

Ujjayi Breathing

Ujjayi in Sanskrit means "victorious", and it comes from two words: ud that meaning "bondage" and ji which is translated as "conquering", therefore ujjayi is the breath which gives freedom from the bondage of the mind and leads to the victory over its restless nature.

How to perform: Ujjayi involves the gentle contraction of the glottis (the opening at the upper end of the windpipe, between the vocal cords) so that when the breath passes, a gentle hissing sound is produced in the throat (not in the nose). To find the place of this contraction, you can start by opening your mouth and inhaling softly, noticing where the breath touches your throat. It will be somewhere at the back of the throat, and this is the spot you need to constrict slightly to practice ujjayi. Once you feel this area, close your mouth. The measure for this regulation is your sound, which ultimately should not require any effort nor create any tension. Sometimes it helps to imagine a hole in your throat that you are breathing through or imagine you are saying SA on inhalation and HA on exhalation .

Relax the face as much as possible, and do not contract the throat strongly. The sound you make does not need to be loud. It should be just audible enough for you. The sound can be compared to a cat purring, or the sound of the ocean you can hear in a shell or that of soft snoring, like the breathing of a sleeping baby. As you practice, listen to the sound of your breath, to understand its quality. Feel how your body and mind respond. Try to smooth out any rough edges so the breath is as smooth as liquid as if you were slowly drinking the air.

As you create a constriction at the base of your throat to make the sound of your breath audible, there will be a simultaneous gentle contraction of your abdomen. Just be aware of this slight contraction. This will happen without any effort being made.

Ujjayi is easier to perform as you exhale so it's advisable to learn the technique first by just producing the sound on exhalation. Once this happens naturally, you can also practice exhaling with the same constriction of the glottis on inhalation. Notice how the sounds of inhalation and exhalation differ because while inhaling you are using slightly different muscles to compare with exhalation.

BENEFITS

Miraculous remedy for thyroid problems. Snoring

Good for heart, asthma, tonsil, cold and cough. All throat problems are cured

Calms the mind and the body increase concentration

Meditation practice become easier Stimulates Circulation and metabolism

Increases prana Increases sense

Lungs absorbs oxygen more completely by opening the alveoli in the lungs

CONTRADICTIONS

Can raise blood pressure and heart rate if forceful ashtanga ujjayi

Lower blood pressure and heart rate if practice original slow ujjayi