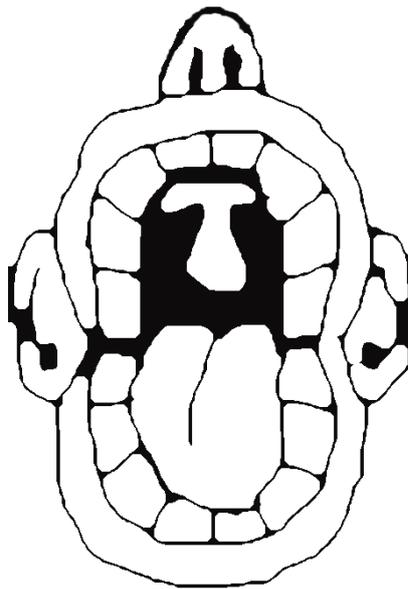


Your Little Book of

Singing Exercises



A series of little tunes to extend your vocal style, with lyrics based around food!

www.singing-exercises.co.uk

Welcome to this little book of singing exercises, warm-ups and challenges to help you improve your singing.

If you use this booklet during your singing lessons and when you are practising at home you will:

- Learn to sing more accurately, more clearly and with more confidence
- Have control over you voice so it does what you want it to
- Be able to understand what the music is telling you
- Have some experience of listening and responding, improvising and many other things

Make sure that you take notice of what your singing teacher tells you about breathing, standing properly, opening your mouth in the right shape and everything else! Listen carefully to yourself singing – make sure that it's always in tune. You can make recordings of yourself if you like, to make sure.

We have made some recordings of the piano parts of these songs available for you to use at singing-exercises.co.uk. You can use these as backing tracks when you are singing, or import them into recording software so that you can record to them.

As well as the exercises in this book, it is important that you keep singing other songs and in other contexts. Sing at home. Join a choir (or more than one). Sing to your friends. Although it's scary at first, find some chances to sing to other people in concerts, gigs and at gatherings. When you're doing that, try to remember what you've talked about with your singing teacher.

Finally, always remember to warm up your voice before you sing. You can use the simpler exercises from this book to get going in the morning (especially when you know them well); and do some of the exercises which your teacher has taught you. Warming up will clear your throat, make sure your voice and singing muscles are ready, will tune your ears up and do a whole load of other things.

Above all – HAVE FUN and enjoy your singing!

Piece of Cake!

Singing scales

Quite fast

I would like a piece of cake with some ice cream on the top

Quite fast

Try to do this in two big breaths. You might like to start by practising it to 'Ah'.

Don't sing it too fast - make it hard for yourself by singing it as slowly as possible without running out of breath.

In lessons we'll do it starting on different notes.

Piece of Cheese

Singing in steps up and down

Use the same ideas for this piece - sing it slowly, making sure that every note is in tune.

Practise it on an 'Ah', turning the repeated notes into one longer note.

Quite fast

I would like a piece of cheese, a piece of cheese will

Quite fast

do just fine. I would like a piece of cheese, a piece of cheese will do just fine.

Tomato Soup

Singing thirds

So far, we've been looking at music which moves by step. Now we have two pieces which move by **thirds**. A third is when the music goes up or down from a line to a line or a space to a space. It's more difficult to imagine, so concentrate hard on 'feeling' or 'pre-hearing' the jump from one note to the next

Not too strict

To-ma-to soup, to-ma-to soup, to-ma-to soup, with crou - tons.

Not too strict

Sausages

Singing more thirds

Not too fast, but rhythmic

Sau - sa - ges are made of pork,

Not too fast, but rhythmic

some are made of beef. Some are ve - ge - ta - ri - an, but all are nice to eat.

Apple Pie

A study in fourths. In an interval of a fourth the note either jumps up a-line-and-a-space (or a space-and-A-line) or jumps down the same distance. The carol *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* or the song *How much is that doggy in the window* both start with fourths

Moderato

Ap-ple pie, ap-ple pie, let me have some

ap-ple pie, I'll come back, in a while, and I'll eat the whole lot up.

Pizza

Fifths are intervals between notes which often sound 'bare'. Tunes like *Twinkle, twinkle little star* and *Chim-chim-iney* start with a fifth going up.

