

Singing Exercise Sheet 3:

(Taken from the book - The Complete Singer - Jo Thompson & Nigel Nelson)

The following exercises will help you become more aware of your breathing when you sing. They will also help to improve your stamina, and build the muscles necessary for support.

Exercise 1:

Stand upright with your feet flat on the floor the width of your hips apart. Your head should be balanced and your shoulders relaxed.

Hang down, and breathe in and out through your mouth, slowly and deeply. Feel the full weight of your arms, and the air filling your lower back and middle like a big rubber ring.

Uncurl very slowly, stopping every few inches, and keep breathing deeply.

Still feel the breath around your middle. Your head should come to rest in the normal, balanced position - don't pull your head back.

This exercise encourages physical awareness of deep breathing. (While doing the exercise it is almost impossible to breathe in the wrong way).

Exercise 2:

Stand upright with your hands placed on your ribcage. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your mouth. Breathe out in short bursts. You should be able to feel the muscles around your ribcage contracting. These are some of the muscles you use to support your singing.

Exercise 3:

Stand upright with your hands on your tummy button. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your mouth. Think of the air speeding into the triangular area below your tummy button. Your tummy should move out. Imagine a large space inside you growing as you do this. Breathe out in short bursts. You should feel your tummy moving in as your diaphragm moves up. This is part of the support system used in singing.

Exercise 4:

Stand upright. Stretch your arms out away from you, pointing your fingers to the walls of the room. Breathe in slowly through your mouth. Breathe out to a slow count of five. Repeat. You can build up the counts progressively to ten, fifteen, and so on. This exercise is designed to build you stamina.

Exercise 5:

Lie on the floor face down with your forehead resting on the floor (if you can) or to one side. Your hands should be placed palms down on the floor either side of your head. Breathe out forcefully through your mouth. Let the air spring back in. It should feel as if the air is filling your back. Repeat, continuing the forceful outbreaths for about five minutes.