

Finding Your Female Voice

*Volume One
Instructional booklet*

*This is designed to accompany Volume One
directed by Calpernia Addams and hosted by Andrea James.*

Please review both the book and video for best results.

You may purchase the companion program at
<http://www.deepstealth.com/store/>

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USA orders (toll-free) 800-853-6077
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We also offer voice consultations by phone or in person.
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PREFACE

Purpose

To help trans women assimilate into mainstream society by feminizing their voices.

To help others (such as part-timers, entertainers, and audibly gender-variant women) who wish to learn a more feminine voice for work/social reasons, convenience, fun, or safety.

A heartfelt plea

Please don't make copies of this! Proceeds pay our rent and allow us to offer tsroadmap.com and other web projects free to the community. They also help us branch out into other media projects for the community, like the companion video.

If you have watched a borrowed copy of the video, please consider making a donation if it helped you. Our ability to do future projects like this will depend on your honesty.

For more on donations, please see: <http://www.tsroadmap.com/donate>

Phone consultations

For those with a registered copy of this video, I am available for phone consultations. For details, please see:

<http://www.deepstealth.com/store/voiceconsult.htm>

Comments and suggestions

This is Volume One of a multipart series. We are very interested in getting general feedback on how useful this has been for you. All comments, good and bad, are welcome. If there are any things that were unclear or items you feel were overlooked, please send them along. You can send questions or comments via email to us at: **info@deepstealth.com**

Please include your order number with your inquiry.

INTRODUCTION

Thanks for purchasing this video and booklet! If you wish to assimilate and be accepted by others as female, all the work on your appearance will mean very little if you don't work hard to achieve a female voice. Luckily, it's quite inexpensive to do, but it takes time and commitment. If you want this to work:

1. Read everything here.
2. Don't skip things because they look stupid or because you already know about what's being discussed.
3. Don't go to the next exercise until you're absolutely certain you are doing the exercise that you're on correctly.
4. You must master the absolute basics before moving on. Some people are always in a big rush and looking for a quick easy fix. You will fail with this attitude.

If you follow the information below and practice carefully for a few months, you will have a good voice that's ready for use in the real world. Everything I know is outlined below. The rest is up to you.

What you'll need

Safety tip: Don't leave the video, this booklet, or your audio recorder lying around if you're not out. Have a safe and secret place where you keep these items.

1. About an hour a day for a few months

You can't learn a foreign language or musical instrument in a day or a week. You can't learn a female voice overnight, either. On the other end of the spectrum, don't overdo it when first starting out—take your time. You are using muscles in a new way, so they're going to get sore. You can't run a marathon on your first day of practice, either. If your throat is getting sore, take a break and let it rest. Pushing too hard can cause you to strain your voice and cause you to get hoarse. This could end up setting you back more than taking your time.

The time you take to learn the basics and do the beginning exercises will make a difference in how you do on the later lessons. Don't short-change the early lessons because you're in a rush to get to the later exercises. They're all important and each builds on the previous ones.

2. A place to practice

You will be making strange noises and using a female voice. You need a place where you

can practice in privacy, especially if you are not out. Good options can be in your car during your commute or lunch hour, or when you are home alone. If you don't have time alone at home, you'll need to find someplace where you can go every day for an hour to practice.

3. Microcassette recorder or portable digital audio recorder

Options to consider:

- Counter and Autostop and feedback on rewind (microcassette recorder only)
- Headphones
- Wall attachment to plug in and save batteries
- Rechargeable batteries with charging kit
- Car lighter attachment for practicing in car

4. Spectrogram (recommended option)

Due to viewer response, we added **Finding Your Female Voice, Volume Two** in 2005. This includes information on using a free spectrogram program to practice your new voice. You will see on screen what you need to emulate when using this program. You will need a Windows-based computer and a way to input audio to use the spectrogram.

For more information:

<http://deepstealth.com/store/voicetutor.htm>

5. Glass of cold water: Take small sips while practicing

6. Pen and this booklet: Take notes

What you don't (necessarily) need

1. Musical ability

Understanding music can help, but it's not necessary. We will be doing some things that are musical, because it helps some people to understand better, but we'll also be doing exercises based only on feel. Those who are not sure if they are hitting the right note may find a spectrogram very useful.

