



# The Orange Spiel

News Of The Jacksonville Big O Chapter



<http://www.BigOrangeChorus.com>



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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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## PERFORMING AGAIN

After almost three years of virtually nothing, we have decided that we are ready to perform again. We have lost members to COVID and to having found something else to do on rehearsal nights, but we have also had guests, some of which have become new members. We trimmed our repertoire, including some that will be usable for fall contest.

To that end, we performed a show at the church where we rehearse on Thursday 28 September to a good crowd that liked what we did. We also took the show to an assisted living facility to another decent crowd that also liked what we did. Our new chorus manager is working on another venue to take that show. It was great.



# WANTED!!

## MEN WHO LIKE TO SING!



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## 2022 Committees

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Community Outreach:  
vacant

Show Chairman:  
vacant

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timely information  
see my weekly  
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**Orange Zest**

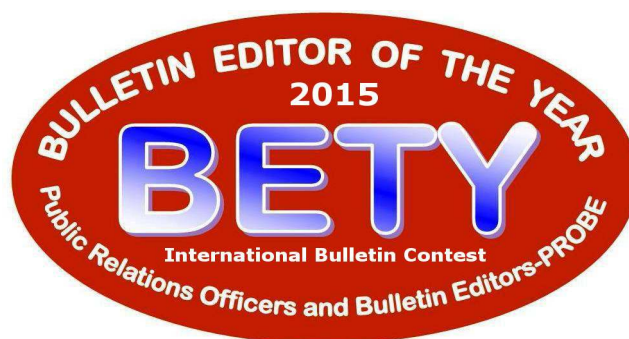
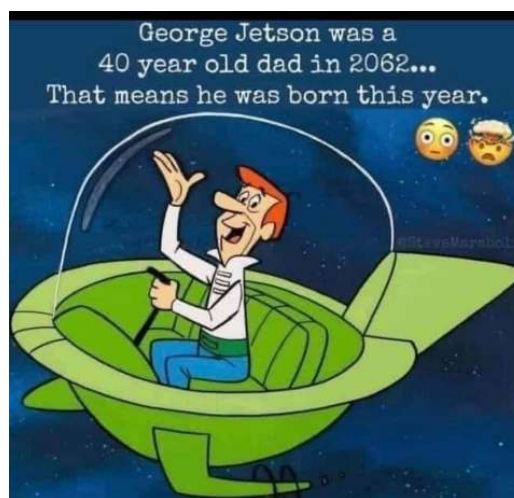
## EDITORIAL

The summer shows were outstanding. We are, however, still struggling to get our numbers up to where they should be.

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.



## HOW TO IMPROVE SINGING WITH PRACTICE

by Ken Taylor  
from askavocalcoach.com

It's not overly uncommon for students or any growing vocalist to ask me how much they should practice.

But to me, how much you practice isn't near as important as what you're doing while you practice.

Don't get me wrong, practicing on a regular basis is a very important part of developing as a singer.

If you want to get better, you've got to practice. But not all practice is created equal.

So I figured I'd write this article to give you some pointers on how much to practice, what to focus on, and how to practice more efficiently.

So let's get to it!

### The Process – How to Practice Singing?

Below, I'll include what I believe to be one of the most effective practice structures a singer can use.

First, start off by balancing your voice with a warm up.

Then, break the song down into smaller chunks. Practicing in small chunks helps you stay focused and execute these sections more accurately.

After you've done that, put the sections of song together piece by piece. Make sure you're continuing to execute what you were practicing in smaller chunks.

Continue this until you are singing the whole song perfectly.

Now, let me go into a little bit more detail about that.

### The Vocal Warm Up

When practicing, always start with a warm up.

The purpose of a warm up is to build the proper coordination and balance for singing. It's like stretching for an athlete.

Warm up properly and you'll be poised and ready for singing.

Skip the warm up and you'll likely feel more clunky and experience less vocal freedom.

I'd suggest taking at least 10-15 minutes to warm up (I regularly go as long as 30 mins).

### Practice the Song in Smaller Chunks

The most effective way to practice anything is breaking it down into smaller pieces.

When you start practicing your song, you want to break it down into smaller sections.

You may choose to break the song up into sections and practice a verse, chorus, or bridge at a time.

Or, if you're working on something harder, you may even want to break it down further, practicing only a couple of lines at a time.

The benefit of working in these smaller sections is it allows you focus on perfecting every element.

Elements like the inflection you use, the stylistic elements you add, the tone, the phrasing, the texture. The list is endless.

Once you perfect your first smaller section, move onto the next one, then the next. *This* is how you practice to perfect a song.

As a side note, I believe waaaaay too many singers make the mistake of repeatedly singing through the whole song over and over while practicing.

This is bad because once you're a few lines in, you go on auto pilot and rarely change anything.

You can't build a house in a day... first you need to lay the concrete, then put up the framework, then wire the electrical, then add the walls, the roof, windows, etc.

It can't all be done at once. You can only focus on one thing at a time.

Said different, you can't focus on all of the various different elements you want to add vocally in a song while singing the whole song over and over.

So don't be afraid to take the time to break things down and really perfect the song piece by piece.

