

Let's Go Outdoors!

Dragonfly breathing: Find calm by the canal

Spending time by the canal is a fantastic way to connect with nature and feel great. This fun breathing exercise, inspired by the amazing dragonfly, can help you and your family find moments of calm and release extra energy, anytime and anywhere.

Did you know?

Dragonflies are **incredible** insects that can fly forwards, backwards, sideways, and even hover.

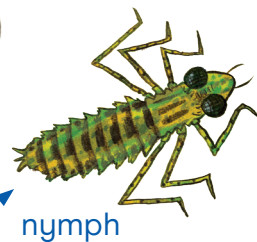
With their large, beautiful wings, they are true masters of the air.

They have been around for over **300 million years** – even before the dinosaurs.

They can fly at speeds up to **30 miles per hour**, making them one of the fastest insects.



Dragonflies **start their lives underwater** as **nymphs** before emerging as adults.



Dragonfly spotting by the canal

Keep your eyes peeled while you're by the canal. Dragonflies love to be near water. See if you can spot them flitting through the air or resting on reeds and plants. Notice their vibrant colours and how their wings shimmer in the sunlight. Observing these fascinating creatures can be a calming and engaging way to connect with the natural world around you.



Let's do dragonfly breathing

We're going to learn two ways to breathe like a dragonfly: one for letting out energy and one for finding calm.

Part 1: Flapping wings (to release energy)



- 1. Stand tall:** Find a comfortable standing position with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- 2. Dragonfly wings:** Stretch your arms out wide to the sides, like the wings of a dragonfly. Keep your shoulders relaxed and down.
- 3. Deep breath in:** Take a deep breath in through your nose, filling your tummy with air like a balloon.
- 4. Flap and buzz:** As you breathe out through your mouth, flap your arms up and down quickly, like a dragonfly in flight. If you want to, you can even make a gentle buzzing sound with your breath as it comes out!
- 5. Repeat:** Do this for a short time and feel that lovely energy release.

Part 2: Gliding & breathing (to find calm)

- 1. Gentle wings:** Keep your arms stretched out wide, but this time, keep them still, like a dragonfly gently gliding through the air.
- 2. Slow breath in:** Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose, feeling your tummy expand like a balloon.
- 3. Slow breath out:** Breathe out slowly and gently through your mouth, imagining your dragonfly gently floating and landing.
- 4. Repeat and focus:** Let's do this a few more times, breathing in slowly through your nose and out slowly through your mouth. Pay attention to how your body feels as you breathe and relax.



How do you feel?

Take a moment to notice how you feel after the Dragonfly Breathing.
Do you feel calmer? More relaxed?

Dragonfly breathing anytime, anywhere

This simple exercise is a wonderful tool you can use anytime you need a moment to:

Release energy:

The Flapping Wings can be great when you feel restless or have lots of energy to get out.

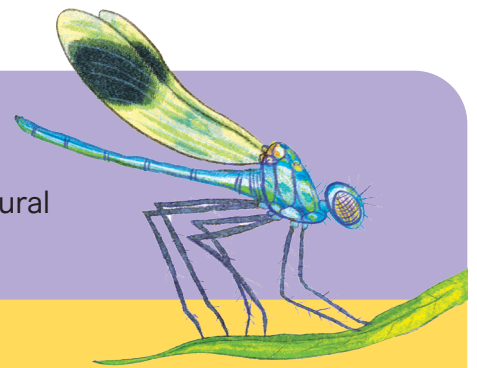


Find calm:

The slow, deep Gliding & Breathing can help if you feel stressed, worried, or just need a peaceful moment.



You can do **Dragonfly Breathing** by the canal, in your garden, or even inside your home. Connecting with your breath is a powerful way to connect with yourself and the natural world around you.



Discover the magic of nature with your family

Hey families! Dive into the wonders of nature along our beautiful canals.

We'd love to see your dragonfly breathing. Share your moments with us by tagging #CanalRiverTrust and #LifesBetterByWater



Explorers

Explore tons of fun activities at canalrivertrust.org.uk/explorers

Let's make memories together!

Remember to soak in the sights, sounds, and smells of nature while practising dragonfly breathing by the canal.

