Viloma: Interrupted Breath

Before you practice

These guides are general fitness and mindfulness content written by BLKMAT. They are not medical advice, therapy, or treatment, and they are not a substitute for a qualified yoga teacher or health professional.

- Check with a doctor or physical therapist before starting a new exercise routine, especially if you are pregnant, recovering from an injury or surgery, or managing a heart, blood-pressure, joint, or balance condition.
- Move within a comfortable range. Mild stretching sensation is fine; sharp, pinching, or electric pain, numbness, or dizziness means stop.
- If you feel faint, dizzy, short of breath, or unwell at any point, stop and rest. Get medical help if it doesn't pass quickly.
- Breathe through your nose if you can, and never hold your breath to force a pose.
- Use a wall, chair, folded blanket, or pillow for support whenever it helps. Props are not "cheating."
- Practice on a dry mat on a flat, non-slip floor. BLKMAT mats have a natural rubber base, which contains latex.

Zodiac and chakra themes in these guides are cultural and creative frameworks for choosing what to practice and what to pay attention to. They are not scientific or health claims.

A BLKMAT guide to Viloma, the interrupted breath. About 5 minutes, seated or lying down. Read the safety note first.

What it is

Viloma means “against the grain.” Instead of one smooth breath, you interrupt it: the inhale (Viloma I) or the exhale (Viloma II) is taken in small, equal sips separated by short pauses. This guide teaches Viloma I, the interrupted inhale.

When to use it

To lengthen the inhale gradually, without strain. As a step between Dirga and retention work. Lying down, as a quiet evening practice.

How to practice

1. Lie on your back or sit tall. Exhale fully.
2. Inhale about a third of a breath, then pause for 1–2 seconds, the breath held softly — do not gulp or brace.
3. Inhale another third. Pause again.
4. Inhale the final third, filling the chest. Pause briefly at the top.
5. Exhale in one long, smooth breath — no pauses on the way out.
6. Take one or two natural breaths, then repeat.

Timing and counts

Sips	Pauses	Breaths
3–4 per inhale	1–2 seconds	5–8, with natural breaths in between

Why people practice it

The pauses teach fine control of the diaphragm and show you exactly where an inhale usually stops. Over weeks, the sips get smaller and the full breath gets longer — without ever forcing it.

Take care

- The pauses are short holds, so the Kumbhaka cautions apply in miniature: no straining, no competing with the clock.
- If a pause makes you gasp, make the sips bigger and the pauses shorter.
- Skip this technique if you are pregnant, or have a heart or blood-pressure condition, unless your doctor says otherwise.

Related glossary terms

Pranayama · Diaphragm

Part of the Breathing Techniques category in the Practice Library.

© 2026 BLKMAT · blkmat.com · General fitness content, not medical advice. Check with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine, and stop if anything hurts.