By Greg Finch - Surf Longevity Coach

greg@surfstrongforlife.com | surfstrongforlife.com | **IG:** @surfstrongforlife

🌬️ Why Breath Endurance Matters in Surfing

If you've ever come up gasping after a long hold-down or felt your session cut short by shallow breathing and rising anxiety, you're not alone.

Breath control is one of the most overlooked—and most powerful—tools in surf performance.

When you train your breath, you train your nervous system.

✅ You recover faster between sets
✅ You stay calm under pressure
✅ You paddle stronger and last longer in the water

This guide gives you the tools to build bulletproof breath control, boost performance, and stay surf-ready for life—whether you're charging heavy conditions or chasing shoulder-high peelers.

🧘‍♂️ Phase 1: Breath Awareness Foundation

🌀 Daily Breath Check-In (5–10 min)

Use this before a session, after you surf, or anytime stress arises.

1. **Get Comfortable**: Sit, lie down, or walk slowly.
2. **Set an Intention**: "Through breath, I stay calm and strong."
3. **Feel What's Present**: Notice thoughts, tension, or restlessness.
4. **Observe Without Control**: Let breath happen naturally.
5. **Relax Fully**: Soften eyes, jaw, shoulders, and belly.
6. **Breathe Through the Nose** only.
7. **Track the Cycle**: Inhale → pause → exhale → pause.
8. **Notice**: Is the breath smooth or jagged? Shallow or full?
9. **Refocus Gently** if your mind drifts.
10. **End** by noticing any shift in your physical or emotional state.

📅 *Tip: Make this a ritual—first thing in the morning, right after surf, and as you prepare for sleep.*

🧪 Phase 2: CO_2 Tolerance Test

This simple test gives you real-time insight into your nervous system regulation and stress resilience.

🧭 How to Do It:

1. Take 4 deep breaths (inhale ~3–5s / exhale ~5–10s).
2. On the 4th **inhale**, start a timer and begin a **slow, controlled exhale**.
3. Stop the timer **as soon as you feel the urge to breathe in.**

📊 How to Interpret:

- **80+ seconds**: Elite – Powerful breath control.
- **60–80 seconds**: Advanced – Solid nervous system response.
- **40–60 seconds**: Intermediate – Room to grow.
- **20–40 seconds**: Average – CO_2 tolerance likely limiting performance.
- **<20 seconds**: Needs attention – likely surf anxiety, breath fatigue, or inefficient mechanics.

🧠 *Why it matters:* High CO_2 tolerance = better oxygen use, longer paddles, and calmer hold-downs.

🌊 ***Want to stay surf-ready for life—strong, calm, and confident in every session?***
Apply now to join the Surf Strong For Life Exclusive Program — limited spots available.

🛠️ Phase 3: Breathwork Training Tools

Start where you are. Progress as you build tolerance.

🟢 Beginner:

Pattern: Inhale 4s → Exhale 6s
Why: Eases nervous system tension.

🟡 Intermediate:

Pattern: Inhale 4s → Hold 4s → Exhale 8s
Why: Builds CO_2 tolerance with breath-hold capacity.

🔴 Advanced:

Pattern: Inhale 4s → Hold 4s → Exhale 8s → Hold 4s
Why: Trains your mind-body response to stress.

🧘 *Practice for 10 minutes/day — before surf or as recovery.*

🏄‍♂️ Phase 4: Surf-Specific Breath Conditioning

🌊 Simulated Paddle Breaths

Mimic your paddle on land (with or without resistance) and hold your breath:

- Every **3rd, 5th, or 7th stroke**
- Mimics surf effort + breath control demands

🌊 Relaxed Breath Holds

Hold your breath post-exhale in a calm setting:

- Visualize hold-downs
- Train staying relaxed during breath stress

🌊 Apnea Walks *(Land-based)*

- Inhale → exhale → walk as far as possible
- Builds underwater comfort & CO_2 resilience

🛟 Never train breath holds in water unsupervised.

✅ Weekly Breath Progression Plan

Day	Practice	Focus
Mon	Breath Awareness (10 min)	Nervous system reset
Tue	Counted Breathing (Beginner)	Exhale length
Wed	Simulated Paddle Drill (3rd stroke)	Surf-specific tolerance
Thu	Apnea Walk	CO_2 tolerance under movement
Fri	Counted Breathing (Intermediate)	Recovery + resilience
Sat	Simulated Paddle Drill (5th stroke)	Surf pressure adaptation
Sun	Full Rest / Awareness Check-In	Integration & recalibration

🌊 Ready to Train with Me?

If you're serious about leveling up your surf fitness—especially building breath resilience, faster recovery, and confidence under pressure—let's work together.

I'll coach you 1:1 inside the **Surf Strong For Life Exclusive Program**, with a personalized plan that combines breathwork, mobility, and surf-specific strength.

👉 **Apply here now** (Limited spots open each month): Surf Strong For Life Exclusive Program

Stoked to coach you on this Surf / Life Journey we are on.

Surf Strong For Life,
Greg Finch
greg@surfstrongforlife.com