

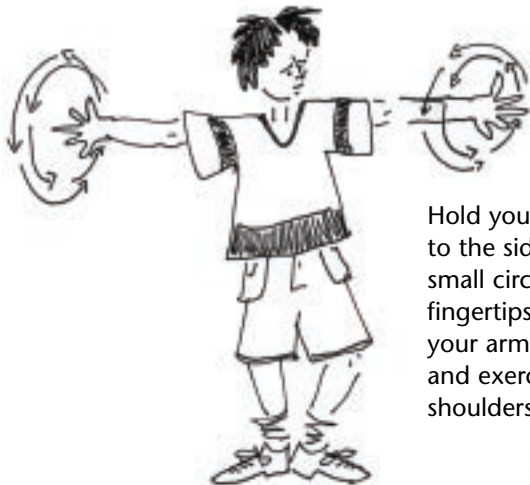


Loosen up!

### Shake it up! stretch it out!

Shake and stretch out any tension from your body: start with the fingers, then wrists, elbows, shoulders, ribs, hips, knees, ankles, and toes. Slap your arms and torso gently to wake up your body and boost energy levels.

Shoulder stretch



Hold your arms out to the side. Draw small circles with your fingertips, keeping your arms straight, and exercising your shoulders.



Stretch up tall, breathing in deeply as you do so. Hold the position for a few moments, then breathe out, bringing your arms down slowly.

Neck flex

### Draw with your nose

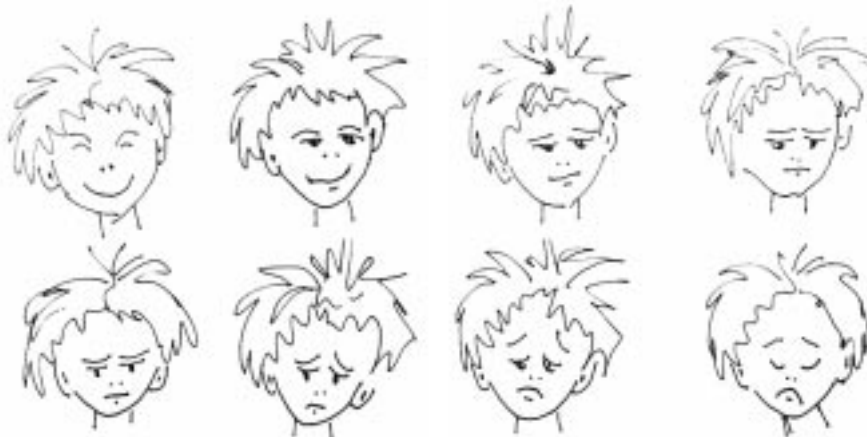
Using your nose as the point of an imaginary pencil, draw some number '8's in the air, exercising your neck and muscles slowly and gently.



Wake up your face

### Chew toffee

Exercise your jaw by chewing an imaginary sticky toffee. You can feel the movement by holding your index fingers just under your ears, where your jaw 'hinges'. Explore all the movements: up and down; side to side; chin out/chin in.



### Take your tongue for a walk

Explore all the corners of your mouth with your tongue. Touch your nose with your tongue, if you can; then your chin; then lick your lips in big circles. Wipe away the mess!

### Mood maker

Pick a feeling: happy, sad, angry etc. Make your face reflect the emotion, then count to eight, gradually changing your face to the exact opposite eg happy becomes sad, angry becomes calm.



## Food for your brain

### Linking right and left brains

These exercises help to link the logical and creative parts of our brains, improving concentration and co-ordination, and heightening our awareness and musical ear.

## Cross-laterals

### Swop it all about

Put one hand on your nose, and the other on your opposite ear. Swap over, and keep swapping as quickly as you can take care not to poke yourself in the eye.

### Knees up

Bring your left knee up to meet your right elbow. Then your right knee up to meet your left elbow. Keep walking on the spot like this for about 30 seconds.



### Pieces of eight

Draw some number '8's in the air with both hands moving in opposite directions. Try the exercise again with both hands moving in the same direction. Now try some lazy '8's: like the infinity sign in mathematics, move both hands in opposite directions, then in the same direction. Finally hold your fists out with the thumbs pointing upwards. Now draw your '8's as if you are looking down on top of them: opposite direction, then same direction.

## Air writing

### All in a name

Using the idea above, try writing letters of your first name in the air. Try variations:

- Write the letters with your writing hand, and the mirror image of those letters with your non-writing hand.
- Write the letters with your non-writing hand, and the mirror image of those letters with your writing hand.
- Write the letters correctly with both hands.
- Write the mirror image of the letters with both hands.

