
SINGERS:

5

MINUTE

"KEEPING IT REAL"

VOCAL WARM UP

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What if I told you there was a *magic ritual* you could do before every singing performance?

A ritual so powerful it practically guarantees you will sound your absolute best, increase your confidence, and won't damage those golden pipes as you wow your audience?

You might already know what this magic ritual is, but just aren't bothering to do it.

It's called warming up your voice.

And it's so easy, you're gonna kick yourself for not doing it.

I'm gonna give you my "***Keeping it Real***" warm up: A quick, easy routine that hits the major players in singing.

You'll release tension and breathe better.

You'll work your range, your resonators, and your articulation.

All this in as little as 5 minutes!

You have no excuse not to warm up your voice if you have a 5-minute routine in your back pocket!



Voices Inc

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If It Only Takes 5 Minutes, How Can It Be Such a Big Deal?

Your voice is like a big teddy bear:

It might sound big and strong, but inside, it's super delicate and sensitive.

That sweet belt of yours is coming from vocal chords: soft tissue that need lots of love and care.

You're also using the inner muscles of the larynx:

*They need to be trained just like any other muscle.
They need to be stretched and relaxed before
being asked to work hard, just like your body.*

Both your vocal chords and larynx need to be coaxed into working hard if you don't want them to rebel one day.

They will rebel if you mistreat them, in the form of losing your voice or even needing expensive vocal surgery.

So, yeah, I'd say vocal warm ups are kind of a big deal.

So, I do this quick warm up and then I'm done, right?

You could be.

Just warming up your voice is better than not doing anything at all.

But if you want to take it further, consider *Full Body Warm Ups and Warming Down* your voice.

When you're a vocalist, your body is your instrument. Caring for your whole body, not just your larynx and vocal chords will improve your singing.

An athlete warms down their body after a race or a routine, and this is a great practice for singers as well.

It ensures you'll still be able to sing tomorrow after rocking out tonight.

Ugh – So Much Work: “I Can’t Wait till I’m Famous and Don’t Have to Worry About This Stuff”

You might think famous singers' pre-show routines go no further than legendary dressing room demands of bowls of M&M's – without the brown ones!

The truth is, many famous singers care more about how they prepare their voice than their dressing room snacks.

If you're on the fence about taking the time to warm up, consider Katy Perry's pre-show preparation.

The singer's day-long ritual includes a massage, a full body workout, vocal warm-ups, and rehearsal, all before getting ready for the actual show.

Imagine what would happen if you invested a fraction of that energy preparing to sing!

Ok, Give Me The 5-Minute Routine!

If you're not sold on the whole "warm up" thing, this next part is gonna feel so good, you will be.

We start out with a little massage.

Our goal with this massage is to release all tension in your shoulders, neck, and face.

Stand with your feet about shoulder width apart, and relax your body.

For the following relaxation exercises, **do them at least 3 times**, or more if it feels good!

Do a few head rolls by dropping your head to the left side, and moving clockwise, roll it down towards your chest, to your right side, and letting it dip slightly towards your back, returning to the left side. (Don't let your head completely hang back, as over time that could damage your neck.)

Repeat starting on the right side, going counter-clockwise.

Roll your shoulders back and down, 3-5 times.

Let your head drop to the right side of your shoulder.

Place your right hand over your head, gently pulling your head towards your right shoulder.

You should feel a stretch on the left side of your neck reaching down to your shoulder.

Drop and raise your left shoulder a few times to intensify the stretch.

Repeat on the other side.

Place your hands gently on your face, on your jaw.

Starting near the ear, massage with your fingertips gently, in little circles. Work your way down your jaw toward your chin.

You may accompany this with some soft vocalization, like sighing on the exhale.

Now hold your hands flat, like paddles.

Place them on your jaw, starting near the ear.

With your paddles, smooth down toward your chin gently but firmly.

This should encourage your jaw to drop.

Wake up your resonators by giving them a little massage.

Your resonators are the amplifiers of your face: they allow your sound to fill an auditorium instead of just your shower.

Use your fingertips to softly massage little circles on your forehead, your cheeks, and even your nose!

Do this while gently making an “Mmmm” sound, and notice how you feel the sound in different areas of your face.

Does your face feel great?

Remember: Do this 3-5 times.

Now you’re ready to practice breathing.



I've Been "Practicing Breathing" My Whole Life - What Do You Mean?

In everyday life, the breath you take is typically shallow.

Your breath is what powers your singing voice, so we want to practice getting deep, powerful breaths, without any tension.

Here's how:

- With your jaw relaxed and open, breathe slowly through your mouth.
- Try not to "suck" air in: that will create tension.
- Instead, focus on the breath gently filling your mouth and hitting the back of your throat.
- Exhale the same way you inhaled: gently.
- Don't push the air out, just let it pour in and pour out, like waves on a beach.
- After a few breaths, add some vocalizing: inhale as described above, but when you exhale, let your breath out on the sound "huh".
- This will sound like a heavy sigh.
- Remember: you're trying to have zero tension in your vocal chords as you do this.
- It should feel as relaxed as breathing in and breathing out.
- Do this 3-5 times.





When Can I Start Making Some Noise?

We're not only gonna make noise, we're gonna multitask!

We're going to warm up your range while warming up your mouth.

Your vocal chords and larynx aren't the only ones working: songs have words and your lips and tongue make sure we hear them!

MOTORBOAT SWEEPS

Make a motorboat sound with your lips by pressing them together and letting air escape through.

Use the same relaxed breath that we did earlier.

Make that motorboat sound on an exhale.

Repeat 3 times, each time sweeping up in pitch, then sweeping back down.

Start at a different pitch each time, hitting the higher or lower ends of your range.

TONGUE TRILLS

Place the tip of your tongue behind your top teeth.

As you exhale, let your tongue vibrate in a trill.

Follow the same steps in Motorboat sweeps, warming up your range as you loosen your tongue.

SIREN SONG

This exercise also does double duty: warming up your range while waking up your face.

Starting at a lower note, make a siren sound, moving up to a high pitch and back down in one continuous sound. Do this while making the following sounds: “Wee, Way, Whoa, Wow”.

Stretch out your face while making these sounds to maximize this warm up.

TONGUE TWISTERS

You don't want to stumble over your words as you sing. Find two or three tongue twisters that are fun and easy to remember, so you always have them in your back pocket. Here's a few ideas to get you started:

“Red leather, Yellow leather” Repeat as many times as you like, as quickly as possible

“Unique New York” Try to really enunciate the “K” sounds here. Repeat quickly.

And here is my personal favourite: it feels thorough, and it's fun to say!

What a To-Do to Die today

Oh, what to-do to die today at a minute or two 'til two

A thing distinctly hard to say yet harder still to do

For they'll beat a tattoo at twenty to two

With a rattatta tattatta tattatta too

And the dragon will come when he hears the drum

At a minute or two 'til two today, a minute or two 'til two.



Ready to See Some Results?

You are now outfitted with new knowledge to take your skills to the next level, whether by including full body warm ups in your routine or bringing a professional onto your team to help you reach new levels of awesomeness.

Most importantly, you're armed with a "magic ritual": ***The 5-minute "Keeping it Real" Warm Up.***

Do this every day, and you'll find you don't need "magic" after all. You got that all on your own.

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