Once you do this, you're ready to start putting it all together.

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## HOW TO IMPROVE SINGING (continued)

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### Putting It All Together

With all the smaller chunks of the song practiced and perfected, it's time to put them back together.

Start with the first verse and add few lines at a time.

Doing this allows you to focus on the new lines, making sure they are solid.

But also, singing through it from the top of that verse helps you engrain the front part of that verse, ensuring it stay strong.

Once the whole verse is coming together well, it's time to move onto the chorus. then the next verse and so on.

Then, all you have to do is all together and your song should be sounding pretty epic.

This method of practicing a song has been extremely effective for me as a teacher, and for my students.

Give it a try and see if it's as effective for you as it has been for me.

Happy Singing,  
Vocal Coach Ken Taylor

P.S. – I've included an older video where I talk about the ideas I mentioned in this article. If you can get past the poor video quality, you may find it helpful.

<https://youtu.be/PMTAqU7P00I>



## LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES

by Brody McDonald  
from choirbites.com

Every movie has music that enhances certain scenes. An activity I call GOING TO THE MOVIES is a great way to help students inject emotion into their performance.

First ask, "Who remembers a time where music amplified the emotional impact of a movie scene?" Hands go up. Then I ask, "For what movie would this piece be the soundtrack? What story would this music enhance?"

Next, ask them to write a short narrative that describes a scene from a movie that the music would enhance. They may draw from their own experiences or make up something completely fictional. The student should not search for a scene in an existing movie; they are to write this scene from scratch.

The third step is to read the assignments and compare them to your vision for the song. Do these movies convey the emotion you wish to convey? If so, great! If not, remind them that no one is "wrong." You might read to the class the movie that you feel best matches your vision, or a movie you wrote as the director to illustrate your take on the music.

Once we did this for Norman Dello Joio's "Come To Me, My Love." (Lyrics in parenthesis.) The student with the most impactful movie described an old man standing on his porch at night, missing his deceased wife (Come to me in the night. Come to me in the speaking silence of a dream). He lovingly recalls images of her face (with soft and rounded cheeks and eyes as bright as sunlight on a stream). He begins to sob as emotion overwhelms him (Come, come back in tears... my love of finished years). As he regains composure he looks to the stars, hoping to rejoin her soon (and whisper low, as long ago).

The last step is to now perform the piece while the singers mentally VISUALIZE THE MOVIE. This is a powerful moment, and it's important to let the choir know it's ok if they take a temporary hit in technical accuracy in service of emotional development. What movie? Theirs? Yours? The best in the class? Experiment. Sometimes everyone watching their own movie is more powerful due to personal connection. Sometimes everyone watching the same movie is more powerful due to unity of vision. But the music is almost always more powerful WITH the movie than without.

## THE TWO MOST EFFICIENT (AND TWO LEAST EFFICIENT) MEMORIZATION STRATEGIES

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

As much as I enjoy a tidy, nicely-made bed, actually making the darn thing every morning is one of those activities in life that often feels like a questionable use of time. I mean, it's going to get unmade anyway the next evening, right?

Socks (or more accurately, their seeming proclivity for ditching their partners) are another time-sucking black hole in our lives.

Not all shortcuts are better, of course. But spending more time on something than is necessary does seem like a waste, when there are so many other meaningful and interesting outlets for our time and energy. So whenever it's possible to do more in less time, with less effort, I get really excited.

Which brings us to memorization. Which is probably everyone's least favorite thing to do ever. But also one of many musicians' biggest sources of worry and anxiety.

### Effectiveness vs. efficiency

Usually, when we ask questions about memorization, it's oriented around the issue of *effectiveness*. As in, what memorization strategy will result in the most durable memory, abolishing memory slips forevermore? Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be a 100% guaranteed memory-slip-proof system quite yet, but there is another question regarding memory that we probably ought to be asking as well. And that's the question of *efficiency*. As in, what strategy will help us memorize music most quickly?

Obviously, we'd prefer a strategy that is both efficient *and* effective, but an effective strategy that takes forever isn't much good to us either.

In a study of pianists (Williamon & Valentine, 2000) working on the Bach D minor Prelude and Fugue, for instance, it took an average of ~14 hours to memorize the piece – but some pianists memorized the piece in less than 10 hours, while others needed almost 20 hours.

That's a pretty big difference.

So are some people just born better at memorizing than others? Or are the fastest memorizers simply doing something different than the slower folks?

### Four memory strategies

Researcher (and violist) Jennifer Mishra recruited 60 university-level instrumentalists (2002) and asked them to memorize a short 36-measure exercise, taking however much time they needed.

Then, she selected the four fastest memorizers (8.66 to 17 minutes), and the four slowest memorizers (66.83 to 100 minutes), all of whom were able to successfully play the exercise from memory, and analyzed how they approached the task.

It turned out that the musicians used four basic strategies. She called these strategies Holistic, Additive, Segmented, and Serial, and found that the fastest memorizers relied more on the Holistic and Additive strategies, while the slowest memorizers tended to use the Segmented and Serial strategies.

And what do these strategies look like, exactly?

