

Structuring Your Practicing

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Warm Ups:

Get your voice moving. Observe what's easy and what's not easy for the day.

• **Grand Slides**

- Start near the bottom of your range, slide all the way up to the top of your range, then slide back down to the bottom on one breath.
- Sing this on an Ng, as in sing.
- Notice if it's fairly easy to glide up and down or if there are big "gear shifts".
- Keep these at a moderate volume.
- Do 5 in a row, breathing between each one.

• **Goal Post Twist**

- *Disclaimer: If this isn't comfortable for you, or if for any reason you are unable, then don't do this. The point is to find a little movement in the ribs, back, and abdomen. Alternatively, move your head side-to-side to find a high spinal twist, or sit quietly breathing, concentrating on feeling expansion in these areas.*
- Stand with your feet comfortably apart, about hip-width or shoulder-width
- Raise your arms (like goal posts), keeping a 90-degree bend in the elbows.
- Slowly begin to look to one side with your eyes and head. Allow your shoulders to follow. Feel a twist through the whole spine.
- Slowly unwind, then turn to the opposite side.
- Make sure you continue to breathe!
- Do as many of these as you'd like.

Technical Exercises:

Where are you going with the voice today? What do you need to prepare it to do?

• **5-tone scales (1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1)**

- Begin this exercise just above your speaking range.
- Keep the tempo brisk, and it's OK if it's messy in the beginning.
- Try singing on a few vowels, like ee or ah.
- Try singing on some "simple" sounds, like bum.
- Move up and down through your middle range.

• **Slides of the 3rd - head voice (1-3-1)**

- Begin this exercise comfortably high in your range.
- The sound will be fairly soft, light, and possibly breathy/hooty (think like a barn owl).
- Try singing on a few vowels, like oo or ee.
- Move up and down through your upper register. See how low you can take the sound.
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• **3-tone scales - chest voice (1-2-3-2-1)**

- Begin this exercise comfortably low in your range.
- The sound will be very spoken, but a moderate volume.
- Try singing on some "simple" sounds, like ma.
- Move up and down through your lower register. See how *comfortably* high you can take the sound.

• **Octave slides - putting it together (1-8-1)**

- Begin this exercise comfortably low in your range.
- Slide from the spoken place (chest voice) up to the “hooty” place (head voice) and back down.
- Try singing on a few vowels, like ee or ah.
- Try alternating the vowels, like ee on the bottom and oo on the top.
- Move up and down through your range maintaining comfortable effort and moderate volume.
- See how smoothly you can slide up and down.

Voice Feminization:

Feminine-perceived sounds:

- Bright, breathy
- Forward-feeling
- Sensations in the mouth/face
- Shorter, more narrow vocal tract

Voice Masculinization:

Masculine-perceived sounds:

- Dark, brassy
- Back/center-feeling
- Sensations in the chest/back of mouth
- Longer, wider vocal tract

Tongue Exercise:

Front:

- Place the tip of the tongue at or close to the bottom, front teeth.
- Allow your lips to spread
- Try speaking while keeping your tongue “attached” to the teeth.
- Release the tongue and speak the same phrase while maintaining the forward sensation.

Back:

- Place the tip of the tongue at or close to the top, front teeth (or alveolar ridge).
- Allow your lips to round
- Try speaking while keeping your tongue “attached” to the teeth/alveolar ridge.
- Release the tongue and speak the same phrase while maintaining the back sensation.



Alexandra Plattos Sulack (she/her) is a performer, singer, and teacher/coach based in Chicago, and the Co-Founder of The Voice Lab, Inc. She believes that everyone has a voice worth sharing. Her work centers around meeting voice users where they are and co-creating a plan steeped in science-based pedagogy and play, so that their most dynamic voice (singing or speaking) can emerge.

The Voice Lab, Inc. provides voice affirming services for transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming individuals as well as music lessons for adults and kids in voice, piano, and guitar. Our teachers are educated, diversely trained pedagogues and performers. Not only is it our job to meet every question you have about the inner workings of the voice with a thoughtful and thorough explanation, but it is also our goal to hear you and understand what taking lessons means to you.



Learn more: www.thevoicelabinc.com