

THE LATIMERLO STUDIO

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BASIC SINGING TECHNIQUE

BODY POSTURE: The voice is a beautiful and powerful expression of the human soul that engages the whole body. In order to have a WELL-SUPPORTED voice, you must stand up straight, with your shoulders relaxed and pulled down from your ears. Your chest should feel high, but not rigid. Your back, head, and neck are straight, and your bottom is tucked slightly under you. Your feet are parallel and shoulder-width apart. The basic attitude of your stance says, "I am here to sing, and you are here to pay attention to me."

ABDOMINAL SUPPORT: Between your chest and your stomach is a muscle called the diaphragm. It sits right under your ribs. When breathing in (inhalation), this muscle moves down and causes our bellies to expand out. When singing out (exhalation), we keep the diaphragm muscle down (which is the position that supports our voice) by consciously firming our abdominal muscles. We firm the abdominal muscles so that our bellies remain in the "out" position...they are not allowed to collapse in. Once it is time to breathe again, we can relax the tension in our bellies and allow the air to flow in.

RELAXED THROAT AND JAW: In order for sound to be produced correctly, you must concentrate on leaving your throat and jaw relaxed. You should never feel like the sound is beginning and remaining in your throat, and you should not feel tension in your vocal cords or in your jaw. All these muscles need to stay relaxed so that the air and sound flow through with no impediments.

RESONANCE: We want the sound wave to vibrate through our nose, eyes, and forehead. When you are using your voice well, you will be able to feel vibrations in and around your nose, eyes, forehead, and your hard palate, as well. These areas, as a group, are referred to as "resonance chambers." They help to shape the sound that you make. Also helpful in shaping the sound is your soft palate (the soft part of the roof of your mouth that starts between your furthest teeth). Most of the time you want it raised up. There are many more body parts involved in resonance, like your tongue and pharynx, but those are the basics.

PATIENCE: This all takes a while. Singing technique is, really, a life-long process that takes years to perfect. So, work hard at improving yourself, but be patient with yourself, too.