Practice suggestions

With any vocal exercise, only work in a range comfortable for you; be patient - your range will improve in time. General tips:

1. Drink plenty of water. This will help keep your vocal folds moist. Have cool water on hand when you practice.
2. Avoid overexertion whenever possible.
3. Learn and practice good vocal technique. Check with your physician about any medications that you are taking and how they may affect your voice. Avoid screaming, yelling and talking over background noise.
4. Practice vocal rest when your voice is tired. This is especially important after a long practice, a speech, or talking in a loud place, or if you are suffering from a cold.
5. Regular exercise benefits the whole body, including the voice! Take time for you, exercise regularly and relax.
6. Use good posture.
7. Proper breath support is a must.
8. Allow adequate time to warm-up and warm-down your voice. As with an athlete it is important to allow your voice the time to effectively warm up and warm down.

Warmup

1. Stretch, especially your neck and shoulders. Stretch your mouth wide open and loosen the jaw muscles especially. Try to touch your chin to your chest, then in a smooth motion roll your neck so your ear is trying to touch your shoulder (don't bring the shoulder up to the ear— bring the ear down), then roll your head back so you're looking at the ceiling, then try to touch your other ear to your other shoulder. Repeat this circle in a smooth motion, first with your jaw loose, then with your mouth as wide open as you can make it. Do this slowly, especially if you don't stretch much. You can easily pull muscles if you are too tight. (2 minutes)
2. Use diaphragmatic breathing will allow your larynx to be more relaxed. This will allow you to project your voice without straining. Place your fist on your diaphragm area, just below your rib cage, and feel your stomach push "out" as you breathe "in." Your stomach will only go out so far, then your chest will begin to "lift". Keep inhaling as your chest lifts! When you've arrived at a full breath, keep your chest held comfortably high while singing. Though these motions seem exaggerated, you'll hardly notice them once they're mastered, and your breath control will increase substantially. Practice this breathing to increase intake while decreasing the amount of time spent on intake; you will build speed.(2 minutes)
3. Do pinched to breathy on your lower range. (1 minute)
4. Starting in your low register, so a glissando (a siren sound) that slides up a few notes, then back to your original, then slides up a few notes higher than last time. Keep doing this till you're at your break. (2 minutes)
5. Get out your recorder and try your base pitch. Do it pinched to breathy.

Exercise schedule suggestions

Novice

Work on exercises 1 – 11

Do these until you are comfortable and can feel the muscles to use.

Beginner

Once you feel comfortable with exercises 1-11, you should start at exercise 12.

Do a regular warmup, above.

For the first 2 to 6 weeks depending on your progress, you should record yourself working with exercises 12 through 35.

Do not practice for more than an hour, and stop if your voice begins to get strained.

Intermediate

Once you are getting a good consistent sound in your recorder on 12-35, you should move to the chanting lessons.

Do a regular warmup, above, then record your pinched to breathy warmups with AH on your target pitch.

Work on exercises 36 –43 for the next 2 –6 weeks, depending on your progress.

Advanced

Once you are getting a good consistent sound in your recorder on 36-43, you should move to the chanting lessons.

Do a regular warmup, above, then record your pinched to breathy warmups with AH on your target pitch.

Work on these for the next 2 –6 weeks, depending on your progress.

Expert

Work on your inflection and speech patterns with 44-49.

Do a regular warmup, above, then record your pinched to breathy warmups with AH on your target pitch, then your mantra pinched to breathy on your target pitch.

Work on these for the next 2 –4 weeks, depending on your progress.

Interacting with others

Do a regular warmup, above, then record your pinched to breathy warmups with AH on your target pitch, then your mantra pinched to breathy on your target pitch, then record yourself speaking the mantra as a sentence.

Work on exercises 50 and 51 for a few weeks, starting on the phone, then in person with friends, then in person with strangers.

Supplementary

Do a regular warmup, above, then record your pinched to breathy warmups with AH on your target pitch, then your mantra pinched to breathy on your target pitch, then record yourself speaking the mantra as a sentence.

Work on the remaining exercises as needed to strengthen your voice and increase your range.

