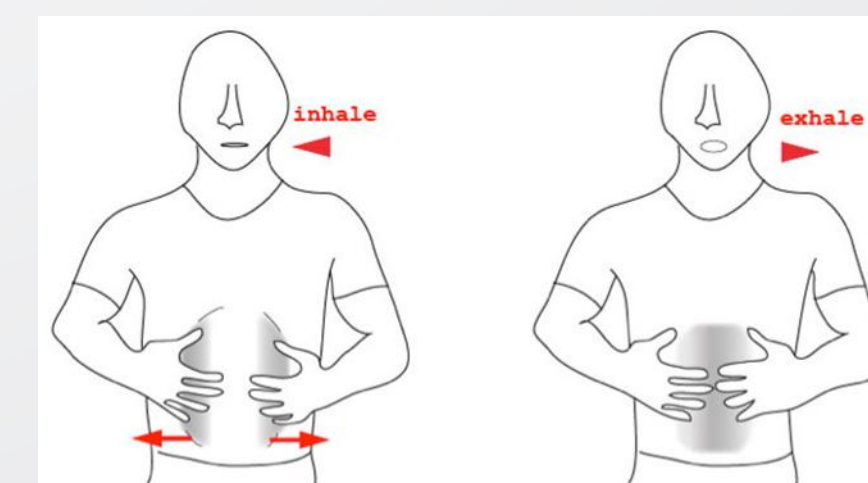


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## The Pinwheel

1. Acquire a pinwheel
2. Take in a deep breath, and blow on the pinwheel
3. See how long you can keep the pinwheel spinning

This exercise allows musicians to see what happens when you do not take a deep enough breath. Running out of air= slowing pinwheel= going flat on a note. If you are competitive, this is fun to do with a friend.



<http://d2lfsu1qnyxzcu.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/breath-4.jpg>

## Hands on your Belly

1. Put your hands on your belly
2. Take a deep breath
3. Watch how your fingers expand

This exercise helps musicians get a visual of what a deep breath looks like. Try just filling up your chest.. Fingers do not move, right? When you take a deep breath, your belly should puff out a bit, you are trying to fill up all of your lungs!