



# The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



Volume 42 Issue 9

September 2022

We meet at 7:00 most Thursdays at Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran, 7860 Southside Blvd, Jacksonville, FL  
Guests always welcome Call 355-SING No Experience Necessary

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## BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY ANNOUNCES NEW \$10,000 PRIZE FOR NEXT GENERATION BARBERSHOP VARSITY QUARTET CONTEST

from [barbershop.org](http://barbershop.org)

139th Street Legacy prize commemorates founders of the youth contest.

Through the generosity of Dr. Jim Kline, the 2023 Varsity contest will include a powerful new incentive to bring new singers into the barbershop world: an annual \$10,000 prize.

**The 139th Street Legacy prize** will be awarded to the top scoring quartet that has at least two singers who have not previously been BHS members. *[Full details regarding eligibility will be published at a later date.]*

Jim Kline, bass of the legendary BHS Hall of Fame quartet, established the prize with a five year commitment as a donor to the Barbershop Harmony Society. The 139th Street Quartet was instrumental in founding the contest in 1992. Since then, hundreds of young singers have launched barbershop lives that have brought them to the fore of musical excellence, leadership and inspiration for succeeding generations of singers.

Jim announced the new prize alongside CEO Marty Monson as a surprise at the conclusion of the 2022 Varsity Contest in Charlotte.

# WANTED!!

## MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



BOLOGNA IS JUST  
HOT DOG PANKAKES.



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For more detailed,  
timely information  
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publication:  
**Orange Zest**

## EDITORIAL

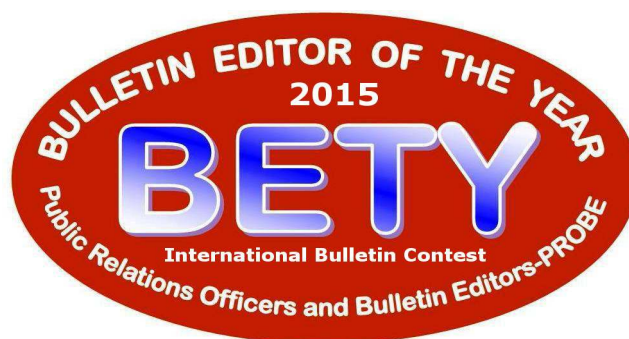
The summer shows were outstanding. We have the possibility of reprising the show for another venue or two. Stay tuned.

We will be doing a joint show with JU this month and have plans to do another one in late February.

Let's see if we can get more people interested in coming to our rehearsals. Ask anyone you know who likes to sing. Invite friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. Singing is fun. Singing well is even better. Performing in public shares that fun with lots of people. Everybody wins.

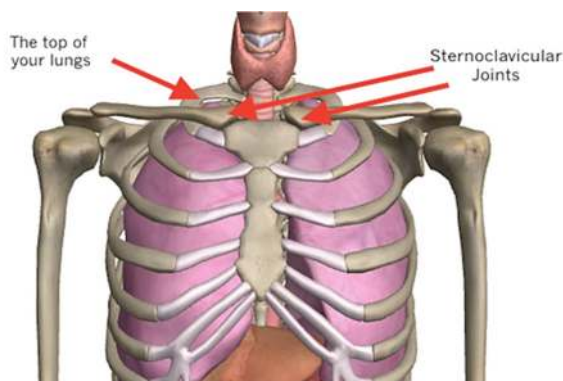
We have some positions (both board and committee) that need filling. If you can help, as a leader or a helper, please see Jason.

Each and every man, improving, just a little, each and every day, will result in huge advances for the chorus.



## 9 THINGS SINGERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THEIR BODIES

by Peter Jacobson  
from [totalvocalfreedom.com](http://totalvocalfreedom.com)



1. Your whole body is your instrument, not just your vocal mechanism.

Your voice is part of a total system which also includes your mind and your entire body. Any method or technique of singing that doesn't address the whole human being has limited applications to developing one's full potential as a singer.

*To become a better singer, in addition to trying to sing well, focus on using your entire mind-body-voice Self well. It's your whole self instrument that supports everything you do.*

2. The poise of the head on the spine directly affects your quality of sound.

The larynx hangs from the hyoid bone which is suspended from the mastoid processes on the skull. If the head is pulled down into the spine, the neck and throat muscles will tense and the torso will become rigid. This excess tension will constrain your breathing and vocal production.

*The head is the boss of the body. Allow it to be delicately poised on the spine. This lets the vocal mechanism hang freely and the allows the muscles of the torso to work without unnecessary effort.*

3. Pain and discomfort is caused by chronic tightening and shortening of muscles.

When a muscle is recruited by our nervous system it can really only do one thing – contract. However, if a muscle (or set of muscles) is always "on" and not allowed to release into its full resting length it can become chronically tense and inflamed leading to pain and discomfort.

*Learn how to access the deep, support muscles in your body. In doing so, you can relieve pain and tension by allowing chronically tight superficial muscles to release into greater length and flexibility.*

4. The more we micromanage our breathing, the less control we actually have.

Our respiratory system is incredible dynamic, intelligent and responsive. When we "take" a breath using muscular effort or try to recruit specific muscles while breathing and singing, we can interfere with our natural breathing and vocal freedom.

*Instead of trying to work on your breathing, investigate the habits that are getting in the way of your natural breathing and learn how to undo those habits. As you use less muscular effort to breathe you will be able to "allow" for a breath that will be perfectly suited for the needs of the music you are singing.*

5. Gasping for breath is a sign of unnecessary tension in the vocal tract and body.

The habit of gasping during inhalation is an almost universal habit among voice users. In fact, it is quite rare to hear a singer that doesn't unconsciously gasp. Though common, this habit is not necessary to sing and can lead to a decrease in our the quality of our breathing and vocal functioning.