- **Holistic** = starting at the beginning and playing straight through to the end, backtracking only a tiny bit if you make a mistake or have a memory slip
- **Additive** = starting at the beginning and memorizing an initial segment of the piece, then progressively adding a little more music to the first bit, until the initial segment grows larger and larger and eventually contains the whole piece.
- **Segmented** = breaking the whole piece into chunks, memorizing the chunks in isolation, and then trying to link the chunks together into a whole
- **Serial** = starting at the beginning and playing until you make a mistake, at which point you rewind back to the beginning and give it another go, hoping that you can get further the next time.

### Putting the strategies to the test

Very intriguing of course, but from this data alone, it's not really clear if the faster memorizers were faster *because* of their use of these strategies, or if it was just because they were better memorizers to begin with. So Mishra ran another study (2011) to systematically test the effectiveness of these four strategies.

Forty music education majors were asked to memorize a 16-measure exercise, and randomly assigned to one of four groups. One group used the **Holistic** strategy. The second group used the **Segmented** strategy. The third group used the **Serial** strategy. And the final group used the **Additive** strategy.

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## THE TWO MOST EFFICIENT (continued)

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Once the participants were able to successfully perform the 16-bar exercise without any memory errors, they were put through a 5-minute distraction task designed to encourage a bit of forgetting.

Then, they were asked to perform the 16-bar passage again, to see how much of the music they could still recall and successfully play from memory.

Any guesses as to which strategy was the most efficient?

### Memorization strategy deathmatch!

It's important to remember that a short 16-measure exercise and a Bach cello suite or complete concerto are two very different things. And memorizing something in the short-term, and being able to recall it perfectly under pressure after more than just a 5-minute break is quite a different challenge as well.

Nevertheless, the study suggests that some strategies do seem to be more efficient than others.

The **Holistic** strategy led the pack with an average memorization time of 39.2 minutes. Which was significantly faster than the **Segmented** strategy (58.49 minutes) and **Serial** strategy (58.53 minutes). If you were pulling for the **Additive** strategy, that seemed to work pretty well too (46.39 minutes).

### Speed vs. quality?

Of course, memorizing music isn't a race, and the point is to maximize the *durability* of our memory, so as to prevent memory slips in the future. So while the Segmented and Serial strategies may have taken longer, could the extra time have been worth it? Like, maybe they made fewer errors on the final run-through, even though it did take them longer to get the music memorized?

Well, as it turns out, maybe not so much? All four groups made a comparable number of mistakes when trying to play the passage from memory after the 5-minute break, and neither the Segmented or Serial groups displayed any advantage from the extra time they spent memorizing the passage<sup>2</sup>.

It's possible that the results could have shifted if the musicians were tested again a day or week later, but at least in the short-term, with a relatively short chunk of music, the Holistic strategy seems to be the

most efficient of the four strategies.

### Take action

You can read the complete paper [here](#) for more nuances and insight about the memorization process, but for me, the two big takeaways are:

- 1) Encourage students to play through larger, meaningful sections of a piece so they can get a sense of the overall structure and how things fit together (Holistic), rather than stopping and circling all the way back to the beginning every time they run into a snag (Serial).
- 2) Memorization should be an active process. Simply engaging in mindless repetition of a chunk of music over and over hoping that it will stick, is not an especially efficient or effective way of committing music to memory. So if a student is going to memorize a piece in chunks (Segmented), it's probably worth taking the time to identify chunks that are musically and structurally meaningful – not just some arbitrary 2-bar or 5-bar block of notes.

### And if you're an educator...

Have you ever wondered why some students are happy enough to play their instrument...but seem to be allergic to practicing? Or why some students practice diligently, but can't seem to transfer what you hear in lessons to the stage?

I was both of those students growing up. In that I felt a *lot* of resistance towards practicing for the first 20 or so years of my musical life. And inconsistent, hit-or-miss performances and auditions were pretty much the norm too.

It really wasn't until I started learning about performance psych and incorporating changes in my daily practice like the memorization "hack" in today's post, that practicing started to become interesting. Rewarding. Even borderline fun. Because I started to see tangible results on a day-to-day basis. Which was a huge boost to my confidence. Which in turn made me want to practice more, crazy as that sounds, given my past history of practice-avoidance.

All this to say, if you have students who struggle with practice motivation, experience distressing levels of anxiety around performing, and get discouraged with how they sound on stage, it may not be that these students are unmotivated or uncommitted. It might just be that practicing and performing makes them feel kind of crummy.

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**THE TWO MOST EFFICIENT**  
(continued)

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A community that can relate

If adding a few new tools to your teaching toolbox, while connecting with a community of thoughtful, curious, like-minded educators to share notes on how to make these techniques work for students at all ages and levels of ability sounds like it'd be a fun thing to do this summer, you may be interested in the live online 5-session *Performance Psych Essentials* class starting next week.

In addition to live Zoom sessions where we'll explore effective practice skills and strategies for managing nerves and getting into the zone, there will be worksheets and activities to try, small and large group mastermind sessions, and Q&A's – all spread out in a manageable sort of way, so it doesn't get too overwhelming.