Warmdown

1. Use exercises that soothe the vocal cords such as vocalizing on “oo.” Do slides downward from your base note into your lower register.
2. Yawn a few times.
3. Do deep exhalations: HHUH
4. Have some very warm (not hot) tea or cool (not cold) water.
5. Repeat your stretching from the warmup
6. Try to avoid speaking for an hour or two after practice if possible.

Daily vocal maintenance

In order to keep the vocal folds moist, and the mucus of the vocal area thin and unobstructed, changes in diet and lifestyle are sometimes necessary. There are, of course, many factors affecting the vocal apparatus: smog, allergies, illness, fatigue, mental and emotional state, daily usage, training, etc., but the following is a highlight of good vocal habits to get into:

Get the right amount of sleep. Your body functions best when it is rested, as you know. The sound of your voice is one of the first indicators of fatigue; even a friend miles away can tell you that you "sound tired" on the phone. Since you'll refuse to show your fatigue in a performance, (and rightfully so), you'll have to expend extra energy just to get your "mix" and into your high notes. You will push your voice harder than you should; it's inevitable. Sleep!

Drink lots and lots of water...more than what you thirst for. It's important that a singer keep hydrated all the time. That will help keep your vocal folds moist and keep the mucus thin and unobstructed.

Be careful how you speak... If you're using your voice in a loud manner consistently (and you may not realize it) you are abusing your voice, and it will show. The high range is always what is affected most. Professional voice users besides singers (salespeople, teachers, lecturers, pastors, etc) are specifically at risk. Learn how to find your optimum pitch, and to speak consistently using it as a reference.

Avoid clearing your throat...it is a harsh action that does more damage than it gets results, and it gets to be a bad habit. Swallow, drink more water, and if you must clear, do it lightly, with a little more air...be gentle!

Warm up your voice before speaking, and before you go about your busy workday, where you will be using your voice at full strength. Even on a minimal vocal day, you should start with a light hum that glides between registers and transitions the break over and over; the shower is a good place for this, since there is warm moist air to work with.

Don't eat late at night...acid reflux is a very common source of vocal trouble for many singers, sometimes regardless of age. For those who suffer from this disorder, the acid from the stomach makes its way up the esophagus when the body is horizontal in sleep, and bathes and irritates the vocal folds greatly. If you are experiencing a noticeable loss of your upper register, finding your voice excessively "cracking" and giving out in the higher notes, consider this as a possibility...stop eating 3 hours prior to bedtime, and avoid spicy foods, coffee (acid); anything that is hard on the stomach. Note: this problem does not necessarily manifest itself as heartburn or sour stomach, it is often unnoticed by anyone but professional voice users.

Pay attention to your diet... what you eat affects your voice greatly; not just in the short run (right before a gig) but in the long run; vocal production is adversely affected by the thickening of mucus in the laryngeal area, and that can be the direct result of a poor diet. Below is a short list of foods that are good and bad.

Good:☐Fish and chicken; "lean" foods, vegetables and fruits, water (lots of it!), herbal teas ("throat coat"), lemon diluted in lukewarm water, fresh air, proper sleep, exercise, moist air to sleep with.

Bad: Fatty meats and fried foods, spicy foods, thick sauces, milk and dairy products, too much sugar, coffee/caffeine, chocolate, alcohol, "sucking on lemon," fatigue, smog, "drafty" sleeping conditions, eating late at night (stomach acid)

Taking things slowly and carefully will add up in the end— don't rush the process and learn bad habits early on.

Practice makes perfect if practice IS perfect!

My old voice samples

After considerable thought, I've included samples of my own range, because I decided it's that important for people to understand. I also felt it might inspire you to know that my voice was probably as low or lower than yours. I did the first one on camera, but I present the rest of them off camera, because I don't want my old voice associated with my current appearance.

- Glissando
- My old voice
- Exaggerated male voice
- Switch in the middle of a sentence

Voice strategies to avoid

"The Mrs. Doubtfire" (low pitch, resonance too full): This voice sounds funny because it's a stock voice used in movies like Tootsie, Mrs. Doubtfire, etc.

"The Minnie Mouse" (falsetto): A falsetto voice is going to sound cartoony.

"The Witch" (resonance too pinched, not full-throated): This croaky sound is caused by attempting to constrict the throat in the wrong place.

"The Whisperer" (atonal): Removing tone doesn't solve resonance problems.