*Start paying attention to your inhalations to hear if you also gasp before you sing. You can avoid this unnecessary (and even harmful) habit by allowing the muscles of the neck and torso to release into greater length and width as you breathe.*

6. We have 24 ribs (12 on each side) and they are designed for movement.

Our 24 ribs are spring loaded and designed for movement (to varying degrees). In our backs, the ribs are attached to our spine via many moveable joints. In front, they attach to our sternum via cartilage (similar tissue to your nose and ears). As Alexander teacher Patrick Macdonald says, "If you allow your ribs to move, as Nature intended, you will breathe properly."

*Explore the 3-dimensional movements available*

*(Continued on page 4)*



## 9 THINGS SINGERS NEED TO KNOW (continued)

(Continued from page 3)

*in your 24 ribs. It can be helpful to use your hands to feel where the movement is happening.*

7. The lungs are housed in the upper torso and the diaphragm sits right below them.

3 key facts: 1. The lungs go as high as the collarbone (which you can see clearly in image at the top of this article). 2. There is more lung tissue in our back than in our front. 3. Right beneath the lungs sits the diaphragm, a large muscle that separates our upper and lower abdomen and moves up and down (as opposed to in and out).

*Many singers are instructed to breathe low into their belly. This can be a useful metaphor to encourage whole torso movement. However, it must be understood that the only place air touches is the respiratory tract. This includes the lungs, which sit MUCH higher than most singers imagine.*

8. The diaphragm is not designed to be controlled directly.

Because it has no proprioceptive nerve endings, we cannot directly isolate and control our diaphragm. Additionally, the diaphragm is primarily a muscle of inhalation and since we sing on the exhale it is not necessary (nor possible) to support your sound with your diaphragm.

*It is impossible to exert any direct control over diaphragmatic movement except through the natural act of reflexive breathing and the controlled exhalation of singing. Therefore, it's best to leave your diaphragm alone when you breathe and sing.*

9. By cooperating with your design you can find freedom and ease in your singing.

Understanding the basics of how your total mind-body-voice system is designed to work best can take you a long ways towards eliminating excess tension, freeing your body and liberating your voice.

*Taking the time to learn about your whole self instrument is one of the best investments you can make in yourself and your singing!*

## HOW TO EVALUATE WHEN YOUR VOICE IS IN TROUBLE + WHEN TO SEEK HELP

by Dr Linda Carroll  
from backstage.com

First, it should never hurt to make sound. If it does, then you have a sure sign that you are either doing too much, singing too hard, or the tissue is damaged. The old adage “no pain, no gain” does NOT apply to voice. A healthy voice is able to maintain control of voicing throughout their normal vocal range, and should not hear a “split” or “double tone” (diplophonia). An audible “double pitch” or sudden loss of voicing for a note or range of the voice is a sign of vocal trouble. Go see your laryngologist. A healthy voice can execute a *mesa di voce* (soft-loud-soft) throughout the vocal range. A healthy voice can glide from low pitch to high pitch and back down in a seamless manner, with no sudden “gear shifts” or sudden change in overall quality.

Any sudden complete loss of voice, particularly following a yell, scream, singing prolonged high notes, or following extended crying, is also a sign of tissue injury. There are tiny blood vessels that line the vocal fold tissue. If a blood vessel breaks, you have a vocal fold hemorrhage (no, you don't taste blood), which can cause (a) sudden and complete loss of pitch or vocal power, (b) the blood to be pushed into a blood blister (hemorrhagic polyp), or (c) you may experience repeated small periods of mini-bleeding from the blood vessel (varix) which can trigger vocal fold stiffness. Due to capillary fragility in the two days surrounding their menstrual cycle, a vocal fold hemorrhage is more common in women who may use aggressive voice during those delicate days. A vocal fold hemorrhage can also occur when using the voice aggressively in the presence of aspirin, alcohol, and anticoagulants. If a vocal fold hemorrhage is suspected, the singer should go on complete voice rest and be immediately evaluated by a laryngologist. Complete voice rest for 5–7 days often helps the vocal folds fully heal and the singer can avoid more serious long-term injury to the vocal folds. When in doubt, check it out with your laryngologist.

Hoarseness in the morning can signal reflux. Many performers experience reflux, also known as GERD or LPR. This may be due to dietary habits, weight, or lifestyle. Performers strive on positive stress, but have to deal with negative stress on a daily basis. Performers use increased intra-abdominal pressure (“support” for the voice), so singing after a meal is particularly challenging. If you eat late, just go to bed

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**HOW TO EVALUATE WHEN YOUR VOICE**  
(continued)*(Continued from page 4)*

later. There should be a solid 2-hour period of no eating before bedtime. Foods that elevate reflux risks are carbonated beverages, chocolate, coffee, spicy foods, fried foods, fatty foods and alcohol. Eating or drinking quickly, or eating large amounts at one time also increase reflux risks

If you have immediate relatives with a reflux history, it's wise to take precautions now, which can avoid swelling of the posterior and membranous aspect of the vocal folds. Choosing foods with higher pH value can really make a difference. Remember, a higher pH is better (just like a GPA!) Typical symptoms of reflux is "morning voice" that is low pitched, dry, and/or "crunchy," and many reflux patients complain of a "lump in the throat" or difficulty swallowing. The irritation at the posterior aspect of the vocal folds causes the singer to work harder to close the membranous vocal folds (to achieve voicing), which often results in Muscle Tension Dysphonia (MTD).

If one side of your throat feels sore or tender, you may be experiencing MTD. There are different types of MTD, but all result is either a breathy, tight, squeezed, or sore throat. A laryngologist can quickly determine if MTD is present. Vocal exercises and attention to physical posture often fully resolve MTD, but the underlying trigger for MTD needs to be determined.

"My voice has a little tickle when I am singing high. Is that normal?" When you sing at higher pitches, the vocal folds vibrate more times per second, which results in some heat dissipation, and requires additional control of breath support, laryngeal control, and coordinating the text to be intelligible. A little tickle often signals that you need either a sip of water or you're singing too loud on that note for the amount of preparation (or capacity) of your voice. If the breath inhalation just before a high note is through the mouth, there is an additional risk of drier air passing through the vocal folds, which may trigger greater sensitivity to a "tickle."

