



The following steps are best suited for able-bodied learners. You may need to adapt them to the needs of people with diverse needs to achieve the aim of chest compressions and rescue breaths (to pump blood and oxygen around the body). If adapting, the ideal technique should allow the first aid provider to perform the principles of the method safely and effectively, be safe for the unresponsive person and be quick to start.

Performing chest compressions

Aim: To press down in the middle of the chest at a regular rate. You are acting as the heart, pumping blood around the body to vital organs including to the brain. This will buy time until the heart can have an electric shock from a defibrillator, which may help it to re-start.

1. Kneel by the unresponsive person and place the heel of one hand on the middle of their chest. This will be the lower part of their breastbone.
2. Place the heel of the other hand on top of the first hand. Interlock the fingers of your hands to ensure that pressure is not applied on the ribs, the abdomen or the lower tip of the breastbone.
3. Lean over the person and with straight arms press down vertically on the chest. Push hard to depress the chest by approximately 5cm (but no more than 6 cm).
4. Release the pressure without taking the hands off the chest. Allow the chest to come back up fully (recoil) before doing the next compression.
5. Compress the chest at a rate of between 100 to 120 compressions per minute (about two compressions per second). The time taken for compression and release should be the same.

Performing rescue breaths (with chest compressions)

Aim: To blow two breaths of air into the person's lungs following 30 compressions. The air you breathe into their lungs is loaded with oxygen which can help to keep vital organs alive. For first aid providers, the gold standard for CPR is a combination of chest compressions and rescue breaths at a ratio of 30 compressions to two breaths.

1. After 30 compressions open the person's airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin.
2. Pinch the soft part of the person's nose (using your hand from the forehead).
3. Allow their mouth to open while maintaining the chin lift.
4. Take a breath and place your lips around the person's mouth making sure you have a good seal.
5. Blow into their mouth and watch their chest rise. If the chest does not rise you may need to adjust their head position.
6. Maintaining the head tilt and chin lift, take your mouth away from the person's mouth and watch the chest fall. If the chest rises and falls that is an effective rescue breath. Each breath should take one second.
7. Give a second breath. Do not attempt more than two breaths each time before returning to chest compressions.
8. Without delay return to do 30 chest compressions.
9. Continue the cycle of 30 chest compressions followed by two breaths.