Teachers who have participated in this class have reported seeing some really gratifying changes in students. If you're a tiny bit intrigued, you can see what they're saying, and get all the dates and details here.

<https://members.bulletproofmusician.com/edu/performance-psychology-essentials-for-educators/?icn=ppe4e&icm=blog&ics=after-post>

**3 SINGING TIPS FOR  
ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS**

by Chelsea Wilson  
from [thebalancedsinger.com](http://thebalancedsinger.com)

So you want to become a singer, but you have SO many questions about where to start!

One of the first things you may do is start googling your questions about singing. (Sound familiar? Is that how you got here?)

Your search for answers to all your singing questions has probably resulted in a lot of confusion (and a LOT of results in your search engine), which is why we're so glad you made it here.

Take a break from all that noise and relax! We want to start your singing journey off with just three singing tips that cover the most important aspects you should focus on.

**1. Coordinate your ears with your throat**

Make sure that you can find basic pitch and rhythm. Even the most beautiful voice with an angelic tone is no good if you are stumbling through a song and can't stay on pitch.

The first thing you want to accomplish is to match pitch, particularly with the piano. Start in the range of your speaking voice, then hit one note on the piano after another and try to sing with it.

The next step is going for a series of notes until you are ready for an easy song. A good drill to start this process is singing the first five tones of a major scale (12345 / DO RE ME FA SOL), step by step in various keys.

Doing this will also get you ready to sing a melodically simple song.

**2. Establish chest and head voice**

Right from the start, it's important to establish using both chest and head voice.

If you make one of these overly dominant, you'll face problems later on that you'll spend a lot of time, effort, and money trying to fix.

When it comes to establishing head and chest voice, we suggest that you start by working on the one that you have a harder time controlling. If you're insecure about both, start working with chest voice first.

You can train your chest voice effectively on sounds like BA (bad), GA (gadget), BAH (Bach, the composer) or GO in the low range of your voice.

For training head voice, try to inflect into the high part of your voice using a WEE (weed) or WOO (wool) sound. It will feel a little bit like cheering at a concert or a football game.

Once you have access to chest voice and head voice at will, try to move in between them on a siren or on an octave scale.

**3. Start to think about connection and the mix voice**

Even as a beginning singer, start to study and practice mixing! Beginning to work on your mix voice from the start will save you lots of time and money later.

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### 3 SINGING TIPS (continued)

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Your long-term goal as a singer should be to develop a united, smooth sounding voice from low to high.

One way to approach this is to try to thin out the feeling of chest voice as you go toward the top of your range without completely losing chest voice.

A really nasty/twangy sung “Nay” on an ascending octave scale can be helpful. Place the scale so that the top note is above the note where you usually experience a break in your voice.

Another way to think about finding connection or a mix voice is to try to thicken your head voice.

Use an octave scale again and sing a “Mum,” but this time, add a lot of a really sad, crying sounds to it as you approach the top note and keep that cry on your way back down.

On both scales, the “Nay” and the “Mum,” you want to make sure that you start out in a solid chest voice that matches your speaking voice.

## SIX TONGUE MOVES TO IMPROVE YOUR ARTICULATION

by Andrew Byrne  
from backstage.com

With musical theater artists increasingly being asked to master genres like rap and hip-hop, proper tongue articulation has never been more important. And even if you're not planning on playing Lafayette in “Hamilton” anytime soon, it still be beneficial to make sure your tongue is working properly.

First, let's discuss why you should care about your tongue; not only is it primarily responsible for the intelligibility of your text, it's also strongly associated with your feeling of belonging in the world. The part of your brain where your personality is stored is called your insula, and the movement map that controls your tongue is right next to the insula. So when you work your tongue out, you're also connecting more deeply to your sense of purpose and increasing your drive to share your talents with the

world.

Here are six moves I want to make sure you can do. Going through these before an audition is a great way to focus your brain and your voice:

### 1. Tongue on the roof of mouth

Some of us have developed an incorrect habit of keeping our tongues low in the mouth. When the tongue is at rest, it's supposed to be suctioned to the roof of your mouth, like an octopus tentacle. The tip of your tongue should be resting about a half-inch behind your upper front teeth. To find the proper position for the tip, say “Nah-nah-nah” and then rest the tip where the “n” is made. The back of the tongue should also be touching the roof of the mouth as much as possible.

### 2. Yawn/swallow with tongue up

Now that you've got the tongue up, try to complete three consecutive swallows without letting the tongue move from the roof of the mouth. Once you've done that successfully, try to yawn and lower your larynx while keeping the entire tongue (including the back) suctioned to the roof of the mouth.

### 3. Hi-hat

The hi-hat is the pair of cymbals in a drum set that meets to make a dampened “crash.” We're going to do that with your tongue now; it will sound like “ts” in the word “its.” Once you've made the “ts,” push the middle front part of your tongue to the roof of the mouth to “damp” the sound. If you're doing this correctly, you'll feel your abs contracting, too. Repeat as rapidly as possible for 10-15 seconds.

