

Warm-ups Can Set the Tone!

Why warm-up?

- Gets the voice ready
- Gets the mind ready
- Gets the unit beginning
- Teaches technique & common language
- Can problem-solve song 'issues'
- It's *fun* (or can be!)

What areas should be covered?

- Alignment & Posture
- Breathing skills
- Physical freedom
- Resonance
- Articulation
- Range/Register
- Phonation
- Common vowel approach
- Interval Accuracy
- Characterization (vocal & physical)
- Dynamics
- Chords & BBS Balance
- Unity in it ALL!

Important To-Do's:

- Encourage the chorus member to leave the 'day' behind her
- Warm-up and free-up the body
- Gently, yet firmly, insist on focus.
- Demo the exercise. Chorus parrots. Repeat till all elements achieved
- Positive reinforcement goes a long way!
- Don't accept mediocrity
- Incorporate song challenges into warm-ups
- Be specific, clear & concise...If the chorus is 'not getting it' --
it just might be you :-)

Suggested Order:

Physical warm-ups -- with A LOT of characterization & energy

- ① Breath management skills building
 - ② Bubbling and/or humming exercises
 - ③ Warm-up middle range
 - ④ Vocal range extension - going down first
 - ⑤ Tuning/Accuracy
 - ⑥ Target Vowel Work
 - ⑦ Articulation/consonants/humor
- BBS Chords (tag or section of song)

Singing traits to include during warm-up exercises:

Focus

Resonance

Dynamics

Extended & lifted phrases

Energized breaths

Vocal texture changes

Key change accuracy

My philosophy-- less talking by the leader, accurate notes & vocal quality in the demo & a variety of exercises that include humor and/or affirmations = success & chorus buy-in to the process--- a super way to begin rehearsal!

Credits: Coaches who introduced vocal warm-ups, & classes by Kim Hulbert, DeDe Nibler, Darlene Rogers & Ase Hagerman as well as various vocal warm-up books.

Sample Warm-ups

① Breath management skills building

Say: 1 2 [sniff] 3 4 [sniff] 5 6 [sniff] 7 8 [sniff]

1 2 [Hey!] 3 4 [Hey!] 5 6 [Hey!] 7 8 [Hey!]

Use abdominals on the explosive [Hey!] Repeat 5 or 6 times without a break

Sing on one note: "I can control my breath// and sustain it fully// to the end of the phrase// without any undue tension// of any kind"

Begin by singing to the // then subsequently add each section-- ultimately all in one breath

② Bubbling and/or humming exercises

Bubble/hum on 1-2-1-7-1-2-1-7-1-2-1-7-1

Bubble on single note then go to target vowel

Bubble on simple tune "Happy Bday" etc.

③ Warm-up middle range

The 'ee aw' – Begin at an A above middle C and progress upwards 6 – 7 times. (1/2 step)



The 'nee nay' – This exercise brings the head voice down. Substitute any consonant.

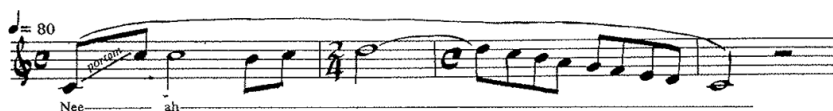


④ Vocal range extension - going down first

The 'Yo Down'



The 'Nee Ah Slide' – Can substitute other consonants & vowels. Great for flexibility.



The 'Zee Aw' – Same as above except for slide.



⑤ Tuning/Accuracy

Sing "Mary" going up by 1/2 steps.

"Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow."

Sing "Everywhere" going down by 1/2 steps.

