

Vocal Concepts

- I. Posture** - It is imperative that a singer employs correct posture. Posture helps elevate the *thoracic cavity* (ribcage), which is where the lungs and diaphragm are housed. It is important that a singer's posture promotes the least amount of tension.
- Feet- should be approximately shoulder width apart with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance. Weight should be balanced slightly on the front part of your feet. Never lock your knees.
 - Shoulders- must be erect with no slouching. Shoulders should not be forced back, rather in a relaxed yet poised position
 - Arms-should rest comfortably at your side
 - Head-Elevated with no tension on the front or back of your neck. Your neck and shoulder muscles are the muscles referred to as the “suspensory musculature” that suspend your larynx (voice box) for free and easy vocal production.
- II. Breathing** - The muscles used in breathing are your diaphragm and costal muscles.
- The diaphragm and costal muscles work together to create space for lung expansion.
 - Diaphragmatic-costal* breathing is the coordination of these muscles together with your lungs in three phases: Inhalation, Suspension and Exhalation
 - A singer's ‘power center’ comes from the correct and disciplined use of the breathing mechanism
 - Shoulders should not rise during inhalation.
- III. Phonation** - The process of creating air pressure from the lungs into audible vibrations
- Diaphragm action pushes air through the vocal cords
 - Vocal cords in larynx vibrate to create sound
- IV. Resonance** - Placement, vibration, and projection
- Vibrations created by the vocal cords resonate in spaces such as sinuses, throat, and mouth also known collectively as the pharynx or pharyngeal cavities.
 - Lowering the jaw and raising the soft palate intensify this sound.
 - Resonance location is often referred to as ‘placement’ of the voice. The area behind your nose is referred to as the mask. Optimal sound production is when your voice resonates freely in “The Mask”
- ♪ A singer **wants forward placement/resonance** of the voice to maximize sound and projection. When placing your sound visualize vibration between your eyes and behind the nose-also known as the MASK.
 - ♪ Placement or resonance too far back in the throat is unhealthy and will sound choked, pressed and strained or as I often refer to as a “constipated sound”
 - ♪ Placement or resonance too far forward creates a thin nasally sound.
- V. Diction** refers to the clarity and understanding of words in singing. Chains of vowels and consonants create words. Sound is produced on vowels. Consonants basically begin and end these vowels. Consonants must be articulated and vowels must utilize optimal space and formation. Poor diction results in “mush mouth” and your audience will not be able to understand what is being sung.