This song is about pizzas. See if you can fit your favourite pizza name in instead of Margherita!

Declamatory

Piz - za! Mar-gha - ri - ta! My fav - 'rite one!

Breakfast

This piece practises singing notes up and down scales, but without changing syllables. Try to get them as smooth as you can.

5

Toast _____ and mar - ma-lade, corn - flakes and a
cup of tea. Ba - con and eggs and sau - sa ges. Break - fast time for me.

When you are singing notes in a row like this (this is often technically called a 'melisma') try to keep your mouth in the same shape all through the run. This will allow you to keep a consistent vowel shape, which is much more pleasant to listen to – and, when you're used to it, easier to sing.

Vowels

Speaking of vowels, they are the most important parts of the words when you are singing. It's the vowels which can really open your throat to let the sound out, and which create the notes that you sing. Try this exercise (starting on different notes) to get your main vowels ('ah', 'ee' and 'oo' are the vowels which we generally think of as the main vowels) working well:

Fancy a cuppa? Singing the main vowels

Practise moving from one main vowel to the next using this exercise.
Sometimes do it without the consonants - so you just sing 'ah-ee-oo'.
Try doing that without moving your jaw/lips/mouth (but DO move your tongue inside your mouth to get the right vowel shapes)

Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew.

5
Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew. Cha, tea, brew.

A Daily Routine

Your daily singing routine should be evolving by now. Make sure that you sing every day, and ideally, before you sing, do some breathing exercises (deep breaths, watching to make sure that your shoulders don't go up!)

TIP There are usually places you can find to watch yourself – mirrors, windows that reflect, shiny surfaces – to make sure that your breathing is happening properly

Hum some middle of the range notes

Sing a scale or two and feel your body working to support the sounds from your tummy (or diaphragm or internal platform) area, as your teacher has talked to you about.

Then sing some of the songs that you have learned from this book – Piece of Cake, Tomato Soup. Whatever. Gently sing your favourite song, growing more positive each time you do it.

You can also add the following exercise into your daily routine:

Chopsticks

'Chopsticks' is what we call this song, although it isn't technically correct to call it that. It's a tune you might recognise from piano players.

Build the exercise up slowly over the course of days and weeks.

First do section A, then when you've got that right, add section B onto the end of section A.

When you can do that, add section C (which is the same as A)

When you've got that sorted and smooth, add section D (careful of the tuning!), then

Finally add section E and the ending.

Repeat sections A, C and E at least twice each time

Breathe whenever you need to. The rule is that you mustn't miss out any notes, and you must keep the tempo going - so quick, efficient breaths are required!

A note about the **lyrics**. Use whatever vowels, words, sounds feel right to get a good swung feel to the exercise. We've suggested some, but you can use whatever you like. Whatever vowels and words/sound you use, make sure that they are open and wide. Ideas to try are beat-boxing (with notes), scat, and straight Italian (ah, ee ooh).

Your teacher will play along with you the first few times you do this exercise, but eventually you should be able to do this *a capella* (unaccompanied). Use it as part of your every day warm-up routine.

Make sure that all the notes are bang in tune - especially the last one of each group of four. Use your diaphragm support, your breath and your clean vowels to make sure that they are in tune. Why not record yourself to check?

The image shows the musical notation for the 'Chopsticks' exercise, consisting of five sections (A, B, C, D, E) and an ending. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. Section A starts with a triplet of eighth notes (F#, G, A) followed by a sequence of eighth notes. Section B continues the sequence of eighth notes. Section C is identical to section A. Section D consists of a single eighth note (B) followed by three quarter notes (C, D, E). Section E consists of a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A), followed by a sequence of eighth notes. The ending consists of a quarter note (F#), a quarter note (G), and a quarter note (A). Lyrics are provided below the notes: 'Dum da dah da sim...' for sections A, C, and E; 'Da ba da ba' for section D; and 'da ba da' for section E.

