

Vocals Skills Ladder

Tone:

- Tone, whilst singing, can manipulate the overall sound of the vocals to suit the song or genre/style of song you are singing to. For example, a warm tone would be quite clean or possibly have a little applied breath and suit a range of pop, R&B, acoustic and country songs. Whereas, some rock, blues and more emotional country songs incorporate darker tone to their sound to highlight the meaning of lyrics.
- Tone can also vary for different singers, as if they sang the same song, there is likely to be differences because their vocal tone is not identical.
- Exercises for awareness of tone:

All - Singing major scales, ascending, and descending, with an 'ah' vowel, concentrating on mouth shape to create a brighter sound. To encourage this, try lifting the corners of your mouth into a smile-like position with each note. For a darker tone, rather than create a smile-like motion, try to keep your teeth covered by your lips and not to raise the corners of your mouth where possible. Exploring minor notes, patterns and scales may bring out darker tones more easily.

Beginner - To simplify this: try to sing five-note patterns, ascending, with a focus on creating a smile-like mouth shape to bring out a happier, warmer tone; or keeping the corners of the mouth level for the opposite effect.

Intermediate - Repeat each scale and mouth shape three times, across three different keys (starting on three different notes) which feel comfortable.

Advanced - To extend this: try to apply breath to the notes to create a softer tone and experiment with different amounts of breath to further alter the overall sound.

Suggested songs that use different tones: "*Mr Brightside*" - The Killers, "*Pompeii*" - Bastille, "*Marry You*" - Bruno Mars, "*Valerie*" - Amy Winehouse, "*Skinny Love*" - Birdy, "*Feeling Good*" - Muse & "*Feel Good Inc*" - Gorillaz.