If you experience vocal fatigue after singing for less than 30–45 minutes, it may be a sign of not enough range of motion (change of pitch, loudness, rate, pauses) or it may signal something (even small) on the vocal fold edge. Vocal fatigue after singing 2–3 hours nonstop may occur, but any vocal fatigue should resolve in 24–36 hours. If you experience fatigue or change of normal voice quality after 24–36 hours, go see your laryngologist.

As a performer you should never feel a "push" from the throat. You should feel the sound bouncing off your face and skull, connected to steady breath support, with a slight sensation of vibration in the throat (but not overpowering). An efficient voice does not hurt the performer or the audience. If you have any concerns about your voice, visit a laryngologist.



**Practice**  
like you've never won.

**Perform**  
like you've never lost.

## IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY STAYING FOCUSED WHILE PRACTICING, COULD CLUTTER BE A FACTOR?

by Dr. Noa Kageyama  
from [bulletproofmusician.com](http://bulletproofmusician.com)

I was chatting with a musician recently who was housesitting for a friend, and finding it surprisingly difficult to practice in this new environment. Some of it was the heat (no air conditioning), but more than that, they found it surprisingly difficult to focus amongst all of the clutter.

I was reminded of the saying that a cluttered desk is a cluttered mind, and it made me wonder...could this be true?

Because there are times when a sudden obsession with cleaning is really just a procrastination strategy. At least, I'm assuming that the voice in your head who says you ought to steam-clean the microwave or whiten the grout in your kitchen floor tiles *before* practicing is a universal phenomenon...

Anyhow, I thought this might be worth looking into. Like, how important is it really to maintain a tidy practice area or teaching studio? Can clutter really disrupt the level of our focus during practice, or even how much learning takes place, in a significant way?

### A learning study

A team of Carnegie Mellon researchers recruited 24 kindergarten students to participate in a two-week learning study.

Six times, over the course of two weeks, students went to the authors' research lab to receive a 5-7 minute lesson on topics like volcanoes, the solar system, and bugs. They'd sit on the floor in a semi-circle while a guest "teacher" would read aloud from a book, and show the students illustrations of what they were learning.

### Two versions of the same classroom

On half of their visits, their "classroom" was decorated to resemble a typical kindergarten classroom – complete with colorful signs and science posters, maps, portraits of presidents, artwork created by the children participating in the study, and more.

On the other half of their visits, the room was sparsely decorated. Everything that was unrelated to the lesson was taken down. Which was pretty much everything, leaving just a bare room with blank white walls.

rything, leaving just a bare room with blank white walls.

So....the first question was, how much of an impact did these posters and decorations have on students' ability to focus on the lesson?

### How distracted were they?

The researchers videotaped each lesson, and used this to calculate how much time each student spent looking at the teacher or the book. It's not a perfect measure of focus, but as long as students' eyes were on the teacher, they were considered to be engaged in "on-task" behavior.

The researchers also calculated how much time students spent "off-task." Where they were no longer looking at the teacher and clearly distracted by something else, whether it was their shoelaces, another classmate, or a poster on the wall.

Was there any difference in their level of on-task vs. off-task behavior between these two room setups?

### Differences in focus

Well, in the decorated classroom, students were distracted by other things in the classroom (like posters on the wall, etc.) **20.56%** of the time. Whereas in the sparsely decorated room, they were distracted by other things in the room only **3.21%** of the time.

To be fair, when the room was stripped of decorations, the students did find other ways to get distracted. They spent significantly more time during these lessons being distracted by themselves (e.g. playing with their clothes), or by fellow classmates.

Still, students' **focus was significantly higher overall in the sparsely-decorated classrooms**, as they stayed on-task about **71.58%** of the time (distracted only 28% of the time). Compared to when they were in the fully decorated room, where they stayed focused on the teacher and lesson only about **61.42%** of the time (distracted 39% of the time).

Ok...but did this have any impact on learning? Maybe they were still listening intently, even if their eyes didn't show it?

### Differences in learning

All of the students took a test before the study began to see how much they already knew about the lesson topics. And then after each lesson, they took

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### IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY STAYING (continued)

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another short 6-question quiz to see how much they learned.

On the pre-test, students got an average score of 22.7%. With pretty much the same performance on the topics that would be taught in the sparsely-decorated room (22%) as the topics that would be taught in the fully-decorated room (23%).

When it came to the post-test, scores did improve in both the fully and sparsely-decorated classrooms. However, students seemed to **learn better in the sparsely-decorated room**, as they got an average score of **55%** in the sparsely decorated room, compared to **42%** in the fully-decorated room.

Ok – that’s all very interesting, but hold on a sec. Aren’t kindergarteners notoriously distractible...?

Does this apply to adults too?

Yes, they can be indeed! And we definitely do get better at focusing past distractions and ignoring task-irrelevant things around us as we go through childhood and become adults.

However, a 2011 study ([McMains & Kastner](#)) found that even as adults, our brains still like things to be orderly. And it takes mental effort to ignore disorder around us, which detracts from our ability to focus on the task at hand.

So at the end of the day, it does appear that there could be some truth to the idea that a cluttered desk equals a cluttered mind!

#### Caveats

But does this mean that a minimalist aesthetic is essential for your practice area or teaching studio?

Or could this be the science-based excuse you’ve been waiting for, to finally give yourself permission to splurge on everything you’ve ever wanted at The Container Store?

Well...that’s probably a bit extreme, because there are likely individual differences in perception of clutter and distractibility. At least, based on my wife and I and our kids, there does not seem to be a universally agreed-upon clutter standard.

Is it clutter?

Like, is this stack of books clutter? Or decorative?

Is this pile of half-folded t-shirts on your bed clutter? Or a cozy napping spot for the dog? (Ok, I’d argue that the answer to that last one is much more cut and dry, but have a family member who would disagree.)

Habituation?

Also, the study took place over just two weeks, so it’s possible that over a longer span of time, students might have gotten used to or “habituated” to the distractions in the classroom. Where it may have become easier to ignore the things around them and focus more of their attention on the teacher.