"The Drag Queen" (nasal, up in palate, pitch too low): This is sort of an exaggeration of a stereotypical gay male accent, and a common voice strategy among early transitioners.

"The Attempted Voice" (low pitch, resonance too full): Not as exaggerated as the Mrs. Doubtfire voice, often spoken very quietly. A common voice strategy among late transitioners.

Most people using these voice strategies can't hear what they're doing wrong. We'll be working on training yourself to feel when you're doing it right.

Starting fresh is always easier than unlearning bad habits. If you have never attempted to find your female voice, that's good. If you are already using one, we'll work on undoing some of the things you're doing wrong.

SOUND MECHANICS AND VOCAL ANATOMY

Voice, another spectrum

Vocal expression, like gender expression, is a spectrum. Voices can have male or female characteristics, some physical, some behavioral.

Female voices come in a wide range which partially overlaps with male range.



Being accepted as female with a voice is just like being accepted as female in general. If you have enough feminine characteristics to offset the masculine characteristics, you will be accepted as female. It's that simple. You will probably never eliminate all of the masculine cues in your voice, but if your voice presents as overwhelmingly feminine, you'll do fine.

Tone

My mom used to say "Don't use that tone of voice with me!" We constantly change the tone of our voice, and it's so easy that we don't even think about it. All I'm going to show you is how to change your tone of voice to be more feminine. Once you understand how and practice properly, it becomes just as easy as any other way you change the tone of your voice.

The main characteristic of a voice, whether speaking or singing, is its tone. So, let's start there.

Sound travels through the air in waves. A **tone** is simply a sound that has regular wave vibrations. Three kinds of vibrations affect a tone:

Pitch: the frequency of the vibration. This is measured in cycles per second. The more cycles per second, the higher the pitch. In general, women's voices have a higher pitch than men's voices-- it sounds higher.

Intensity or loudness, is measured in decibels. The more decibels, the louder it is.

Quality is the greatest variable of the three. It's also called the timbre or **resonance**. It is measured by a bunch of complicated stuff like the overtones and prominence of the primary tone, but we don't need to get into that.

The voice is an instrument

A trumpet and flute and piano could play the exact same note in terms of **pitch** and **intensity**, but they would sound very different because of the quality or **resonance**. Resonance is affected by lots of variables, like the size, the shape, the material, the way they're played, etc, etc.

Your instrument has three main components:

1. Lungs: Air moves past the vocal cords in the voice box, causing vibration.
2. Voice box: Muscles in the throat control the shape of the air passage and the tension on the vocal cords, making pitch and resonance changes as you speak.
3. Mouth: How you hold your head and jaw affects the sound coming from your voicebox.

The closest instrumental analogy to a human voice is an oboe: air from lungs blown past two reeds (= vocal cords) causes a sound to come out the end (= mouth). Unlike an oboe, you can actually change the shape of your vocal instrument as you play it.