A Dum da dah da *sim...*

B

C Dum da dah da *sim...*

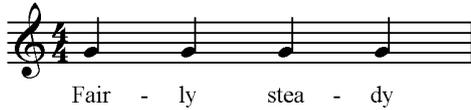
D Da ba da ba

E da ba da Dum da dah da *sim...*

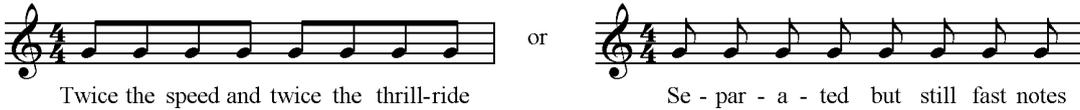
Rhythms on the page

We've spent quite a bit of time looking at the intervals (or jumps) between notes, but as you've been learning the songs you've not just been learning the intervals, you've also been learning about how note lengths – or rhythms – are written down. Here's a reminder of some of them:

Crotchets are single beats:



Quavers are half beats, so there are twice as many of them, and they're twice as fast:



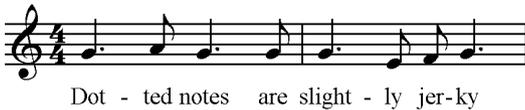
Minims are worth two beats each, so they last twice as long, and are twice as slow:



Finally for the moment, the semibreve looks like this and has four beats:



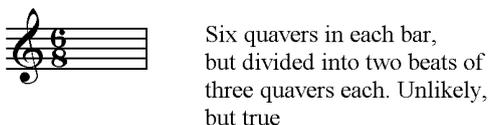
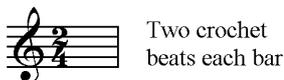
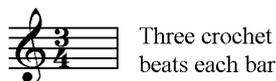
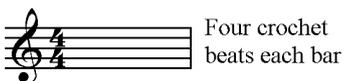
One small but important - and very common - extension of these rules are dotted rhythms. In dotted rhythms a dot is put immediately after a note. This means that the note is extended by half its length again - so a dotted crotchet, instead of being worth two quavers, is now worth three quavers.



The same goes for dotted minims, which are now worth three crotchets:



Another thing to notice is time signatures. These tell you how many beats to expect in each bar.



Improvising

Improvising is an important part of many styles and cultures of singing. It's not difficult, although at first the idea of it feels impossible.

Our first exercise is to make up a new song using the days of the week as lyrics: "Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday..." and so on. Your teacher will play a chord sequence which repeats while you're doing this, and will demonstrate the sort of thing you can do.

It's difficult to teach how to improvise – you just need to hear an example and then get on with it! At first we expect your improv to be quite simple, or maybe similar to your teacher's. But in the course of time you'll find your own way of doing things, and hopefully your teacher will encourage you to experiment with different ideas, explore varying speeds and rhythms, and use bigger intervals between notes.

Once you've got the basic idea, the world is at your feet. Next thing you know, you'll be a songwriter!

Teachers, here is that chord sequence. Just keep repeating it until you reach a conclusion together.



We'll do more improvisation, to different chord sequences, later in the course.

Throw a burger

Sixths rising and falling

Sixths (think of 'My Bonny Lies over the ocean' for a major sixth like the first interval in this song) take a lot of energy to sing accurately. Your voice has to move a long way to hit the right notes. Feel your support, diaphragm and breath helping you, not just your voice. You could even occasionally practise this exercise by sliding between the notes, to encourage your voice to develop what singers call 'line'

Moderato

Throw a bur-ger on the grill, Get some re-lish:

6
stea - dy. Cook it, throw it in a bun, And your din-ner's rea - dy.

Some honey - happy

Vocal dexterity - increasingly big intervals

Rising intervals in a major (happy) key

Moderato felice

Moderato felice Some ho - ney, some choc - 'late a saus - age or two,
din - ner is rea - dy for me and for you. Din - ner is rea - dy for me and for you.

My honey - sad

Vocal dexterity (2)

The same, but in a minor (sad) key

Moderato doloroso

Moderato doloroso My ho - ney, my choc - 'late, my saus - age, all burnt!
Din - ner's des - troyed and my les - son is learned, Din - ner's des - troyed and my less - on is learned

Energy foods

Sevenths, rising and falling

Sevenths are very energetic! Get your breathing and diaphragm apparatus working to get the leaps accurate. See if you can end it a bit quieter, as marked in the music, but still with energy!

Allegro con brio

mf

E - ner - gy drinks and flap - jack. Ba - na - nas, jel - ly beans.