But still, over the two weeks, the amount of time students spent off-task didn’t change much. It dropped a tiny bit – from 48% to 46% – but I suppose that’s something that will have to be studied further in a future study.

Clutter is sometimes ok?

And if we really wanted to play devil’s advocate, there *is* a [study](#) which found that a cluttered desk may not always be bad, but that seems to be a bit of a special case, related to creativity...

So what can we take away from all of this?

#### Takeaways

Well, overall, my take is that if you feel like you need to tidy up before practicing, or if you’re having difficulty focusing and your surroundings feel a bit cluttered, it’s probably not just a procrastination tactic or an excuse.

The clutter or visual distractions around you could very well be related to the amount of time your brain spends going off-task.

So if your practice space or studio could use a summer cleaning, give yourself permission to do a bit of uncluttering and organizing this week. See if a less-cluttered practice space helps with your focus, or maybe even makes sitting down to practice a little more enjoyable.

But do be sure to set a time limit so you don’t suddenly become fixated on organizing your scores or digitizing your CD collection and avoiding practice altogether!



## HOW TO SING QUIETLY OR SOFTLY

by Audrey Hunt  
from spinditty.com

### Are There Benefits for Singing Softly?

Why would I want to sing softly? A soft, voice is pleasant to listen to. Think of Elvis Presley, Don McLean, Andy Williams or Rosemary Clooney.

Once you learn to sing softly, you can connect with others emotionally. You will sing more expressively. You will sound more professional.

A soft tone is not a weak sound. It takes skill and practice.

Let's get started now.

### How to Sing Soft

1. Begin by singing the word "me" on a comfortable tone, not too high or too low. Make it a medium sound to start with. Hold the note for a count of 1-2-3. Repeat this 3 times.
2. When initiating the 'm' on the word "me", be sure you inflate the abdominal wall, holding the inflated position until the 3rd count. This assures that you are using the diaphragmatic muscle which is your breathing muscle. Because singing is sustained speech your breathing must come from the belly and not the chest.
3. Now, imagine the softest sound possible and sing the word 'he' on an easy tone. Hold the note for a count of 1-2-3. Repeat this 6 times.
4. In order to sing softly you must hold back air by tightening the abdominal wall as well as the buttocks. This is a huge help in controlling your air. Remember that it takes fewer vibrations to sing softly unless you are required to hold the note for an extended period of time.
5. Some folks think it's necessary to use a more closed lip and mouth position when singing quietly. Not true. You still need adequate mouth opening for each and every word.

Much to the surprise of most people, it is more difficult to sing softly than to sing loud. It requires more skill and much more control.

### Goodbye, Tension—Hello, Silky Soft Singing

Whether you sing loud or soft, it's important to release tension in the face, neck, and shoulders. Tension is the enemy of the singing voice. It hin-

ders your natural sound by producing unneeded tension in your tone.

1. First, totally relax your entire body concentrating on releasing tension from the neck and shoulder area. You can do this either standing, sitting or lying down.
2. Spend a good 7-10 minutes and if you've learned the belly breath (diaphragmatic breathing) inhale deeply and exhale slowly throughout each exercise.
3. Now, with the lips completely relaxed and free of all tension do about 3-6 lip trills.
4. Then concentrate on tongue trills. This may sound silly, but the lips and tongue hold the most tension, distorting the tone.

When you feel quite relaxed and void of stress it's time for another exercise to learn how to sing quietly or softly.

### Humming Is an Excellent Vocal Warm-up

Do your lips tingle when you hum? If so, congratulations. This is what you want because it indicates your lips are relaxed. If you aren't feeling a tingling sensation here's an exercise to work on:

1. In a standing position (this keeps all your singing muscles and spine lined up) first, unlock your knees. Again you are releasing tension in the body.
2. Now, hum softly avoiding all tension in the lips. Make sure the pitch is easy and comfortable. Refrain from high and low sounds right now.
3. Be sure to inhale, expanding around the waistline, just before humming. Keep the chest high and quiet with no movement as you inhale.
4. The next step is, to begin humming on an 'm'. Once the 'm' is stable add an 'ee' so that you're singing the word 'me.'
5. Continue several times with this exercise, concentrating on the vibrations across the nose and in the lips.
6. Don't forget that the hum must be soft, so only allow as little air to escape as possible, still keeping the "me" very controlled.

**Tip:** As you hum softly, keeping the lips relaxed, you should be feeling vibrations in the lips or closely around the lips. These vibrations assure you that you are relaxed enough and rid of all unnecessary tension.

Practicing these exercises several times each day

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## HOW TO SING QUIETLY OR SOFTLY (continued)

(Continued from page 8)

will teach your body how to adjust, automatically for a soft, quiet but controlled sound.

### Don't Confuse Soft Singing With a Meek, Ineffective Sound

Even though your goal is to produce a softer tone, it must be controlled and supported by stable air. Singers need to know that even the lightest vocal sound needs body connection. Please keep the following in mind as you practice singing softly:

- Keep a rounded mouth opening.
- Be careful that the tongue doesn't bunch.
- Keep neck and shoulders relaxed.

What do I mean by singing with control? Again, it's all about air. The professional singer always determines exactly how much air is needed for a particular phrase or for holding on to a note longer than usual. Always measure every phrase to determine whether you need to inhale a large amount of air or a small amount of air.

You absolutely must prepare your body to meet this requirement just before you sing. When singing a soft sound you still want your tone to be a rich and controlled soft tone and not a 'wobbly' and inefficient soft tone.

Like I said before, singing softly is not for wimps. It's a challenge even for trained singers. Be patient, practice diligently and it will happen for you. Now get ready to sing with your new soft voice and test it out.

### Singing Softly Is Not for Wimps

Learning how to sing with a soft, yet beautiful sound is one of the most difficult challenges a singer will ever face. Singing is a wonderful form of expression, but until we learn how to sing softly, trying to be expressive is futile.