### 4. Chipmunk

We're now going to make a chipmunk sound by suctioning the front body of the tongue backward along the roof of the mouth. When done properly, this will sound like the disapproving “tut-tut-tut” that your grandma might have made when you were misbehaving. Repeat as rapidly as possible for 10-15 seconds

### 5. Tongue cluck

We'll now make a clucking sound by curling the tip of the tongue backward and flicking it down rapidly to rest briefly on the lower front teeth. It should make a sharp, clean sound that is somewhat similar to the motion for making an “l.” Repeat as rapidly as possible for 10-15 seconds

### 6. Dry K's

Finally, we're going to repeat a “k” consonant as quickly and rhythmically as possible. The goal here

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## SIX TONGUE MOVES (continued)

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is not to let a lot of air escape. Most Americans have an aspirate “k,” which meaning we blow a lot of air through it. Try to make the “k” as dry as possible, letting the airflow be very small. Repeat as rapidly as possible for 10-15 seconds.

## HELP MY VOICE IS HOARSE

by Katarina Hornakova  
from [how2improvesinging.com](http://how2improvesinging.com)

Questions regarding a hoarse voice and loss of voice are very common among singers.

The most common cause of this condition is laryngitis, which is *inflammation of the voice box*.

In this article, I want to provide you with some basic information about laryngitis and what you can do to overcome it and return to your “normal” singing voice.

*Note: I am not a physician so this article is based on my knowledge and experience from my speech-language pathology practice as well as my own personal experience (unfortunately, my son often suffers from laryngitis and croup which is inflammation of the larynx and trachea and results in a “barking-like” cough). The best practice is to consult with a specialist who can assess you and give individual recommendations.*

### What Is Laryngitis?

As I said before, **laryngitis is inflammation of the larynx** (voice box).

Naturally, this is a concern for singers who use their voice as their instrument.

In laryngitis, *vocal cords become irritated and swollen*; therefore producing sound may be difficult or painful.

The *voice is hoarse, croaky or breathy*, or a complete *loss of voice* may occur.

### Why Do I Have a Hoarse Voice?

What are some common hoarse voice causes?

The **most common cause of laryngitis is a viral infection** that can manifest itself as a cold or in-

fection of the upper respiratory system (any part of your respiratory system above the trachea – wind-pipe).

A less frequent cause of laryngitis is a bacterial infection that may last longer than a viral infection.

Other causes of laryngitis include:

- *overuse or misuse of the larynx by shouting or singing with inadequate technique,*
- *allergies,*
- *acid reflux,*
- *bad vocal habits* such as smoking, frequent coughing or throat clearing etc.

Luckily, these are not as common as infectious types of laryngitis.

However, they may be long lasting and require the attention of a specialist.

### Symptoms and Signs of Laryngitis

The most common symptoms and signs of laryngitis are:

- **hoarse voice or even loss of voice,**
- **sore throat, dry throat, or**
- **pain during swallowing.**

Other symptoms may include fever, cough, headache, runny nose (when you suffer from a more wide spread infection).

In children, as I experienced first-hand, laryngitis can be accompanied by croup (with its typical cough that sounds like barking).

If the swelling in the larynx is excessive, you may have difficulty breathing.

This symptom is more common in children or in people with narrow vocal tracts (again, I am writing from own experience – two visits to the emergency room made me more knowledgeable and prepared) and a visit to a specialist is warranted.

If you are not sure why your voice is hoarse, talk to your doctor.

### What To Do When My Voice Is Hoarse?

The first few days are the worst – your voice is hoarse or you cannot talk or sing, your throat hurts, you have a hard time swallowing.

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### HELP MY VOICE IS HOARSE (continued)

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Towards the end of the first week, you should feel better though.

However, your voice may not sound “normal” for another week or two because it takes longer for the vocal cords to get back into their original shape.

So how to cure hoarse voice?

There are a few things that you can do right away when you feel that your voice is hoarse:

**Take voice rest and drink lots of fluids.**

**Voice rest is very important.**

When your vocal cords are irritated and swollen, they are more susceptible to vocal injury.

If you overuse them at this stage, they may take longer to heal completely.

If it is possible, do not use your voice at all (avoid talking and singing).

Watch a movie, read a book or work on a computer. Use pen and paper (or some kind of a writing app) to communicate.

Avoid whispering and shouting!

If you need to talk, use quiet and soft speech but **do not whisper**.

Some singers have to sing during the first days of laryngitis.

It is very difficult to decide if you should sing or not at this early stage of laryngitis.

Sometimes it may not even be possible and cancellation of your gig is necessary.

My recommendation is to speak to your doctor to get a professional opinion.

**Drinking plenty of fluids** is a good vocal habit for singers on any day, so this rule applies even more when it comes to hoarse voice and laryngitis.

It may be painful to swallow initially and therefore, you may be avoiding drinking.

With laryngitis, the vocal cords may become dry and

need to be hydrated.

**Water is the best option** as some other drinks may cause irritation, such as citrus drinks.

If you have a humidifier at home, you can use it to **inhale moist air** to soothe your throat or clear secretions.

My doctor recommended that I run hot water in the tub/shower and spend some time in this humid environment to alleviate the symptoms when needed.

**Painkillers (analgesics)** may be needed in the initial stages to ease the pain.

However, analgesics are not a good option for singers.

