



# Vocal Warm Up Guide

A step by step guide on how to warm up  
your voice

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# Welcome!!!



Thank you for picking up my free guide on How To Warm Up Your Voice! My name is Shari Bennett-Jackson and I am a classically trained contemporary singer, songwriter and vocal coach. I'm so glad you chose to allow me to be a part of your vocal journey!

As a performer myself, I know first hand how important it is to stay in vocal shape, and that's why I want to give you this information on how to warm up your voice. This guide will walk you through a 10 minute warm up that will get your voice open and relaxed.

I have included video examples for each section and [downloadable exercises](#) so you can warm up on your own, any time you want. Now, I think it's great that you want to do this on your own but I hope that you find a vocal coach to make sure you're doing this correctly. In the mean time, I hope you find this guide to be helpful!

### *In this guide, you will learn:*

- Why warming up is important
- Things to consider before warming up
- The correct posture and breath for singing
- Vocal exercises to open your voice

*click here to watch  
my welcome  
video*



## WHY WARM UP?

Have you ever gone to the gym and skipped your warm up and went straight into training? If you have, you were probably really sore the next day because you didn't prepare your body for what you were going to do. You may have even injured yourself by pulling a muscle.

Think of singing as a workout for your voice and your warm up as, well, a warm up. Warming up your voice is crucial to maintaining a **healthy** singing voice and preventing vocal injury.

There are a lot of muscles that are involved in singing, and similarly to an athlete who needs to warm up before going full out on the field or the court, singers are vocal athletes and need to warm up before singing.

The idea is to get the blood flowing to the muscles involved in vocalizing, starting low intensity and working up to whatever your practice session needs.

*Singing  
is a  
vocal  
work  
out!*



# THINGS TO CONSIDER *before* WARMING UP

## LOCATION

One of the first things to consider is where you are going to warm up. You want to be in a space free from distraction, where you feel comfortable making loud -and sometimes weird or seemingly embarrassing- noises. This might be in your closet, bedroom, living room or even your car if you're on your way to a gig. If you don't feel comfortable at home, go to a practice room at a local college or junior college!

## DURATION

The length of your warm up will depend on the current state of your voice. For instance, if you haven't been speaking all day up until your warm up time, or you just woke up, you might require a longer warm up session than if you were talking all day. Alternatively, if you've been doing a lot of talking your voice might feel pretty warm and a shorter workout would be required. I would suggest setting aside at least 10 minutes for a warm up at minimum. This guide will walk you through a 10 minute warm up.

## FREQUENCY

Whether you are just beginning or are an advanced gigging vocalist, I recommend setting time aside daily to warm up and keep your chops in shape. A big part of developing healthy vocal technique comes from **muscle memory** and building new neural pathways in your brain which is triggered by frequent exposure to the exercises that work those muscles. That being said, I'd recommend a daily practice session for 30 minutes to an hour, preceded by a 10 minute warm up session.



# POSTURE & *Breath Support*

## *POSTURE*

Stand tall with your feet shoulder width apart and your knees slightly bent. You want your shoulders relaxed with your head feeling like it's being suspended from an imaginary string coming from the ceiling. Try to relax your whole body as much as possible for the duration of your warm up.

## *BREATH SUPPORT*

The air in your lungs is the energy that powers your voice. If you don't have enough air to support your voice, you will find yourself not able to make it through phrases or experiencing vocal tension. Proper breath support is critical to healthy vocal production. It starts with taking in an adequate breath.

## *WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU BREATHE?*

When you inhale, as the lungs fill up with air, the diaphragm lowers, displacing the organs in your belly and causing your stomach to protrude outward. You will know you have taken a deep breath if you feel this expansion around your belly and rib cage.

## *TAKE A LOW BREATH*

Place your hands on your hips and then bring them up to your rib cage. Inhale as if you are inhaling through a straw. Keep your chest and shoulders still as you breathe in, allowing only the belly to protrude outward as you inhale. Blow out on a forceful "shh" as if you are a librarian. Empty all of your air, hold briefly and allow a vacuum to be created in your lungs, then inhale and your belly should expand. This is how to take a low breath.

*Click here to watch the  
Posture & Breathing video*



# Time to Sing!

The next couple of pages will walk you through the warm up exercises. Each exercise has an accompanying video to watch to make sure you are doing the exercise properly.

Remember to maintain proper posture and breath during the warm up and try to stay as relaxed as possible.

Ready?

Let's go!





# Let's blow some **LIP BUBBLES**

## Exercise 1: Lip Bubbles

I first recommend starting with a light exercise. One of my favorites is the lip bubble (also called the lip trill). If you've ever sung in a choir or had voice lessons in the past, you may have done them before.

This exercise is great for working on the coordination between your **AIRFLOW** and your vocal folds. This type of exercise is called a semi-occluded vocal tract exercise and puts the vocal folds in the most optimal position for sound production.

**DIRECTIONS:** Imagine that you are under water blowing bubbles in the water with your lips. Get a good breath before you blow and keep your lips relaxed. Put two fingers on either corner of your mouth and push up to help keep your lips closed. First try this with no tone, then add a tone to it. Do this on a scale up and down your range.

*Click Here*

to watch the video  
on Lip Bubbles



## Exercise 2: Open Space on MUM

# Mum's the word

This exercise will focus on creating open space and preventing **TENSION** when you are singing. Open space is created with a high soft palate and happens when the muscles in and around your throat are relaxed.

**DIRECTIONS:** Let out a big sigh as if you just came home from a long day of work. Make sure there is no tightness in your throat when you do this. You want to be completely relaxed. The feeling inside of your mouth should be what it feels like just before you yawn.

Now do this on the word MUM.  
Let out a long "muuuuum".  
See the video, and do it with me as I play.

*Click Here*  
to watch this video  
on Open Space



# Yaw...n

This exercise will work on creating open space in your mouth when you sing, just as in the previous one, but on a different vowel. Again your soft palate will be raised, which will result in a resonant sound.

Check the mirror and make sure your tongue is down and not up in the back or else you might sound like Kermit the frog. If you find that you yawn during this exercise, you're on the right track!

*Click Here*  
to watch the video  
on Open Space on  
YAW

Exercise 3: Open Space on YAW

**DIRECTIONS:** Try to feel in your mouth the same open sensation you had on the "MUM" exercise, but this time on the word "Yaw". Put a silent "h" in front of "yaw" so it's "hyaw". Try this going up and down a scale from the bottom to the middle part of your range. We will cover the upper part of your range next.

# Headvoice

## Exercise 4: Head Voice

These two exercises will address your head voice (upper register).

Strengthening this part of your voice is important for singing high notes without straining.

The first exercise is on the phrase "wee". Again you want to have the open space in your mouth when you are performing this exercise.

The second exercise is a siren. Sirens are a great way to warm up your voice without the pressure of worrying about matching pitch. If you have trouble matching pitch this is a great exercise to do to get through your entire range. If you have trouble singing higher notes this is a great exercise to include in your warm ups.

*Click Here*

to watch the video  
on Head Voice



# All done!

*That completes this free warm up guide. I hope your voice feels nice and warm and you are a little more knowledgeable about how to warm up your voice!*

*Click below to download the exercises so you can warm up whenever you want!*

*Thank you again for allowing me to be a part of your vocal journey!*

*xo Shari*

*click here to  
download all of the  
exercises*