As we sing we reawaken what has been tucked away deep inside, bringing back into the light all our memories, dreams, conflicts, confidences, and insecurities. We are instantly connected to a deeper place within ourselves, drawing on our own feelings.

This brings us to an important step in learning to sing softly. Try to imagine the feeling of softness just before you sing, then ask yourself "what does

soft feel like?" Images of cotton balls, rose petals, marshmallows, a baby's cheek, and clouds are just a few visualizations that come to mind.

If you can't imagine it, you can't sing it. So dig deep into your imagination system because you're going to need it if you want to learn how to sing quietly or softly.

### Reduce Tension in the Body and Voice With the Rag Doll Exercise

Quiet singing requires unleashing body tension and the neck, shoulders and knees are the biggest culprits. So this is what I want you to do before tackling your favorite song:

The following body position involves these three sections of your spine.

- The cervical vertebrae, which are the neck.
- The thoracic vertebrae, which are the middle of your back.
- The lumbar vertebrae, which are the lower back.

Now, If you're ready, you are about to unhinge these 3 sections:

1. First, standing with good posture, unlock the knees. Legs will be shoulder-width apart.
2. Next, roll your spine (cervical - neck) slowly until your chin is tucked into your chest.
3. Bringing your shoulders forward will help with touching your chin to the chest.
4. Now, you will roll the thoracic or middle back area slightly forward like you are doing a cat stretch. Allow your arms to loosely dangle
5. Keeping the chin tucked into the chest, roll the lower part of your spine, the lumbar region, down until you touch your toes or as close to your feet as possible. Arms should be loose. Avoid tension by trying to touch your toes.
6. Remain in this position for about 5-10 seconds releasing all the tension in your body.

**Tip:** To build your breath support, take a big breath at the beginning of this exercise. *Slowly* exhale using a hissing sound, throughout this rag doll exercise until completed.

### Sing Along With This Video

<https://youtu.be/Gcl6eMRjJdQ>

Abbybirdaytuyu—What?

Excuse me—what did you say (or sing?) Abbybirday-

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## HOW TO SING QUIETLY OR SOFTLY (continued)

(Continued from page 9)

tuyu. Oh, I see. "Happy Birthday to You."

Yeah—that's what I said. Abbybirdytuyu.

Ok. We've all heard this song and most of us sing it at least 2–3 times a year. If you haven't heard "Happy Birthday to You" all you need to do is youtube the title and sing along with one of the endless versions available. You can also watch the video below to learn the words and melody.

So now, if you're good and ready here's another fun exercise to help you develop your soft singing.

1. Sing this song once all the way through with a normal voice and don't worry about trying to sing it softly at this point. We're just giving your voice a little warm-up. You can sing along with the youtube video or you may sing a capella ( by yourself without music.)
2. Next: This time sing only the first 2 phrases 'Happy Birthday to you, happy birthday to you.' Sing these 2 phrases in a medium dynamic. Remember to breathe from the abdominal wall.
3. Now repeat these 2 phrases singing with half the volume. Do this 6 times.
4. If this is just too difficult, stop at this point and do not continue. Instead, go back to the humming exercises above and practice those until they become easy to sing in a very light tone.
5. For those of you who have mastered this step, you will continue to sing the same phrases as softly as possible. Repeat 6 times controlling the tone and keeping the sound even.

If your words were barely mumbled and not articulated the listener will hear 'abbybirdytuyu.' So be sure to clearly and distinctly pronounce each word.

- Continue to add the rest of the song a phrase or 2 at a time until you've gone through the entire song.
- When you've completed this exercise, give yourself a hug or a treat.

### Amazing Grace Sing-Along Exercise

<https://youtu.be/ZsXBZPWWhPRs>

Here is your final exercise for learning how to develop a softer sounding voice:

- Sing the song "Amazing Grace" along with the

video below. If you prefer, you may hum along.

- Now, sing it again, but this time select one phrase and sing it softly. You may choose any phrase or line of your liking. I suggest using the very first phrase to try your new soft voice out because it is in a comfortable place range wise.
- When the notes get higher, the body must exert more breath pressure so be sure you inhale more air to help you reach the higher notes. These notes will also sound louder and more powerful.
- You can also select the very end of the song in each verse. Example: Using a lighter sound, "Was blind, but now I see."

The more you sing and concentrate on where you deliberately want softer tones, the easier it will become.

### Famous Soft Voices of the Past and Present

Much to the surprise of most people, it is more difficult to sing softly than to sing loud. It requires more skill and much more control. These great legends all shared the most important skill of all. They were masters of diaphragmatic breathing.

- One of the best male pop and jazz singers of all time is the great Tony Bennett. His soft tones blend perfectly into louder tones and vice versa.
- Perry Como was spell-binding, bringing his beautiful soft tones to his weekly Television Show in the 50's.
- Another singer (the daddy of them all ) bringing soft, almost lazy tones to the emotional phrase was Bing Crosby. His perfectly pitched smoothness influenced some of the best male (and even female) voices in the recording industry including Frank Sinatra, the "bobbysoxers" dream voice.
- And then who can forget the soothing, romantic singing voice of the late Andy Williams ("Moon River"). And you thought he was only famous for discovering The "Osmonds."
- Michael Jackson could "melt an iceberg" with his soft, quiet voice whenever he was so inclined.
- The great female singer of the '40s and '50s, Peggy Lee sold millions of albums to fans seeking her soft interpretation of marvelous lyrics. She is remembered fondly for her imaginative voice in the movie "Lady and the Tramp."
- Rosemary Clooney (the aunt of George Clooney) had the most unique voice and style. Every note had a velvet-like quality..

Note: These timeless singers didn't set out to sing with a soft, smooth, easy listening singing style.

(Continued on page 11)

## HOW TO SING QUIETLY OR SOFTLY (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

These artists were born with the necessary vocal properties. I mention the above singers as an example of pure vocal control which is needed for the production of soft singing.