Aspirin products may predispose you to bleeding.

Also avoid local anesthetics (e.g. sprays) for throat pain as they numb the vocal mechanism.

**Lozenges** (with glycerin or pectin) may be the best option to ease some symptoms (but avoid lozenges or sprays with analgesics).

Also be aware of **antihistamines** because they have a drying effect.

When Can I Start Singing Again?

This is a difficult question to answer.

**If you start too early, hoarse voice may return** and it may take longer for your voice to come back completely.

When you start singing, spend more time on **gentle warm-up exercises** – lip rolls, easy scales, familiar and easy songs in your comfortable range.

As time goes by, the voice comes back, and you will be ready for more dynamic exercises to bring back the **strength of your vocal mechanism**.

Watch for either extremely high or low notes.

When you start working on bringing your voice back, you may develop **fear or anxiety in using your voice**.

This anxiety is counterproductive as it creates tension in your larynx, neck, shoulders or your body.

Be attentive to this issue and **include some relaxa-**

(Continued on page 11)

## HELP MY VOICE IS HOARSE (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

**tion techniques** into your daily vocal routine.

It may be useful to dust off some "beginner's exercises" for breathing, opening your throat, easy phonation, releasing tension etc.

### When Should I See a Doctor?

If your symptoms last longer than 3 weeks, if you suffer from recurring laryngitis, or if your voice is hoarse constantly, it is time to talk to a specialist.

And I always advise talking to a doctor whenever you are anxious or overly worried (regarding hoarse voice or any other problem) – the internet will not give you individualized attention and the recommendations you deserve.

Usually, hoarse voice is not a big deal and it will resolve itself within a few weeks.

It is however a huge inconvenience for many singers.

Try to **stay healthy, develop good vocal habits and learn to sing with healthy vocal techniques.**

## BARBERSHOP QUARTET



## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING BEGINNING SINGERS NEED TO KNOW

by Audrey Hunt  
from spinditty.com

### Open Your Mouth to Improve Your Singing

"Let me out," cried the voice inside. "Please, I beg you, open the gates to the jaw and mouth wide enough for me to escape. Release me."

If your voice could talk to you when you sing, this is the plea you would hear. So don't be afraid to show off those pearly whites. Open your mouth to project your sound, especially when singing any word containing the "Ah" vowel. Also, when you are [breathing correctly](#), your singing takes on a beautiful and powerful sound.

Now, let's look at the benefits of opening wide when you sing.

### Vocal Tones Can Only be Projected When The Mouth is Generously Opened

### Sing Better, Sing Stronger by Dropping Your Jaw

Here's a tip to help you open your mouth wider. It's simple, and it works. Wash and dry your hands before you do the following:

- Locate the first and second fingers on either your right or left hand.
- Place these two fingers perpendicular just inside your mouth between your front upper and lower teeth.
- Keep your jaw relaxed.
- This is about how much space you will need for singing specific vowels - especially the sound of *ah*. (Of course, this doesn't apply to vowels Ee, Eh, Oh, and Oo).
- Now with the fingers still in your mouth, sing *ah* on a comfortable pitch. Avoid singing too high or too low.
- Hold the *ah* sound for the count of 5.
- Repeat six times.
- Repeat this exercise, but this time remove the fingers from your mouth on the count of two, still sustaining the *ah* sound.

It's natural to feel uncomfortable initially, especially if you usually sing with a small mouth opening. Don't worry about it. Keep practicing, and before you know it

(Continued on page 12)

## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING (continued)

(Continued from page 11)

singing this way will feel normal.

### Open The Back of the Throat to Unleash Sound

The soft palate is located in the very back of your throat. It's a 'moon-shaped look that appears at the hard palate's end (roof of the mouth.) Whenever you yawn, your soft palate will rise to create more space in the mouth.

In singing, *backspace* refers to the space in the back of the mouth and throat. The result of not learning to do this is a 'swallowed' sound, a non-pleasing sound, trapped in the very back of your throat.

Try the following exercise:

- Yawn. Make it real. Relax your body and yawn. Repeat 2 - 3 times.
- This is where *awareness* and *feeling* come into play. The soft palate will lift to make room in the back of the throat.
- Feel the open space you've created in the back of your mouth and throat.
- Now, yawn with your lips closed. You'll begin to feel the open space you need for singing.
- Make this feeling part of your everyday routine. Practice while driving, sitting, watching commercials, waiting in line, bathing, walking, or lying down.

### Another Way to Feel Space Inside Your Mouth For Singing

The following exercise is one that I teach my vocal students regardless of the level of expertise they claim to have:

- To feel the space inside your mouth, pretend that you have an egg in the back of your mouth. If you're not an egg lover, pretend it's a golf ball.
- When air is moved through your mouth, the "egg" space remains open.
- Sing a section of your favorite song, find the openness of the yawn, and imagine the golf ball or egg space in the back of your throat.
- Then practice singing words containing the Ah vowel, such as *hot*, and pretend you have a golf ball in your mouth.

Warning: Do not use a real golf ball or egg.

