

# PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS FOR VOCAL STUDENTS

Practice at home should include the following on a daily basis to maximize your lesson productivity:

- 1.) WARM UP: The best is called The Great Scale. In short, it is a long-tone scale **{this means that you spend a lot of time, maybe 2 minutes, on each individual note}**("Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do") of two octaves up and down, which takes about 50 minutes to complete
- 2.) EAR TRAINING: Big Ears: online JAVA based ear training site <http://www.ossmann.com/bigears/> May be used in conjunction with your piano for identifying both major, minor and perfect intervals, as well as tonic and dominant tones.
- 3.) DIVERSITY OF PRACTICE: One can learn a great deal about singing from studying different styles. With the knowledge of another style in one's head, the singer can choose a particular way of singing a phrase or word; an option that is not available to those who only study one style of singing.
- 4.) VOLUME EXERCISES FOR CONTINUITY OF SOUND: Practice singing both loudly and softly to develop a solid consistency in the production of tone. If experiencing difficulty check for the following to try to isolate the reason:
  1. It is possible that you are producing the sound differently when you sing loudly and softly. You can check to see if it is the case simply by getting away from as much noise as you can and trying to sing whatever phrase you are having difficulty with at different volume levels. Anything from using your muscles differently to holding your mouth in a different position to standing differently to trying to force the air out another passage could be the culprit. Take note of any little thing you may be doing differently at different volume levels and try to do whatever it is you are doing at softer volume levels.
  2. The notes that you are having problems with may be among your weaker notes. Try to practice, only focusing on the note(s) you are having problems with.
  3. See if you are forming the vowel the same loudly and softly. You'd be amazed how many different ways you can pronounce the vowel "a" as in "face."
  4. It may be the way you produce the sound in the first place. Try to make the sound resonate off of your [hard palate](#). Also see [The Great Scale](#).
  5. It could be the words themselves. In English, words such as "to" and "you" have a tendency to go out of tune because of the way the words are formed. Another problem with singing in English is our diphthongs, vowels which are actually pronounced by saying two vowels at the same time. Our "a" is actually pronounced "ayee," our "i," "iyee." The difference continues with changes in dialect. Check to see if the words are causing the problem.

It will truly help to be aware of what you are doing when you practice, so that it will be easier for you during your performances, even if your performances are in the shower.