



Your daily warm up - How to and why?

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Like every other physical activity, your singing voice will benefit greatly from daily practise. These benefits stretch far beyond the act of singing itself, into physical and mental well-being.

Now is an opportunity to work on your voice and to take some time to breath a little deeper.

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES BEING THIS WARM UP?

Awareness: Bringing awareness to the **six fundamentals of singing:** breath, resonance, adduction, jaw and tongue release and a free larynx so you can be in control of your instrument.

Repetition: EVERY exercise works all six areas so each time we do the exercise we can focus on a different area, going deeper into the practise as we become more familiar with each technique.

Balance: The biggest challenge to a singer is coordinating active engagement and release. Via awareness and repetition we learn which areas must be engaged and which must be released.

Community, shared resources and support : As these will be live, we can all support each other, wherever we are in the world.

Self-care: taking a moment each morning to deep breath and be mindful is important for us all at this time.

THE WARM UP:

Part one: We will start each session with a short mindfulness exercise including alignment and a gentle stretch.

Part Two: Bringing awareness to the six fundamentals of singing:

1. *Breath flow connected to your body.*



2. *Cord adduction.*
3. *Resonance,*
4. *Jaw release*
5. *Tongue root release.*
6. *A Free larynx.*

EVERY exercise below works all six areas!

Lip trills - for breath flow connected to the body

How: *Whilst keeping your face relaxed, allow your lips to trill or reverberate.*

Why: *You are learning to make a continuous flow of air, connected to your body as you sing.*

The closure (SOVT) creates a backflow of sound waves which aids cord adduction and can stabilise the larynx. It also gives your heightened awareness of resonance.

As this exercise only works if your jaw and face is relaxed it will also encourage jaw release.

If you also want to target your tongue root release, then have an awareness of the tip of your tongue behind your bottom front teeth.

Puffy cheeks - For resonance awareness.

How: *Sigh out and fill your cheeks with air then add sound. Make sure you keep your cheeks full of air as you sing.*

Why: *The closure of your mouth contains the sound waves within your vocal tract, allowing a heightened awareness of the sensations of resonance (the feeling of soundwaves travelling through your body). These sound waves move at different speeds and shapes depending on different notes (frequencies), how you use your breath and vocal cords (harmonics) and the shape of your vocal tract or mouth and throat (Formants)*

As sound waves are a physical thing, gaining a heightened awareness of the feeling of sound will greatly help with placement and register breaks.



Sighing as singing - for awareness of cord adduction.

How: Breath in for two, out for two then sing!

Why: We are exploring the benefits of an 'aspirate onset' and awareness of your own vocal cords.

This exercise is especially helpful for those of us who tense up before we sing (holding our breath and tensing the jaw and tongue)

There are two types of onset (how to commence a note):

Glottal onsets mean that the cords come together before the breath.

Aspirate onsets mean that the breath passes through the open cords before they come together to make sound.

Aspirate onsets, can help with jaw and tongue release, a free larynx and breath flow.

“Wee wee wee,” - with a finger/pen between your teeth - For jaw hinge release (add nose hold to check for nasality)

How: Put your finger (or a pen, or chopstick) between your front teeth.

Why: You can't lock your jaw hinge with this in place so it teaches you to sing without clenching your jaw (which also affects the muscles that surround your larynx)

It will also encourage your tongue mobility.

The 'W' we are using is to engage the breath support in the body and the choice of EE is because it's one of the best vowels for tongue release and acoustic shaping.

The addition of holding your nose tests whether you are sending the sound into your nose allowing you to adjust the resonance placement accordingly!



“Woah,” - For a free larynx or ‘extreme tilt.’

How: Aim for a yawning, dopey, sobby low Papa bear voice.

Why: This one is for those of us who tend to sing with a high larynx, allowing us to feel the other end of the spectrum: a very low larynx.

It is also for those of us who struggle with register breaks, or high notes as it uses an extreme version of the techniques needed to navigate these areas.

The yawny, sobby feeling encourages larynx tilt (The larynx’s makes high notes

The emotive sobbing feeling, can also engage your breath support and cord adduction (and your body’s primal knowledge of vocalisation)

Use an additional F before the W to aid jaw release and breath flow.

Consonants -

How: Use your lips and tongue to make your consonants NOT your jaw!

Why: The jaw muscles connect to the larynx. If they contract then the muscles around the larynx contract and hinder it’s free movement, and ability to vibrate and move freely through your vocal range.

When we release the jaw, and our tongue and lips start working instead, we’ll feel our body engage in response to the closures we’re creating, reaping the benefits of SOVT work including subglottic pressure, awareness of support, adduction, resonance awareness and larynx freedom.

“Hey hey hey,” - To engage the primal or emotive side of singing.

How: Take a gasped in-breath on the count of four they call out, ‘Hey,’ on an arpeggio as if you need to urgently get someone’s attention.



Why: *Understanding that much of the vocal system is autonomic (or involuntary ie. connection to your nervous system) we need to give over to emotional intention to engage the body's natural knowledge of how to vocalise.*

The H provides the aspirate onset, and engages breath. Just be careful not to tense the jaw, neck or tongue in the urge to communicate.