Good Singing Requires a Generous Mouth Opening

### Don't Forget The Water

Singers require more water than non-singers because the throat must be moist during singing. Be sure your water is room temperature. Cold drinks will restrict your vocal cords. Singers must keep the throat moist during practice, rehearsal and performance.

Avoid anything that may cause dryness to your throat including medications and anti-histamines. Of course, smoking, caffeine, and alcohol is a strict no-no, and this includes vaping.

And if you're a screamer or yell often, damage to your throat is right around the corner.

Singers Require Plenty of Water

### Who Told You That You Can't Sing?

So once upon a time, someone (who knows nothing about the mechanics of singing) told you your voice stinks. Baloney! Hogwash! Ridiculous! This is like telling you, "you can't talk." If you can speak - you can sing. But it would help if you opened your mouth wide enough for the sound to escape. It would be best if you dropped your jaw.

You have just what you need right now. You have the talent (which is another word for working hard) and the qualifications (you were given the right singing tools when born.) Your singing may not be as professional sounding like someone else, but that's okay. You're not competing with them. You're only competing with yourself. You only have to become the best that you can be.

### Closing Thoughts

I've spent my life helping others learn how to sing with a better voice. I love it! What a privilege. I can't begin to tell you how blessed I am.

The singing voice is closely related to one's self-esteem. When I witness the student's personal growth and development with their singing voice, I am over-the-moon happy.

In a way, the mouth is very personal, and being asked to expose our teeth and tongue can be uncomfortable. However, the mouth is the biggest resonator

(Continued on page 13)

## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING (continued)

(Continued from page 12)

in the body, projecting the sound of life and the sound of singing and laughing.

So, open your mouth and free your voice. Let it ring. Stop judging your sound. Just Sing!

Free Your Voice to the Possibilities

## CLEARING UP THROAT-CLEARING

by Joanna Cazden  
from joannacazden.com

“Don’t clear your throat—it’s bad for your voice.” Every serious voice user hears this advice. But what can you do, when your throat tickles or drips or you’re nervous about a show? How can you resist?

The urge to clear your throat can arise for several reasons, most of them false-alarms. Here are some tips about how to avoid unnecessary throat-clearing, and how this will, in fact, help your voice. First, some background. The voice box—in medical lingo, the larynx (LAA-rinks)—has a bigger job to do than just making sound. Its fundamental role is as a valve that protects the airway. Your vocal cords are constantly on-guard, ready to open or close the top of your windpipe.

Too much smoke, dust, or fumes in the air? The larynx coughs or holds your breath, keeping the bad stuff out of your lungs. Too much phlegm inside the bronchial tubes, collecting debris from an infection? You expell it by slamming the vocal cords hard and then pushing air—and crud—out of the valve.

Throat-clearing is a smaller version of a cough: your vocal cords lightly clap or rub together. This is normally triggered when we swallow the wrong way, or have true post-nasal drip, but it’s more vigorous than what’s needed for vocal vibration. When there really isn’t anything to clear out, it becomes a useless habit, or worse.

Repeatedly slamming your vocal cords together can irritate them, leading to callouses (vocal nodules) or swelling (vocal edema). More often, repeated throat-clearing just makes you slightly

hoarse or uncomfortable. And that leads to—you guessed it—more urge to clear.

Now, if you clear your larynx heavily and repeatedly, it will create phlegm and “prove” you were justified! But *if the clearing was not productive (wet) the very first time, you didn’t really need to clear at all.*

Because your body is so motivated to keep the airway clear, your vocal cords can get over-sensitive. Dry weather or air conditioning, slight irritation from acid reflux or allergies, or just using your voice without good technique (like the low-pitch, glottal-fry style that’s been in the news lately), can all make the vocal cords unhappy. Like a baby, they fuss but don’t tell you why. Your throat gets itchy and scratchy and you don’t know what else to do.

How to break the vicious cycle? Get savvier about how you respond to false alarms, when clearing will just make things worse. And take better care of your voice pro-actively, so the urge-to-clear doesn’t arise in the first place.

- Keep water near you at all times, and *whenever you feel the tickly desire to clear, take a sip of water instead.* This sensory interruption decreases irritation over time, turning the vicious cycle into a positive one. Cold or ice-water is especially good at “distracting” your throat. (No, it doesn’t hurt your voice at all.)
- Develop more consciousness of when and why you clear your throat. If your voice sounds low-pitched or weak just before you clear, practice using a more energetic speech style to stay out of the “danger zone.” This will take more energy commitment from your whole body, but your larynx will be happier, and throat-clearing will decrease.
- If you tend to clear a lot at the end of the day, take more voice-rest breaks, and see a coach about your technique and pacing. Also get some help if you clear a lot on the phone. (Most people are too loud on cellphones, but too soft on land-lines.)
- A vague feeling of phlegm or “something’s in my throat” can be a leading symptom of acid reflux irritation, long before you experience regular heart-burn. Cut back on coffee, alcohol, and heavy meals before bedtime; try a quick-acting antacid before long meetings; and arrange for a throat exam with an ear-nose-throat specialist (laryngologist).
- Invest in a few sessions with a voice coach or therapist, to tune-up your technique.

