

Vocals Skills Ladder

Step 1: The Compulsory Techniques

Breathing and Using the Diaphragm:

- Breathing and the correct diaphragm technique are vital when singing to support and control the vocal sounds, as well for projection and creating a full, richer and grounded sound.
- To apply the correct breathing technique, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth; breathing in deeply to the lower lungs and feeling your diaphragm muscle (below the ribcage) expand, rather than raise your shoulders. When you breathe out, this muscle will retract and support the release of this breath.
- Exercises to develop strong breath support are held breathing:

Beginner - Elastic Band Analogy: Imagine an elastic band around your waist, around where the diaphragm is. You can then to inhale to try and try to snap the elastic band.

Intermediate - Held Breathing Exercise: Place your hands under your ribcage, where your diaphragm is located and breath in, so you push out your fingertips. Hold this breath for 10 seconds and then try to release the air slowly to control the airflow using that diaphragm muscle. Once this feels easy, progress to holding the breath for 15 seconds, then 20 and so on.

Advanced - Controlled Exhale: Like the previous exercise, breathe in deeply using your diaphragm and then slowly try to hiss out this breath, releasing the air for as long as possible like a balloon.

When approaching these songs, think about where in the songs would you need to take a breath in order to sing a phrase. Use a sheet of lyrics and map out where you think the best places to take a breath are!