Remember

- Singing softly requires more skill and absolute vocal control.
- Always warm up your voice by humming softly. Just five notes up and five notes down are sufficient.
- Remember that as you form new habits for singing, you are also stopping those bad habits which prevented you from being able to sing softly in the first place.
- Be patient.. Don't expect immediate results. It can take days, weeks or even months to teach your body and mind to develop new singing habits. Enjoy the journey.

*Sing with joy .*



## YES, YOU CAN ACTUALLY IMPROVE YOUR SINGING VOICE-HERE'S HOW

by Roger Love  
from rogerlove.com

Whenever we hear great singers perform, it's easy to believe they are naturally gifted with a phenomenal voice. But singing isn't just a talent, it's a skill you build with practice and hard work. You can be sure that some of today's most popular singers — people who are *paid* for their singing voices — took the time to practice and improve their singing skills.

And if they can do it, maybe you can.

Here are some tips and techniques you can use to learn how to sing better. If you put the work in to make your voice better, you'll be singing better before you know it.

Practice, practice, and more practice

The very first thing you have to remember about singing is that it takes practice every day to get better. Basketball players shoot free throws every day, writers write every day, and anyone who has a skill they want to improve works at it each day. Singing is no different.

If you're committed to having a better singing voice, you have to sing every day. You should have vocal exercises to do and songs in your repertoire to rehearse. Practice these songs until you've mastered them, then either switch to new songs or sing the same songs with different arrangements.

Focus on more than just pitch

Most budding singers think hitting all the right notes is the most important aspect of learning to sing well and so focus solely on it. However, It takes more than matching pitch to be an excellent singer. To be a good singer you also must master:

- **Vocal control:** You have to learn to control your voice and keep it in check so it makes the sounds you want it to make.
- **Posture:** Good posture is crucial for achieving a strong singing voice. When you are slumped over and trying to sing, you struggle to get enough air in your lungs. Not only is this bad for your lungs, but it also inhibits your singing ability.
- **Breathing:** Great singing happens when the right amount of air meets the right amount of vocal cord. Proper breathing is instrumental to develop-

(Continued on page 12)

**YES YOU CAN ACTUALLY IMPROVE**  
(continued)

(Continued from page 11)

ing a good singing voice and without it, your voice won't sound strong.

**Perfect your breathing technique**

There is a right way — and a wrong way — to breathe when you sing. To improve your voice, practice diaphragmatic breathing. This technique forces you to breathe through your nose, not your mouth. When you breathe through your mouth, the air dries out your mouth and cords. Your voice doesn't sound good when the cords are dry. By breathing through your nose instead, you can keep your throat and cords moist.

Diaphragmatic breathing also includes expanding your stomach when you breathe, not moving your shoulders up and down. You have to imagine there's a balloon in your abdomen that expands and contracts when you breathe in and out.

**Stay hydrated before performing**

Drink plenty of water when you rehearse or in the days leading up to a big performance. Hydrated vocal cords are happy vocal cords. When they aren't adequately hydrated, it puts strain on your vocal cords and prevents you from being able to sing well.

**Hit the high notes**

Many amateur singers struggle with knowing how to sing high notes. Other than sticking to songs that are within your range, there are two easy ways to sound better on those high notes:

- **Don't get louder.** A lot of people start singing more loudly when they try to climb up to those high notes. There's no need to get louder and it usually doesn't sound any better. Keep your voice at the same volume.
- **Don't let the corners of your mouth get wider.** Another thing people do when they're reaching for high notes is let their mouths open more widely. But doing so doesn't make you better able to crush those notes. It just makes your singing voice sound unpleasant.

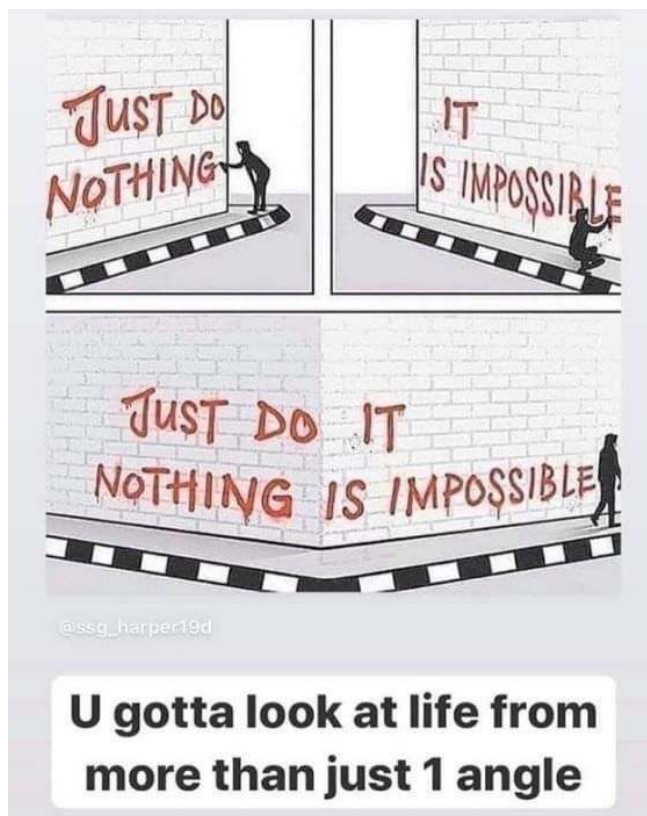
**Record yourself singing**

By practicing your singing often, you'll have ample

opportunities to record yourself while you sing. Most people feel uncomfortable when they hear their voice on a recording for the first time because our voices sound different inside our heads than they do to others. Recording and listening to yourself singing can help you better understand what you actually sound like when you sing, which will help you make further improvements to your voice.

**Improving your singing voice is possible**

The best singers work hard to have and sustain their marvelous voices. Commit to working that hard and you will start to see results.





## 5 VOCAL TIPS THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR VOICE DRAMATICALLY

from musicianstuts.com

Have you ever wondered what separates a really good voice from one that you would rather not hear?

The answer is actually quite simple to the trained ear of a music expert.