Above all, treat throat-clearing as a signal, not as a mysterious bad habit. Listen more carefully to your

(Continued on page 14)

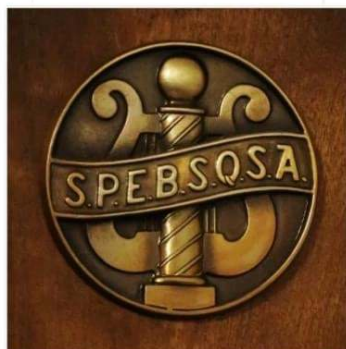
# CLEARING UP THROAT-CLEARING (continued)

(Continued from page 13)

throat symptoms, and you'll soon sound—and feel—much better.



The original logo was classic....



...SPEBS.Q.S.A. had style....



...the new logo looks like the Girl Scout logo.

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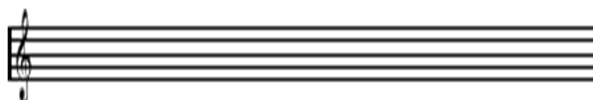
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Editor's Note: The latest version of the Amazon app (both android and iOS) now has an option to activate smile in the app, so that you can get the charity donations for purchases made in the app (if you enable it). Open the app and find 'Settings' 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)

### Common Problems

- Tongue twitching or moving around the mouth during singing.
- Tongue retreating and/or retracting.
- The rear and the base of the tongue being made rigid.
- Making an excessively deep furrow along the centre of the tongue, from front to back.
- Larynx being forced to stay down.
- Over-articulating.
- Articulating too much with the rear of the tongue and mouth.
- Temporomandibular joint disorders (TMD or TMJ). If you do not know what this is, it probably may not affect you.

### The Larynx

Feel your Adam's Apple. You are feeling the protective thyroid cartilage that encases your larynx. The technical term for the Adam's Apple is the Laryngeal Prominence. It is more visibly noticeable in teenage and adult males than females because a male's larynx grows significantly larger during puberty, which causes the voice to 'break' and results in deeper vocal pitch.

Sound is simply vibration. The larynx's purpose is to vibrate. Breath passes through it, vibrates the tissue folds, and those vibrations then continue into the resonating chambers. On their own, the vibrations in the larynx make very little sound, just like guitar strings vibrating appear to make very little sound until the guitar's hollow resonating wooden body is added. Therefore, do not think that singing happens in the larynx. Singing really happens in the mouth and teeth and resonating chambers of the skull.

(to be continued next month)...



**What do you call a musician who  
steals sheet music?**

*A Clef-to maniac*

## FREE SINGING TIPS

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

C = Communicate the music's message. During performance it is very important to communicate the message of the song. If you make a "mistake" don't point it out to your audience. It is most likely they did not even notice.

## FREE SINGING TIPS

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

C is for Criticism. Everyone always has something to say – especially if you ask them! Graciously towards your fans, disregard those whom you believe may have motive to see you fail. Take to heart constructive criticism you can use to make yourself stronger, and accept the fact that you cannot please all the people all the time.

## FREE SINGING TIPS

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

C. Care! There's nothing worse (ok, maybe root canal surgery is a little worse) than watching a singer perform a song that they just don't care about. Sing songs that you love and that you care about and your audience will care about you.

## FREE SINGING TIPS

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

C= Control -- control in singing is a combination of techniques. Breath control, resonance, pitch, placement, holding up and being able to ride the air are all elements of control. Like riding a bike, it's the balance of all of these things that contribute to effortless singing.

## CHAPTER QUARTETS



## 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.

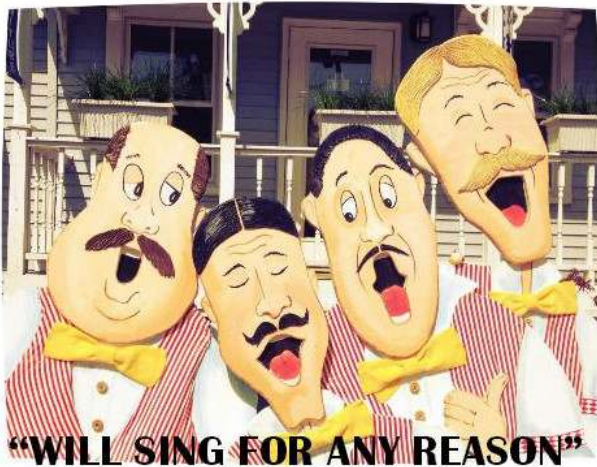


No Name Yet

? tenor  
? lead  
? baritone  
? bass

No Name Yet

? tenor  
? lead  
? baritone  
? bass



# ***Big Orange Chorus***

## REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Thu	04 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	11 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	18 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
Thu	25 Aug	Shepherd of the Woods
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

## BIRTHDAYS

Dave Schubert 07 August

## 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

# WELCOME

## NEWEST MEMBERS

Les Mower	April
Ray Parzik	August
Ed Fitzgerald	September

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.

## 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 September is 24 August.  
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  
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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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**IMAGINE 80 MEN ON THE RISERS  
BE A SINGER-BRINGER**



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