Allegro con brio

Ped. Ped. *sempre*

7

f

All these foods give you "Go", make you full of beans,

11

mp

make you full of beans. Make you full of beans, full of beans.

Ped.

Salad leaves

Rising and falling octaves

Like sevenths, octaves require energy and control, but many people find them easier because they are usually less difficult to pitch

Allegro. Jazzy *mp*

Sa - lad leaves ___ Fruit and nut. ___

Allegro. Jazzy

mf

Car - rot sticks and ce - le - ry. Pep - pers, crun - chy on - ions,

cu - cum - ber and ra - dish - es, and some sal - ad dress - ing

The next few exercises explore a number of different areas and techniques in singing and pitching – some are about intervals, some about the way that we sing.

Jelly and ice cream

Chromatic scales

When singing chromatic scales you must always be aware of the tuning. Listen carefully to make sure that you're always in agreement with the accompaniment. But don't let that restrict your singing - always sing out!

Advanced singers might want to consider whether semitone steps always feel exactly the same - and they might like to try this exercise unaccompanied, then check whether they've stayed in tune!

Slidily, moderato *mp*

Jel - ly and ice cream slips down quite

Slidily, moderato *mp*

5 *sub mf* *sub mf*

nice - ly. Smooth and sli - dy, slips down qui - et - ly.

sub mf *sub mf*

Colours of Food

Tone and semitones

One of the most tricky things to come to terms with, but also one of the most important, is the difference between tones and semitones (half steps and whole steps). Both are small intervals, but you should be able to distinguish between them. This will help your sightreading immensely

Liltingly

mp



Din - ner-time at school or home, what co-lours can I eat?

Liltingly

mp



6 *mf*



Greens and browns and o - ran - ges, Yel - lows and some

mf



9



red things too, but no - thing blue.

p



p

Red. _____

Loads Curries

A study in textures

Overdo the textures in this song - make the louds loud and the staccatos staccato, the quiet quiet and the legatos legato. Make the music match the words. It's also good for practising pitching thirds

Quite fast *f* *mp* *f*

Spi-ky spi-cy cur-ry; drea-my, crea-my cur-ry; fie-ry, red-hot cur ry;

Quite fast *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

5 *p* *mf*

cool and cal-ming cur-ry; pun-gent, fra-grant cur-ry

p *mf*

7 *mp* *cresc.* *f rit.*

sweet and sour cur-ry, do you like a cur-ry half as much as I do?
(I don't like a cur-ry half as much as you do!)

mp *cresc.* *f* *rit.*

Meatballs and spaghetti

Long notes and breathing

This is an exercise in long breaths and sustaining tone over long phrases.
You'll also need to control the diminuendo at the end

Moderato a la Baroque *mf*

Meat - balls and spag - het - ti. To -

Moderato a la Baroque

mf

7

ma - - to sauce and some cheese on

11

top, and some cheese on top *p*

Sandwiches

Patter singing - fast notes and fast words!

Accuracy of pitching and rhythm are key in this song. The accompaniment supports rather than guides you - it isn't always as helpful as it has been in some of the other songs!

Allegro. Fast and lite

mf

Sand-wich-es all filled with cheese, _____ Sand wich-es all filled with

Allegro. Fast and lite

mf

4

ham and mus-tard, sand-wich-es with ba - con and with let - tuce and with some to - ma - to

6

too And some tu-na, or some jam, or with some egg and may on -

8

naise _____ And some tu-na, or some jam or with some egg and may-on naise _____

Trifle!

Sequences of thirds - broken triads and sevenths

Longer sequences of rising and falling thirds. Keep an ear open for tuning, and make sure that your support apparatus is helping you to shape each vowel and note.

Laid back, but rhythmic *mp*

Straw-ber-ry tri-fle with hund-reds and thou-sands on top; cus-tard and jel-ly with

Laid back, but rhythmic *mp*

7

fruit float-ing in it as well, douse it in cream, eat with a spoon,

11

douse it in cream and then eat with a spoon and en-joy.

