

THE ART OF THE BREATH-HOLD

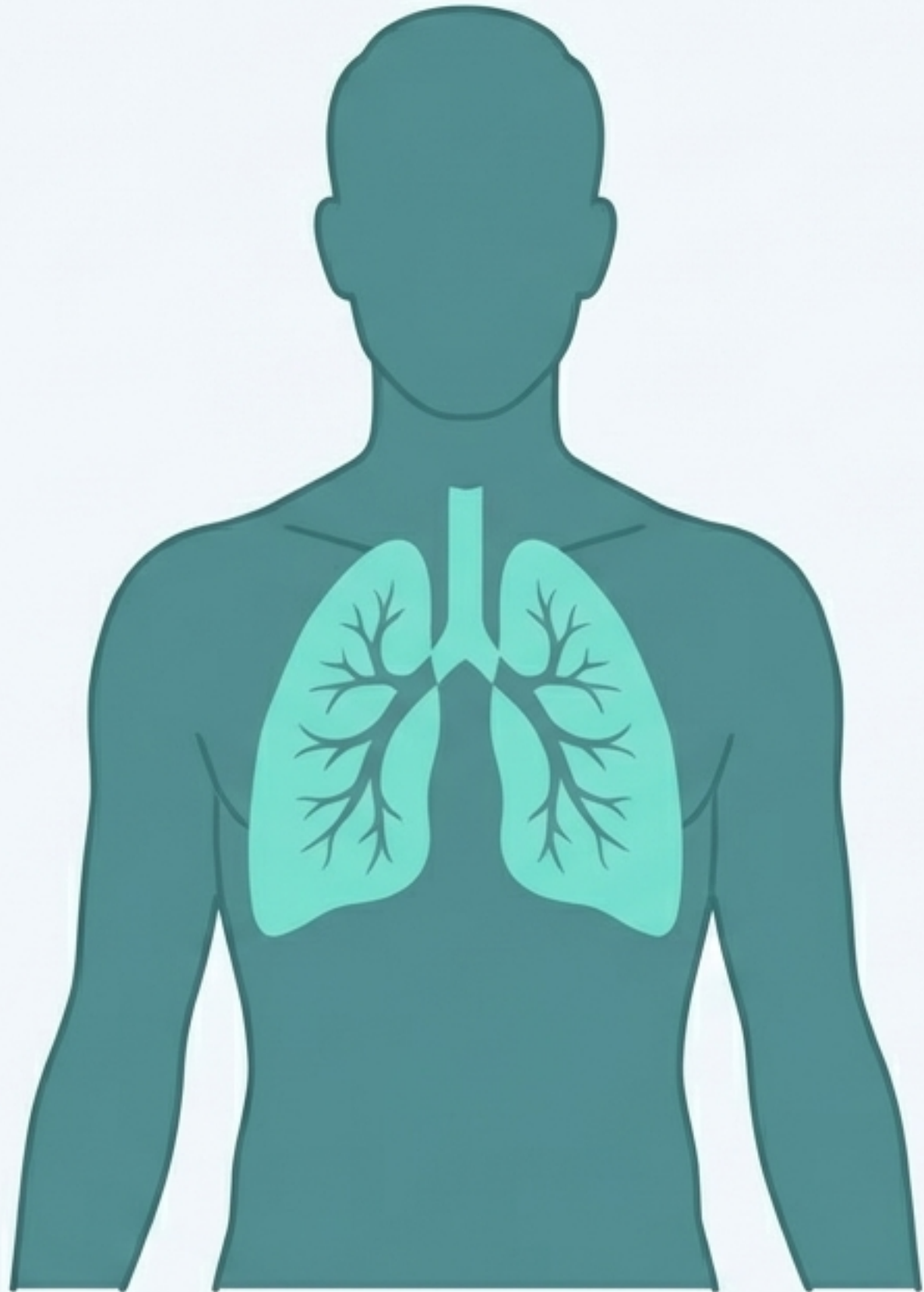
A Practical Guide to Apnea Tables for Freedivers





EVERY NEW FREEDIVER ASKS THE SAME QUESTION...

“ First-time freedivers are often asking about a ‘magic bullet’ that will unlock their breath holds; a secret trick that enables us to stay down for so long. ”



THE SECRET ISN'T A TRICK. IT'S TRAINING.

The real path to a longer breath-hold is to progress naturally, know your limits, and push them gently. The key is allowing your body to adapt safely and gradually.

This is where **Apnea Tables** come in. They are a structured exercise designed to encourage this adaptation without ever needing to get in the water.

THE TWO CURRENCIES OF YOUR BREATH-HOLD



During any dive, two things happen: your body consumes Oxygen (O₂) and produces Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). Effective training teaches your body to get used to lower levels of O₂ and higher levels of CO₂.

TWO TABLES, TWO GOALS



CO₂ Tolerance Tables

The goal here is to get comfortable with discomfort. By decreasing rest times between holds, you train your body's response to rising levels of CO₂—the primary driver of the urge to breathe.



O₂ Training Tables

This is about extending your limits. By increasing hold times, you train your body to function efficiently with lower levels of oxygen, adapting you for longer dives.

HOW TO BOW BUILD CO2 TOLERANCE



Constant Hold Decreasing Rest

Core Concept

The primary mechanism of a CO2 table is to decrease the rest time between a series of consistent breath-holds.

Why it Works

This method doesn't allow your body to fully expel the carbon dioxide built up from the previous hold. This trains your mind and body to tolerate the urge to breathe, which is triggered by CO2, not a lack of O2.

