

NOTES FROM CATEGORY SCHOOL 2000 (Ottawa)  
**WARM-UPS**

**The 10 Problems causing poor singing**

- 1) Poor Posture
- 2) Lack of proper Breathing/support
- 3) Glottal Attacks
- 4) Lack of proper Tone Quality/Resonance
- 5) Improper register transition ~limitations in range of pitch
- 6) Lack of Flexibility or ease of production and vocal endurance
- 7) Poor articulation
- 8) Lack of discipline
- 9) Health concerns/Vocal abuse
- 10) Self image/confidence level

**Warmups are important. They should include these things:**

- taking time to physically stretch, deep breathing and body preparation
- relaxing the jaw, shoulders, neck or all 3 BEFORE vocalizing
- it=s the individual=s responsibility to set their own time line and be ready to sing

**Warmups - who needs 'em?**

By Bill Rashleigh (Key Note - 1989 Summer + HARMONIZER - 1988 July-August)  
A summarized report from this article:

Warmups can focus on three separate and specific aspects:

- preparation of the body
- focusing attention
- transferring concepts into literature

**Preparation of the body**

The singer, like any athlete, must ready herself for physical activity. This aspect of the warmup should include stretching, relaxation exercises, breathing exercises and posture alignment. These prepare the body so that breathing and singing mechanisms can function naturally and properly. Realigning the singer=s body to the correct posture for singing helps establish and reinforce good habits.

**Focusing Attention**

Success in singing is directly associated with thinking. Music can provide escape from trials, tribulations and problems of the workday if the mind is allowed to focus on the production of quality sounds. Music demands total concentration over an extended period of time. If concentration is dropped for even a split second, something suffers: pitch accuracy, words, breath management or visual presentation.

**Transferring concepts**

This is the aspect of the warmup that is the most neglected. Warmups are designed to teach vocal technique and craft, establish good habits, develop

concentration and refine singing technique. But if all of these are then shelved until the next warmup session, we must re-invent the wheel@ every week. During warmups, a specific problem can be isolated from the many sound, interpretive and presentation elements that tend to absorb our attention during a performance. Through repetition, good habits can be established while the problem is separated and , over a period of time, they can become automatic. Once an aspect of vocal technique has been isolated and developed, it can serve as the focus of a rehearsal. One or two vocal techniques can receive attention and reinforcement instead of shotgunning all that goes vocally amiss during the rehearsal. Any transference from what is done during warmups into the literature is a positive step toward reinforcing good habits.

If warmups only involve singing some short songs or tags, the opportunity to isolate problems that may occur consistently in contest or show songs is lost. If warmups are properly understood and consistently executed, they can save time and can result in better sound being produced, which means we can have more fun singing.

### **WARMUPS - on the risers or on the floor?**

They should always be interesting. Different ideas keep the chorus attentive. Use parts of a song or a small song. Go from warmups into physical into Vocal Techniques to get ready for singing.

### **IDEAS:**

- rounds
- simple songs but singing the melody line
- ee@ is an easier vowel for placement for women
- ah@ is easier for men

### **BOOKS SUGGESTIONS:**

- Successful Warmups Book 1 & 2 - Nancy Telfer ISBN 0 8497 4174-2
- Road to Success - tapes - Paul Mayo
- Sing out Like Never Before - Rhea Zimmerman
- Improving Techniques through the Warmup - Yellow Binder available from Harmony and SPEBSQSA
- How to Train Singers - Lara Browning
- Complete Handbook of Voice Training - Richard Alderson
- Inner Game of Music - book and workbook
- Structure of Music - Richard Miller

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR WARMUPS - SORTED BY TECHNIQUES**

#### **INTERVALS:**

- to the tune of the A Can Can@ - SHELAGH RADCLIFFE  
come come over here and get some ice cream that is yum yum  
get it in a cone a crunchy ice cream cone

Use hand moves to emphasize ups and downs

- Fish & Chips & Vinegar, Pepper, Pepper, Pepper, Salt  
4 part round

- Bruce the Moose - SHELAGH RADCLIFFE will email this one
- Singing up the scale 1-5 using ANO@ and keeping the sound open and free
- First in steps then as intervals (jumping from 1-3-5-3-1 or any combination of choice)

**EXTENDING RANGE:**

- Using 1-5-1 and the word ANO@ , sing in steps then up a 2 interval and repeat.
- Using 5-1 and Azzzz-eee@. Also raising each repetition the 2 interval. - reference Lauren Lindeman
- Using the steps on the scale of DO ME SO DO= or 1 3 5 1 and the words  
Ee aye aye ah Ee aye aye ah  
Then sing RE= DO= TI= Or 7 8 9 and down the scale on the sound of AAh@