

***“But I’m Just a Chorus Member”
How to Develop Your Own
Personal Plan for Vocal Improvement***

KEY INFORMATION:

I. Vocal Improvement is a life-long process, both intellectual and physical

- ★ Four things will greatly increase your chances of becoming a better singer
 - Patience
 - Thinking Positively
 - Acknowledging Your Successes
 - Always Staying in Touch with Your LOVE OF SINGING!

II. Four Elements of Your **PERSONAL VOCAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PVIP)**

1. Understand the Basics
2. Reinforce the Basics
3. Receive Feedback on your Grasp of the Basics
4. Engage in Positive Performance Experiences

III. What are the **BASICS**?

1. The Care and Feeding of your Vocal Instrument
2. Resonance
3. Breathing
4. Phonation on the Breath
5. Blending the Voice
6. Articulation

★ Self-Evaluation is the first step in developing your PVIP so you know where you’re starting in terms of your singing skill level.

★ Resources for improving your understanding of the Basics

- “The Pitch Pipe” Vocal Production Series by Betty Clipman
- “The Contemporary Singer” by Anne Peckham
- “Singing For Dummies” by Pamela S. Phillips
- Regional/International Education Seminars

IV. Reinforcing the Basics through **VOCAL PRACTICE**

1. How Often? – 4 – 6 days a week, 30 minutes to 1 hour
2. Where? – In a location you can be comfortable and not afraid to be heard!
3. With What? – Tools of the Trade:
 - Warm-Up/Workout Tape/CD and player
 - Some kind of recording device
 - Keyboard or pitch pipe
 - Mirror
 - Metronome

IV. Reinforcing the Basics through VOCAL PRACTICE (cont'd)

4. How? – **PRACTICE ROUTINE**

- Beginning Physical and Vocal Warm-Up (5-8 minutes)
 - Vocal Technique (10-20 minutes)
 - Song Study (15-20 minutes)
 - Cool Down (2-5 minutes)
- ★ Record yourself throughout your workout, rewind periodically and listen to the sounds you are creating. Make adjustments based on this active listening.
- ★ Resources to assist you in your Vocal Practice
- Highly Recommended – Roland Wyatt’s “Guideposts to Singing” (especially for beginning skill development)
 - Highly Recommended – All of the “Sing, Baby, Sing” CDs

V. Receiving Feedback through Outside Evaluation – **PERSONAL VOCAL INSTRUCTION**

1. Why?
 - We can’t hear ourselves well, even with a tape recorder!
 - Outside feedback is more objective
 - Teachers are GOOD!
2. How Often?
 - This is up to you and your wallet!
 - Skill development is NOT an overnight thing!
3. What? – Routine should be similar to the one outlined above
4. Who?
 - Word of mouth
 - Phone book
 - Internet
 - Voice MDs
 - Choir Directors

VI. Engage in **POSITIVE PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCES**

1. Create opportunities outside of your chorus life to showcase your skills – this gives you something to work towards that is totally about and for YOU!
 - Voice Teacher Showcases/Recitals
 - Karaoke
 - QUARTETING!
2. Music Choice
 - Begin with less difficult music that highlights your vocal strengths
 - Challenge yourself – add difficulty as skill development progresses
3. PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE

The person who makes a success of living is the one who see his goal steadily and aims for it unswervingly. That is dedication. -- Cecil B. DeMille