There is no substitute for having natural talent, but there are technical aspects of singing that can be identified in creating a sound that is pleasing to the ear. The lack of those technical attributes makes it easy for a professional to spot an untrained voice.

You can improve your voice dramatically by learning how to sing properly through technical voice training. Here are five technical aspects that a vocal coach will work to improve your singing voice in a typical series of voice lessons.

1. Avoid singing from the throat
2. Sing from the diaphragm
3. Use the resonators
4. Develop proper singing posture
5. Use your ears

### 1. Avoid Singing From the Throat

When learning how to sing, most people believe that you have to sing loudly to sing well and they attempt to do so by shouting or what is also called singing from the throat.

Although throat singing is actually a type of aboriginal style of singing, it isn't what we are accustomed to hearing. In fact, singing from the throat is not what we would traditionally consider a sound that is pleasing to the ear. In order to improve your singing voice, every vocal coach will tell you to avoid the throat when singing.

Your voice and sound are created in the vocal cords. Your breath is what supports your sound. By developing the correct breathing habits you can support the air that carries your voice and this way, you have more control over the sound and volume you create.

Avoid the throat when you're singing and you will be able to sustain the sound you make for longer breaths and sing for longer periods of time without getting tired.

### 2. Sing From the Diaphragm

In order to find the most effortless way to develop vocal control, you must sing from the diaphragm. You can practice this by taking deeper breaths and filling (what feels like) your stomach with air. This is an extremely important aspect of singing, as it will allow you to avoid the throat and focus on the sound you are creating with less effort.

### 3. Use the Resonators

Your voice is an instrument itself and your singing is something that involves the entire use of your body. One aspect of using your body is to allow sound to resonate in your chest and head resonators.

The chest is used for the lower notes and the head is used to resonate sound for the high notes. Well-trained singers are able to transfer the sound between the two with effortless, smooth transitions.

### 4. Develop the Proper Singing Posture

Singing involves the use of the body and the smooth release of air as you make a sound. To do this is the most effortless and natural way, it's necessary to sing using the proper postures that allow the air to support your voice for the longest time and allow you the most control.

Sitting up or standing with a straight back is an obvious singing posture that opens the lungs to allow for deeper and fuller breaths. Chest up will also assist in opening the lungs.

When standing, have your feet shoulder distance apart, with one foot slightly in front of the other. You should be able to shift your weight comfortably with a stable base.

Your head should be straight, arms and hands at your side, and relaxed. When you sing high notes, tilting the head down will help to hit those notes and help you use your head resonator for a fuller sound.

### 5. Use Your Ears

Finding the perfect pitch is something that talented singers are able to do naturally. This can also be achieved by ear training exercises to improve your singing voice. When you are aware of the sound you are making and can match it to the right pitch you are demonstrating complete control of your vocal cords.

When you hear people miss notes or sing off-key, this  
(Continued on page 14)

**5 VOCAL TIPS THAT WILL IMPROVE**  
(continued)

(Continued from page 13)

is due to a lack of vocal control or simply not being able to recognize how to match their voice with the correct pitch.

There are many ear training exercises you can do to improve this aspect of your vocal ability. Consistent practice is what will really help you to break through to the next level. When you're constantly singing you develop more awareness of the muscles that help control your sound.

Remember that singing is a full-body effort. By incorporating the use of the abdominal, back, and intercostal muscles you improve your ability to control breathing. There are dozens of facial and neck muscles that help enunciate while keeping an open jaw at the same time. Using all of these muscles becomes easier when you practice religiously.

Use Your Technical Knowledge  
to Explore Your Talent

The benefits of voice training can be quite obvious in your performances. Now that you're aware of five different technical improvements you can make, you can improve your voice dramatically by mastering these areas.

Talent only gets you so far. Developing a solid technical foundation is something that every talented artist must pursue at some point to improve the quality and capabilities of their voice. Only when you've mastered the technical elements of how to sing can you truly explore the limits of your talent.



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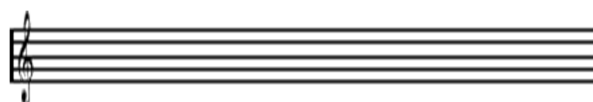
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Thanks in advance!!

Editor's Note: The latest version of the Amazon app (both android and iOS) now has an option to activate smile in the app, so that you can get the charity donations for purchases made in the app (if you enable it). Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu. Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.



**FREE YOUR VOICE**

by John Newell, Lead, *Realtime*  
from Let It Out ©2013 Used by permission

...(continued from last month)

Have you ever been taught you must keep your larynx down at all times when singing? Some singing teachers are adamant that it must be kept down. I recommend caution and some flexibility with this approach, mostly because it is often poorly taught and explained, with the result that a singer forces the issue and creates unnatural, over-muscled rigidity. The idea has a noble purpose but try not to become hung up on it. Humans are overachievers, remember? A consistently lower larynx position is required for classical styles of singing. In other styles, the larynx may either be higher or else will fluctuate naturally.

Whatever you do, it should always feel comfortable. Becoming hung up about keeping the larynx down can make you tense. I recommend focusing on elasticity and freedom in the area of the larynx. When it is free, it will stay in a lower position most of the time, but will also move around in a gentle and subtle manner quite naturally. Fighting against this causes tension. However, do not let it jerk and jolt around all over the place in a sudden or violent fashion. Find what is natural and relaxed.

Much depends on an individual's unique vocal structure and the style of music being sung. Personally, with my lighter vocal quality (I mean lighter in timbre, not necessarily volume), keeping my larynx down has been detrimental by causing me tension, fatigue, throat soreness, and an unattractive tone. I have been more successful focusing on freeing the base of my tongue. After, the base of the tongue and the larynx are inter-connected.

