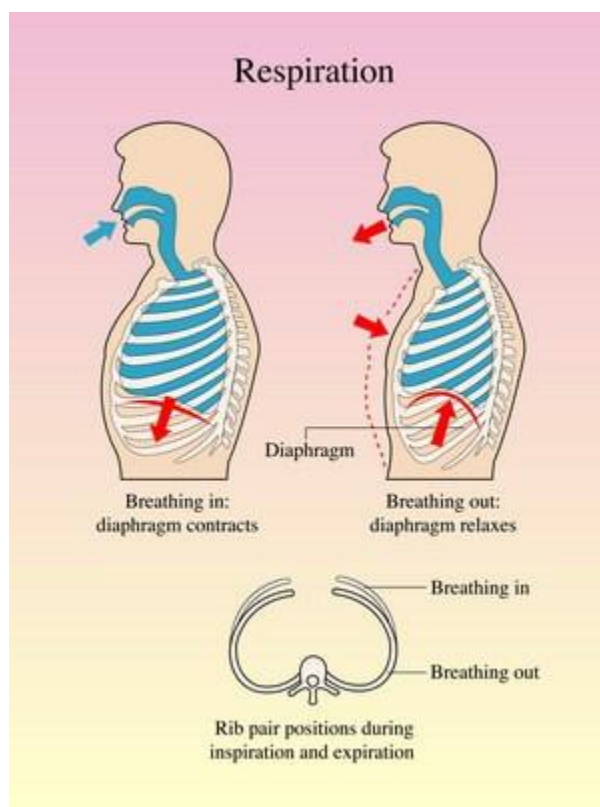


BREATHING EXERCISES

“BUILDING BREATH CONTROL”

Exercises Help with your diaphragm breathing and stops accessory breathing.

When singing, you want to breathe using your diaphragm, not your chest. Only your abdomen should move. Breathing from your chest leaves you with insufficient air for the high notes. These exercises will make sure you are breathing from your diaphragm and show you how to build healthy, sustained breath control.



Book on Belly

1. Practice by lying on your back with a book (or just your hands) on top of your abdomen. Breathe in so that the book moves up—the air should move in and out through your stomach.

BREATHING EXERCISES

When doing this, breathe in through your nose and out through your nose and mouth.

2. Fill your belly with air and focus on holding it for a second or two. Then slowly let the air out like a balloon. Use visualization to help you learn to move air in and out of your stomach.
3. Now stand up and try breathing deeply in the same way. Imagine a rubber band around your waist. Breathe in slowly through your nose and imagine pushing the rubber band outwards. Keep your shoulders relaxed and level; try not to raise them at all. Exhale slowly through your nose and mouth, while picturing the rubber band contracting again.

Once you've got breathing using your diaphragm down, it's time to work on controlling your breathing.

You want to learn to be economical with your breath, so you never end up out of breath while singing.

Try the following exercises to learn breath control:

Practice Inhaling Quickly

When you sing, you need to fill your lungs with air quickly, so it is important to be able to do this. Fill your lungs fast, as you would if you were going to blow up an air mattress. Notice how your body feels when you fill it with air, so that you can easily replicate this when singing.

Practice Exhaling Slowly

Pretend you are trying to keep a feather afloat and breathe out an even stream of air (you could even get a real feather to practice).

BREATHING EXERCISES

Make sure that your abdomen deflates as you breathe out, not your chest.

Practice Exhaling Slowly While Making Sounds

Get a belly full of air, then make an “s” sound while slowly exhaling. Try to keep the volume at the same level to practice controlling your breathing while singing.

...Now Take It A Step Further

This exercise will help you monitor your breathing so that you can last through many beats. The key is to keep the hissing sound at an even volume throughout.

- Breathe in to the count of 4, then breathe out while hissing evenly, also to the count of 4.
- Next breathe in to the count of 6, then out to the count of 10.
- Next, in for 6, out for 12.
- In for 2, out for 12.
- In for 4, out for 16.
- In for 2, out for 16.
- In for 4, out for 20.
- In for 1, out for 20.

Practice Snatched Breaths

Breathe in gradually, (imagine taking sips) filling up your diaphragm in fractions.

- Breathe in 1/4 full on the count of 1.
- On 2, breathe in another quarter so your belly is half full.

BREATHING EXERCISES

- On 3, add another quarter.
- On 4, add the final quarter. Your belly is now completely full.
- Breathe out gradually through the following counts: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
- Now, breathe in halfway on the count of 1.
- Finish breathing in on 2.
- Exhale gradually through 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Practice Controlled Breathing While Making Staccato Sounds

Breathing evenly while making an “s” sound is fairly easy. Now try to do it while going through a series of staccato notes. “Tss, tss, tss” or “shhh, shh, shh” or “brr, brr, brr”.