## Alphabet aerobics

### Do-as-I-do

Recite the letters of the alphabet from A to Z, accompanying each letter with a movement of your choice: left hand up, right hand up, both hands together, jumping up etc. Your group must recite the letters with you, copying your movements as they you do them. Go through the alphabet as quickly as you can and see if your group can keep up with you.



## Opening the throat

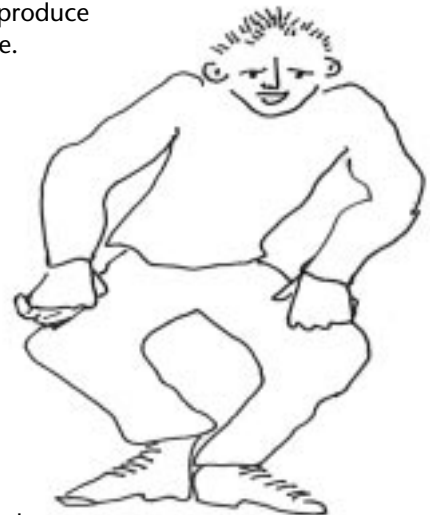
### The roaring lion

This is a singing exercise from the North Indian vocal tradition. Breathe in deeply through the nose, as hard as you can, and hold the breath for a few seconds. On breathing out, throw the head forward, open your mouth as widely as you can and stick your tongue out as far as it will go. Repeat five or six times. As the air passes over the vocal folds, you may produce a roaring sound: hence the name of the exercise.

## Exercising the diaphragm

### Caveman communication

Stand with your feet wide apart, squatting slightly, and with your arms in a circle in front of you. Your face should look like that of a very stupid caveman! Get your group to copy loud, low, short sounds: 'ooh', 'aah', 'ee', 'yeah', 'ha', and 'whoosh'. Accompany each sound by the whole body moving, punching the air with your fists. Root yourself to the ground with slightly bent knees, and feel the diaphragm at work.



## Exercising the head voice

### Supermarket sweep

To exercise the high or 'head' voice, imagine you are pushing a shopping trolley around your local supermarket. You see a friend and attract their attention by pushing one hand high into the air and shouting 'coey' in a high voice. Follow this with a deep 'It's me!' so that your singers can feel the difference between 'chest' and 'head' voices.



## Linking the head and chest voices

### Siren circles

Using an 'ooh' sound, draw circles in the air, encouraging your singers to follow your movements – like 'sirens'. Start with small circles, singing in the middle of your group's range, and gradually extend the sound higher and lower as the voices warm up.

### Hoovering hula hoops

Place your thumbs just underneath your rib cage, with the fingers spread around your lower back: as if you were about to start hula-hooping. Using a 'VVV' sound, make the sound of a Hoover starting up and switching off, rising and falling. Encourage your singers to feel their diaphragms at work. Then try some short staccato sounds using consonants: 'p-p-p', 'c-c-c', 't-t-t', 's-s-s' 'ha-ha-ha' etc – always working towards making each sound be like an explosive attack.



## Twisty tongues

### Whispering tongue twisters

If you whisper these tongue twisters it will allow your singers to concentrate on using their lips, teeth, tongues and jaws to produce clear, focused words. You will have some good tongue twisters of your own, but try these to start.

### Imagine an imaginary menagerie manager imagining managing an imaginary menagerie

**The Popocateptl is not in Canada,  
rather in Mexico, Mexico, Mexico**

**She sells seashells by the seashore**

**Peter Piper picked a pint of pickled peppers**

Using descending scales or musical phrases like the one below, experiment with phrases like:

**Wear a wig  
Buy a bun  
Dunk a dip  
Pick a pie  
Fluffy floppy puppy  
Flappy happy flamingo**

Bring a bun and dunk a dip and wear a wig and then  
pick a pie and steal a stick and kick a co - la cube.

## Pitch matching

### Right pitch, left pitch

Split your group in two – and control one group with your left hand, and the other group with your right. Start both groups on the same note, sung to 'ooh' – then move your hands up or down, with the singers sliding their pitch up or down according to your movements. See if you can hold one group slightly out of tune with the other, then bring them both back to the starting note. With practice, this exercise encourages your singers to feel out of tune singing as well as to hear it.

## Posture and voice

The exercises above are just a few of many – and you will know some of your own. Experiment lots, but whatever you sing, try to ensure that your singers always:

- stand tall and relaxed, and feel confident and good about themselves
- know the limits of their own voices and warm up gently and carefully
- use their faces expressively: eyes, cheeks, lips, teeth, tongues, and jaws
- sing with their bodies and souls, not just their voices and brains.