YOUR FIRST CO2 TABLE: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

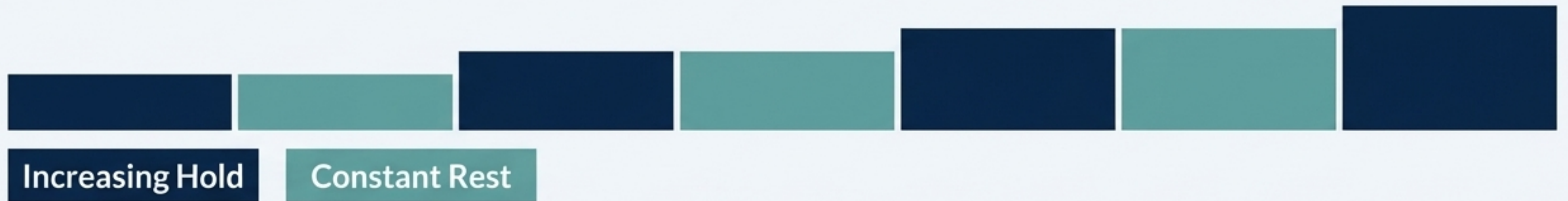
- 1. Find Your Base:** Your hold time for every repetition is 50% of your Personal Best (PB) breath-hold time.
- 2. Breathe Up:** Start with an initial 2 minute, 30 second 'breathe up' (rest period).
- 3. Decrease Rest:** After each hold, reduce your next rest period by 15 seconds.
- 4. Repeat:** Complete no more than 8 cycles.

Sample CO2 Table (for a 3:00 minute PB)

Constant Hold Time: **1:30**

Round 1	Breathe 2:30	Hold 1:30
Round 2	Breathe 2:15	Hold 1:30
Round 3	Breathe 2:00	Hold 1:30
Round 4	Breathe 1:45	Hold 1:30
Round 5	Breathe 1:30	Hold 1:30
Round 6	Breathe 1:15	Hold 1:30
Round 7	Breathe 1:00	Hold 1:30
Round 8	Breathe 0:45	Hold 1:30

HOW TO EXTEND YOUR OXYGEN LIMITS



Core Concept

The primary mechanism of an O2 table is to hold rest times constant while gradually increasing the duration of each breath-hold.

Why it Works

This method safely pushes your body to adapt to functioning with lower oxygen levels. By keeping the rest periods consistent and long, you ensure you are fully recovered for each progressively challenging hold.

YOUR FIRST O2 TABLE: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- 1. Set Your Rest:** Your rest time is constant between every hold (e.g., 2 minutes).
- 2. Build Your Holds:** Start at a comfortable hold time and increase it by 15 seconds with each repetition.
- 3. Define Your Goal:** Slowly build up to a maximum hold of around 80% of your Personal Best (PB) breath-hold time.

Sample O2 Table (for a 3:00 minute PB)

Constant Rest Time: 2:00

Round 1	Breathe 2:00	Hold 1:15
Round 2	Breathe 2:00	Hold 1:30
Round 3	Breathe 2:00	Hold 1:45
Round 4	Breathe 2:00	Hold 2:00
Round 5	Breathe 2:00	Hold 2:15
Round 6	Breathe 2:00	Hold 2:30

Your target hold

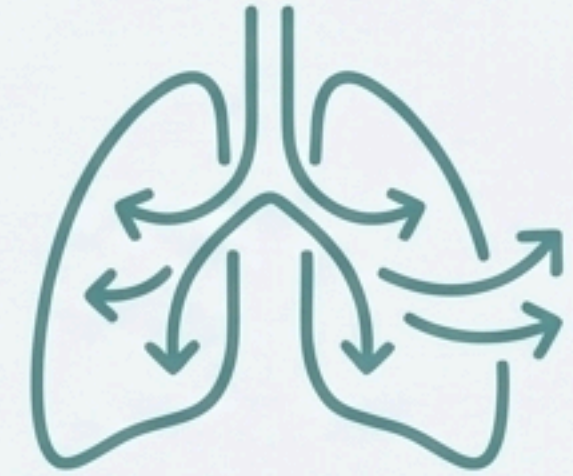
PRO-TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DRY TRAINING



Find a comfortable and safe spot where you can lie down and fully relax, like a couch or bed.



Use an app to guide you. It's tricky to stay relaxed while also tracking times. Apps provide audio cues to guide you through holds and rests.



During rests, breathe normally and focus on complete relaxation. This is not the time for hyperventilation. The goal is to make total relaxation your default state.

THE GOLDEN RULE: NEVER TRAIN ALONE



This applies even during “dry” training on the couch.
A blackout from hypoxia can happen without warning.
Always have a buddy nearby who knows what you are doing.



CONSISTENCY CONNECTS THE COUCH TO THE CORAL

You don't need to train every day. Practicing your tables just a few times a week is enough to see steady, noticeable improvements in your comfort and breath-hold times.



YOUR QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

Q: What does '80% of my personal best' mean?

A: This refers to 80% of your maximum breath-hold time. For example, if your personal best (PB) is 3 minutes (180 seconds), your 80% target is 2 minutes and 24 seconds (144 seconds).

Q: How should I breathe during the rest periods?

A: The goal is complete relaxation. Use relaxed, normal breathing. This training helps you familiarize yourself with what total relaxation feels like, so you can achieve that state quickly and efficiently before a real dive.

YOU'VE BUILT THE FOUNDATION. NOW EXPLORE THE DEPTHS.

Apnea tables are your key to unlocking potential on land, building the physiological and mental strength for your underwater adventures. Take these skills, continue your education, and discover what you're capable of.



Breathe. Relax. Explore Safely.