

Viloma Ujjayi

Whereas anuloma translates as 'with the grain', viloma translates as 'against the grain'.

This is an energising and stimulating technique in which we exhale through both nostrils using ujjayi breath and inhale through alternate nostrils using the fingers to regulate the flow of the breath. (This is the opposite of the anuloma technique that we practised on Day 4).

A reminder of the mudras

The hand position used in this technique is known as Mrgi (pronounced mrigeer) or Vishnu mudra, or alternatively Nasagra mudra.

The thumb is used to close the right nostril and the ring finger to close the left nostril. Always use the right hand for these mudras.



Mrgi/Vishnu Mudra

With the right hand, fold the index and middle fingers in towards the palm.

The thumb will rest on the right nostril.

The ring finger will rest on the left nostril.

The little finger is softly extended.



Nasagra Mudra

Using the right hand, rest the index and middle fingers at the space between the eyebrows.

The thumb rests on the right nostril.

The ring finger rests on the left nostril.

The little finger is softly extended.

Technique

Come to a comfortable seated posture. Use any props or support that help you to maintain a steady upright spine.

Become familiar with the practice by using the basic technique without ujjayi.

Begin by taking a normal inhale and a normal exhale, then

Inhale: left nostril (right nostril closed with thumb)
 Exhale: both nostrils
 Inhale: right nostril (left nostril closed with ring finger)
 Exhale: both nostrils

This is one round. Practice 4 – 6 rounds.

Rest with the ebb and flow of your natural breath for a few rounds before closing your practice.

When you are comfortable with the technique, incorporate ujjayi on the exhale. Remember that ujjayi should be soft and gentle.

Inhale: left nostril (right nostril closed with thumb)
 Exhale: both nostrils with ujjayi
 Inhale: right nostril (left nostril closed with ring finger)
 Exhale: both nostrils with ujjayi

Ujjayi should only be used on the exhale.

Practice for 4 – 6 rounds and gradually increase to several 2 – 5 minutes.

Considerations and cautions

The cautions are similar to ujjayi breath (refer back to your handout from Day 2) and the anuloma technique.

If you have a tendency towards anxiety or feel agitated or restless during the practice then avoid using this technique.

If there is a blockage or congestion in the nostrils, or if the mudra makes you feel claustrophobic, then this technique works well with visualisation. Imagine or sense the stream of the breath or energy flowing out through the nostril without using the mudra.

Remember that the breath should never feel forced or strained, and you should never feel as if you are running out of breath. Check if any tension is creeping into the jaw, face or hands. If you notice any of these effects, ease back and invite gentleness into the breath. If the effects continue stop and choose an alternative practice such as the subtle breath awareness or full yoga breath.

Note:

There are other breathing techniques called viloma that incorporate an interrupted flow in the inhale / exhale. This has not been covered within this teaching.