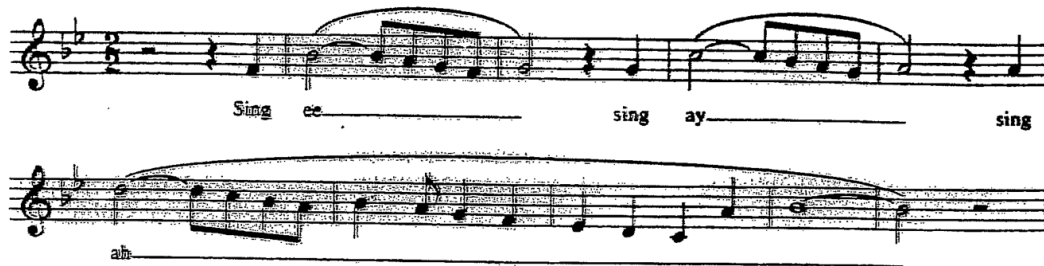
"Everywhere that Mary went the lamb was sure to go."

Interval work: Sing numbers: 1 3 5 3 1 4 6 4 1 3 5 3 1

Have one section hold the tonic during exercise.

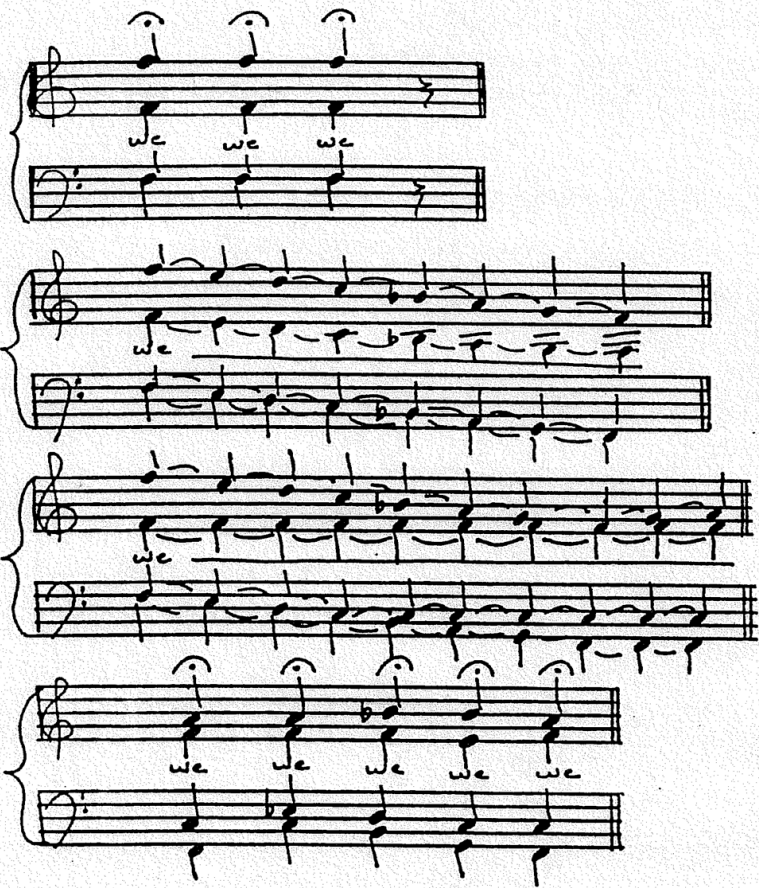
Begin on unison note: Tenors/Leads sing ascending scale while Baris/Basses sing descending scale. Reverse and end on unison starting note.

Vocalise No. 59 (Complete exercise with accompaniment is on page 186)



⑥ Target Vowel Work

Start in the key of Eb and go up to key of Ab by 1/2 steps



Sing the word three times; match the vowel.

Hold the target vowel as you sing down the scale. Turn endings together.

Hold the target vowel as you sing the intervals and turn endings together.

Sing the word each time you change notes (chords).

Use Fred Waring Tone Syllables.
Work on vowel match, breath support/management, wall of sound, placement match, dynamics.

⑦ Articulation/consonants/humor

On unison, sing: "Minnie, Minnie, Minnie, Minnie, ming, ming, ming, ming, what a pity, what a pity, what, what, what, what, zoom, zoom, zoom, zoom, zah -- [up note on open 'ah']"

Repeat 'Minimal Animal' on triplets descending down the scale

"Are our oars oak?" Sing on 5 3 2 1 ...up 1/2 and repeat

"Mommy made me mash my M & M's" 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1