

Vocal Workshop notes. Copyright Nicola Corbishley.

Vocal tips:

- Aim to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. Take water to rehearsals.
- Try to limit talking above the noise at social or sports events. If you find you are losing your voice, avoid talking or even whispering.
- Avoid clearing your throat unnecessarily – swallow or sip water instead. If you have a cough, try a gentle ‘huff’ instead!
- Always provide yourself with enough breath when singing or speaking – avoid straining the sound to the end of your breath.
- If your throat is sore and/or your voice is hoarse, inhale steam from a bowl of hot water to moisten the throat.
- Regularly practise releasing your out-breath slowly and easily, and then comfortably letting the in-breath fill the base of your lungs (allowing expansion of the lower ribs).
- Always warm-up before rehearsals or concerts – warm up every part of your body, particularly the muscles involved in producing supported breath. Start with light physical exercises, then hum gently in the middle of your range, before moving onto singing vowel-based exercises throughout your range, always paying attention to the way your breath is produced and used.
- When singing, stand tall, with the feeling of a long spine, shoulders relaxed and open, head balanced at the top of the spine. Have your weight equally balanced between your feet and your knees unlocked. When seated, sit tall, forward of the chair’s back-rest, with the same relaxed shoulders and balanced head. Feel your weight slightly over your knees and toes. Standing from this position should feel and appear seamless!

Useful Resources:

www.voicecare.org.uk/vcn/voice-tips - useful tips and warm-up exercises (downloadable).

www.vocalist.org.uk/exercises.html - vocal and postural exercises, vocal health, sight-singing tips.

www.throatproblems.co.uk - for all your nasty throat queries!

www.vocalprocess.co.uk - click ‘Resources’ for lots of interesting articles and FAQs.

www.bbc.co.uk/sing/learning/voice.shtml - use exercises with audio clips to test your vocal range.

www.garethmalone.com/sing - click ‘Voice exercises’ for posture, breathing, warming-up, articulation and other useful tips.

www.choirs.org.uk - gives details of most British choirs. Click on ‘Links page’ for lots of singing-related websites.

www.singforpleasure.org.uk - lots of choral workshops and other events listed here.