



Wise Warm Ups for Clear Speech

'Voicing' is a muscular activity affected by our mental state. Since mind and body work together, doing some physical stretching and warming of the muscles which make voice will prepare you to sound clear and strong and, in turn, help you look, sound and feel clear and strong! Your listeners will get the message first time round!

Postural alignment

Aim to stand tall, spine long and neutrally aligned, shoulder blades sloping down your back, head balanced at the top of the spine. When seated: sit on your sitting bones - fully supported by your muscles - not the back-rest! - knees a little below pelvis - and think tall as you speak. You will create more space in the rib cage for the lungs to inflate and give you all the power you need for your voice.

Breathing

Stretch both arms up above you, hands clasped with palms facing the ceiling and move from side to side. Take a few consecutive breaths in, hold, then release on 'psh' strongly, as you bring your arms back down by your sides. Controlled exhalation: Expel any air you may have left by breathing out, when you are ready allow the new breath in on the recoil, and release slowly to 'ssss' then 'sh....' then 'zzz...' to practise controlled exhalation, and feel the movement of the ribs as they expand.

Tension Release for Neck and Shoulders

Gently lift and drop the head. Slowly circle the head from side to side, letting the jaw relax open. Lift shoulders to tense and then drop them to relax. Circle shoulders backwards one at a time slowly and gently. Then do both together to open the chest.

Warm the Voice

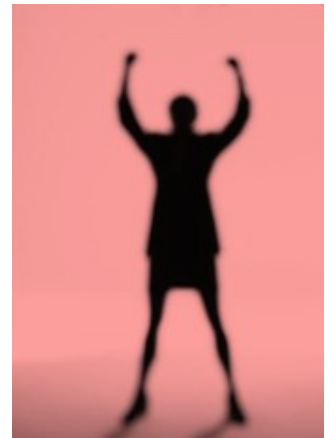
- Humming gently to 'mm', feel the vibration in the upper chest, throat, nose and chest. Start off very quietly, gradually increasing volume. Let the hum fill your mouth like a drink. This will warm the muscles powering the vocal folds safely, and help increase resonance.
- Vocal Slides up and down on 'ng' to replace any missing notes from your range
- Smile and yawn loudly – to open the pharynx, relax the throat and increase resonance. Look in the mirror and say 'Ah there you are!' in warm tones
- Jaw Massage - while saying 'ya, ya, ya,' 'yeah, yeah, yeah' etc.
- Tongue waggle – dart/furrow/stretch
- Lip flex – horse-blow, grinning and pouting
- Face stretch - tighten the muscles on a frown as you say 'Oh no!' and then release them on big smile, to 'Oh yes!' To ease a dry mouth – pretend to chew sticky toffee.

Warm the articulators with a few tongue twisters - say each 6 times:

- Unique New York / Red leather, yellow leather etc.
- Mixed biscuits!
- Rubber baby buggy bumpers
- The tip of the tongue and the teeth and the lips / It's lovely to see you today!
- Can you imagine an imaginary menagerie manager imagining managing an imaginary menagerie?

Working through different consonants say the following as you shift the stress at the same time:

Boo boh baw bah bay bee
Boo **boh** baw bah bay bee
Boo boh **baw** bah bay bee
Boo boh baw **bah** bay bee
Boo boh baw bah **bay** bee
Boo boh baw bah bay **bee!**



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