#### Larynx Strategies and Exercises

- First let your jaw and tongue be loose and relaxed at all times. This is vital.
- When you sing, feel your larynx (Adam's Apple) with your finger. Let it be free.
- As was outlined in the previous chapter, using the muscles of, and around, your epiglottis to control and pressurize your outward air flow is deadly to your vocal quality and vocal stamina. Keep your throat muscles loose and natural so breath may pass in and out unimpeded. The epiglottis must feel like a permanently open gateway.
- Then follow the exercises and strategies for the jaw and the tongue.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Yvonne DeBandi  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

D = Diaphragmatic Support. Develop the strength and coordination of the diaphragm and become a pro at controlling the speed of the airflow released, the quantity of the airflow released and the consistency of the airflow released.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Nicole LeGault  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

D is for Dynamics. Using dynamics is the art of raising and lowering the volume of your voice to add texture and expression to the sound. This is also known as "color". You will notice that in popular styles, the voice grows louder with higher notes, and softer with lower notes, with the exception of when falsetto is used.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

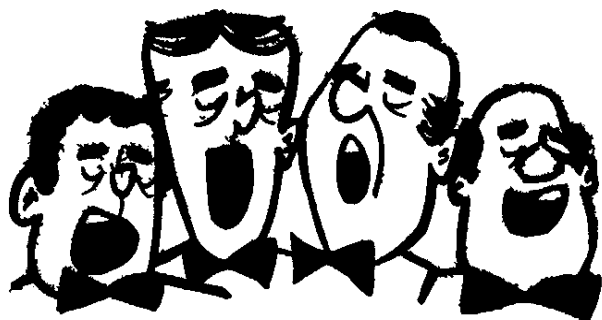
by Mick Walsh  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

D. Diaphragm, diaphragm, diaphragm, diaphragm. (did I mention diaphragm?). To me the diaphragm is the most important muscle in singing. Find out where it is and how to control your airflow. In a very short space of time you can become a much better singer simply by learning to control your diaphragm.

**FREE SINGING TIPS**

by Teri Danz  
from [a2z-singing-tips.com](http://a2z-singing-tips.com)

D= Drop Your Jaw -- Relaxing and dropping the jaw in (pop) singing is the key to reaching notes effortlessly, making range transitions and supporting the ends of your range.



## QUARTET CORNER

Our quartets are regrouping.

What is YOUR quartet doing? Don't have one? Find three other guys and start one! Can't find a match? Drop me a line and I'll run a list of guys looking to quartet up here in the bulletin. It's one of those really fun things that you don't fully understand until you've done it.

It's never too early to be thinking about Singing Valentines. Quartets are always needed, officially formed or pickup. It's only a few easy songs. Learning more than one voice part to these songs can help make you easier to fit into a quartet.

## CHAPTER QUARTETS



No Name Yet

? tenor

Mark Roblez lead

Jason Dearing bari

John Alexander bass

No Name Yet

? tenor

? lead

? baritone

? bass



# Big Orange Chorus



## REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	01 Sep	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	08 Sep	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	15 Sep	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	22 Sep	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	29 Sep	Shepherd of the Woods

Thu	06 Oct	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	13 Oct	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	20 Oct	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	27 Oct	Shepherd of the Woods

## BIRTHDAYS

Lou Richardson	15 Sep
Andy Schrader	15 Sep
Joe Russ	18 Sep

## PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat	28 Sep	Joint JU Show dress rehearsal
Tue	30 Sep	Joint JU Show
Fri	21 Oct	Sunshine District Convention
Sat	22 Oct	Sunshine District Convention
Sun	23 Oct	Sunshine District Convention

...more to come

## RECENT GUESTS

Asrul Dawson	Bill Caruso
Ethan Erastain	Alex White
Tristan Arthurs	Mark Murillo
Roger Erestaine	Ron Blewett
Jon Greene	Jim Harper
G Lane	Brandon Edwards
Joe McLean	Adom Panshukian
Christian Cornella-Carlson	
Michael Reynolds	Kyle Batchelder
David Brown	Thomas Barhacs
Pat McCormack	David Brown
Richard Breault	Justin McGhie
Emily Dearing	Sean Henderson
Doug Owens	Chris Redman
Steve Moody	Jeff Fullmer
Doug Schultz	Ryan Himes
Ron Geno	Mike Ryan
Dale Patricu	Gary Weddel
Stephen Gramza	Curt Shepherd

# ⇒ BIG O BUCK\$ ⇐

## BIG O BUCKS SCHEDULE

...more to come

I'll talk to anyone about anything,  
but sooner or later I'll tell him I sing.  
I'll invite him to visit on Thursday night  
and if he likes what he hears, he just  
might become a member and maybe  
he'll bring another good man  
who likes to sing.

# WELCOME

## NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September

## 2021 DIRECTING TEAM



Jay Giallombardo  
Front Line  
Director

## 2021 OTHER CHAPTER LEADERS



Dave Walker  
Uniform  
Manager



Les Mower  
Chorus  
Manager



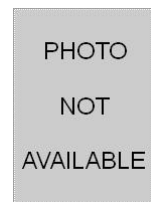
John Alexander  
Bulletin  
Editor



Frank Nosalek  
Webmaster &  
Technology



vacant  
Show  
Chairman



vacant  
Big O Bucks  
Coordinator

### EDITOR'S NOTE

Article and column submissions are solicited.  
Help make this a better bulletin. Send me stuff!  
The deadline for October is 24 September.  
Items without a byline are from the Editor.

*The Orange Spiel*  
John Alexander, Editor  
2429 Southern Links Dr  
Fleming Island FL 32003

Back issues are available online at:  
[www.bigorangechorus.com/newsarchive.htm](http://www.bigorangechorus.com/newsarchive.htm)  
More specific and timely performance information  
is in my weekly sheet, *Orange Zest*.

**Print off two copies  
of this newsletter  
to share – one with  
your family and  
one with someone  
you are bringing to  
a chapter meeting.  
Let them know they  
belong here!**

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President



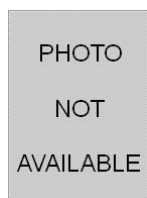
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**IMAGINE 80 MEN ON THE RISERS  
BE A SINGER-BRINGER**



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