Cookies

Moderato, with clear rhythms

mp

Coo-kies, cook ies, —

Moderato, with clear rhythms

mp

6

mf

cook - ies, cook - ies, cook - ies, cook ies. —

Choc - o - late chip, — rai - sins and

10

mp cresc.

mf

f

oat - meal. —

Coo - kies, —

cook - ies, —

cook - ies! —

cresc.

f

Sweetcorn and peas

Some sweet - corn, some peas, _____ some sweet - - corn. Some

Some sweet - corn, some peas, _____ to ba-lance on the edge of my knife. A

6 peas, _____ some sweet - - corn, peas _____

yel - low and a green, a pea and then some sweet - corn, ba - lance them and then don't let them

9 _____ and _____ some sweet - corn.

fall in - to the gra - vy _____ wai - ting _____ down be - low

Bake a cake

Recitative, or free rhythm, quasi-speech singing

Recitative, or recit., is a rather difficult challenge, but one worth conquering. There are different styles of recit, depending on what type of music you're singing. In classical music it's the dialogue or plot-developing part of an opera or oratorio; in show and jazz music it's often the introduction (or verse) part of the song. Either needs a real concentration on the words, and although the notes need to be accurate you can 'bend' the rhythms to emphasise the words

Recit.

Four oun-c-es of flour, (self-rai-sing) four oun-c-es of su-gar, two eggs and four oun-c-es of

Recit.

6

but - ter or marg-a-rine. Cream the su-gar and but-ter to - ge - ther, beat the

11

eggs in, one by one; fold the flour in and bake at oneeight-y for twen-ty-five min-utes and eat.

Five a Day

Singing in five time

We normally sing songs with 2, 3 or 4 beats in a bar. This one is in five! You have to concentrate hard, especially in the rests. Try to get a feel for the rhythm. By the way, in the UK we have the advice that you should eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day!

Moderato

mf Lem-ons and o-ran-ges, car-rots and cab-ba-

Moderato

6

ges, ap-ples and pea-ches broad beans and broc-ol-li, all could be one of

10

five a day, five a day, five fruit and veg - 'tab - les.

Eat your Potatoes Up!

Singing rising and falling fifths, staccato and off-beat

The notes in these intervals are separated, so you have to make sure that you pitch them accurately! And a lot of them are off the beat, so you have to concentrate quite hard!

Jauntily, quite fast ♩=88

mf

Chipped, roast, boiled, baked, turned to waf - fles;—

Jauntily, quite fast ♩=88

mf

4

Fried, mashed, skins, or made in - to crisps. Put in - to sa - lads,

7

made in-to hash browns Just make sure you eat your po-ta-toes up.——

Mushroom Soup

A dark and moody study in minor sixths

See if you can capture that brooding, spooky atmosphere, while keeping the tuning and tempo accurate.

Dark, spooky, not too slow.

Mush-rooms grow in un-lit pla-ces, make a dark___

Dark, spooky, not too slow.

6

soup. ___ Serve with gar - lic, And with pars - ley,

9

then you'll frigh - ten all the ___ vam - pires in town.

Buses, trains and aeroplanes

An alternative warming up exercise

Moderato

Bus - es, trains and ae - ro - planes, cars and bi - cy - cles.

Moderato

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are "Bus - es, trains and ae - ro - planes, cars and bi - cy - cles." The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. The tempo marking "Moderato" is placed above the vocal line.

Scoo - ters and mo - tor - bikes, these are things I like.

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line lyrics are "Scoo - ters and mo - tor - bikes, these are things I like." The piano accompaniment continues with the same key signature and time signature. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Some rounds

Christmas is Coming/Summer is Coming

A round for any time of the year

Make sure you choose the right set of words for the time of year! The second part starts when the first part has reached *2, and the third part starts when the first part has reached *3 When you get to the end, go back and start again.

*1 *2

Christ - mas is com - ing, soon it will be here. — It's the best time
Sum - mer is com - ing, soon it will be here. — It's the best time

4 *3

of the year. Let's all get us some Christ - mas cheer.
of the year: sun is warm and the sky is clear!

Carrots and baked beans

Another three-part round

The same rules as above, but a big longer and maybe a bit more challenging

*1 *2

Car - rots and baked beans and sau - sa - ges and chips. Dough-nut rings and ice cream and

7 *3

spe-cial fried rice might make me wish that I had ea-ten less be - fore I came to school but then some

