

ADB/ATU Musical Theatre - Vocal Warm Ups

Breathing is the key to proper control of the voice

Counted Breathing:

1. Stand with arms relaxed at sides, feet shoulder width apart, eyes closed.
2. Take deep breaths and be aware of where the air is going as you inhale and exhale. Relax the knees and shoulders.
3. Breathe deeply for 4 beats, hold for 4 beats, then release for 8 counts. Repeat and work towards a 32 count release.
4. Repeat this exercise a number of times each day.

Side Coaching:

- Feel the rib cage expand and contract. Do not raise the shoulders up and down.
- Breathe into your lower rib cage to ensure diaphragmatic breathing.

Physical Warm Up:

Physical warm-ups are also important for singing. Conducted in a relaxed manner, these exercises focus the mind while loosening muscles. These warm ups will also prove useful for the upcoming choreography unit.

1. Look over your right shoulder, hold. Look over your left shoulder, hold.
2. Put your left ear to your left shoulder without lifting your shoulder. Hold. Then turn your chin slightly towards the ceiling. Hold. Repeat on right side.
3. Roll the head gently around the neck, don't hyperextend. Leave mouth open to relieve pressure on the spine.
4. Roll the shoulders forward and back
5. Allow body to scrunch down then imagine there is a string attached to the top of your head and someone is pulling you up. Rise slowly so that you are standing tall.
6. Let your chin fall to your chest. Allow the weight of your head to carry you slowly over so that eventually your hands touch the floor. The head should be very heavy. Recover stacking the vertebrae from the bottom up with the head being the last to stack.
7. Reach both arms upward, stretching side to side to expand the rib cage.
8. Stretch with both arms up on tip toes, then let body drop like a rag doll. Repeat but this time, breathe in when going up and when falling, breathe out. Add an 'S' sound. Repeat with 'V' and 'F.'

Articulation Exercises:

1. Massage the cheeks and jaw to relax stress along the jaw.
2. Open mouth wide, hold. Scrunch like a prune, hold. Smile, hold. Repeat several times.
3. Mouth wide – over enunciate vowels *a, e, i, o, u*. Add consonant *b-a, b-e, b-i, b-o, b-u etc.*
4. Tongue trills, lip buzzing.
5. Tongue Twisters – work on enunciation e.g. yellow leather red leather, proper copper coffee pot, the tip of the tongue the teeth the lips.

Humming:

Hum in different pitches and at different volumes. Follow the musical scale.

Singing Simple Tunes:

Following some preliminary warm-ups for the vocal folds, the class sings simple, familiar tunes in chorus e.g. Row, Row, Row Your Boat