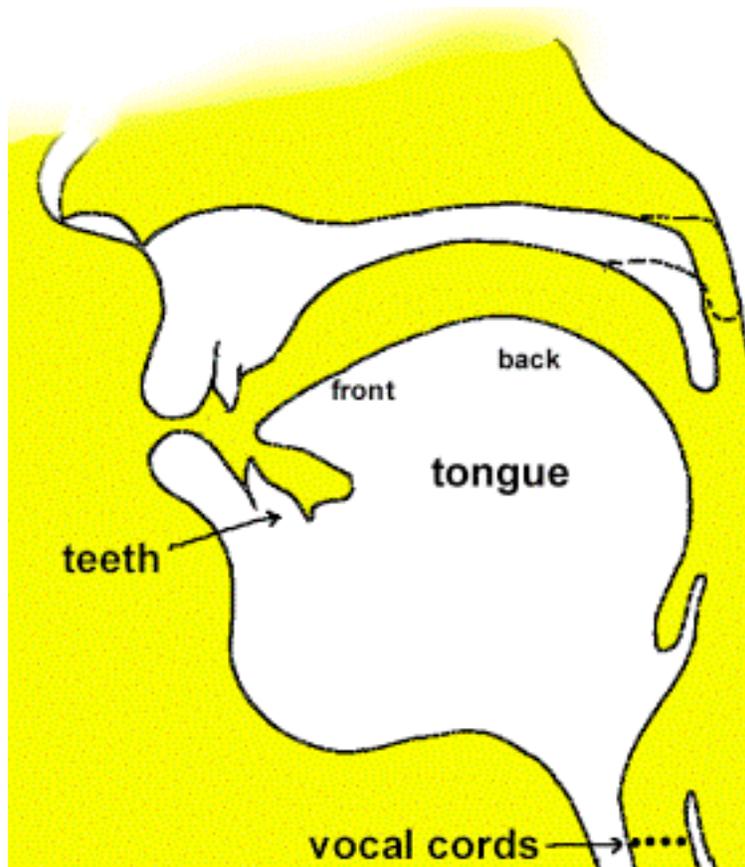
Posture

How you position yourself is very important when doing these lessons:

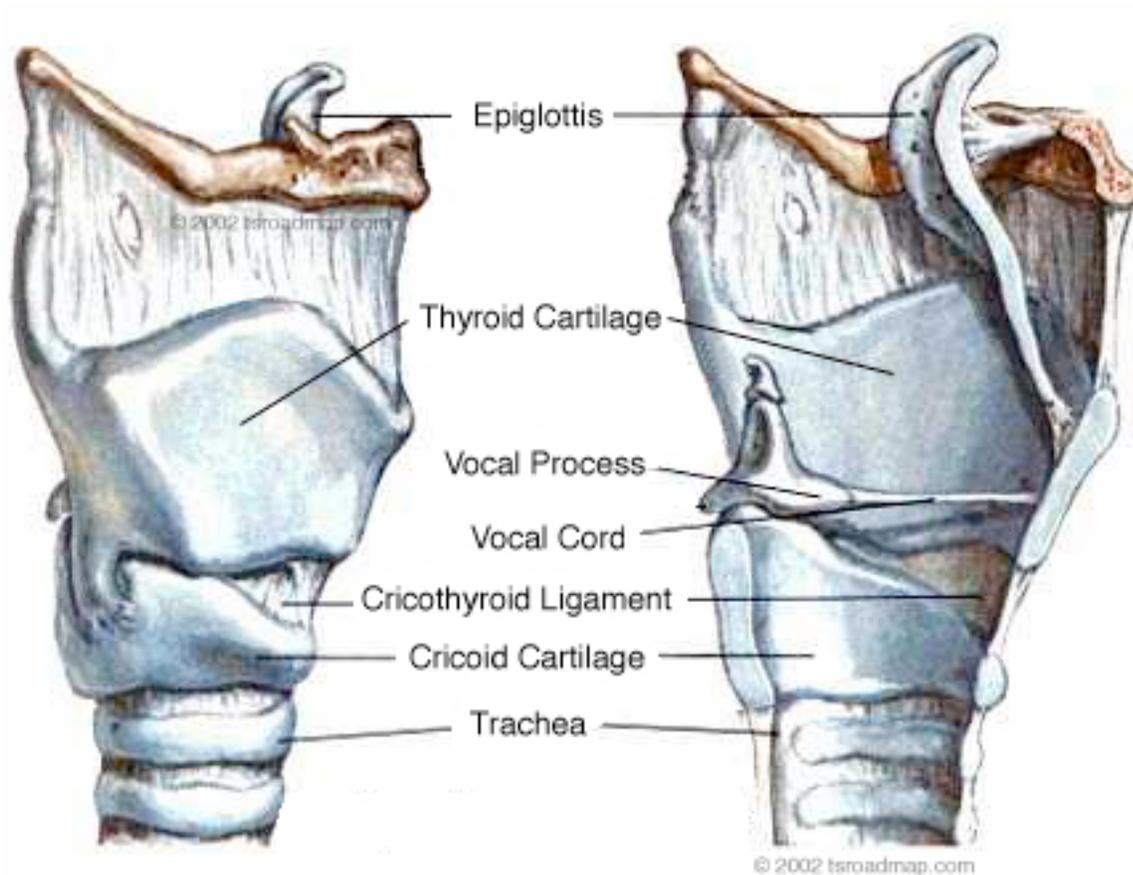
- Seated position
- Bare feet flat on the floor
- Knees shoulder width apart
- Hands on upper thighs
- Shoulders not hunched forward; slightly back, but not exaggerated.
- Shoulder blades should be as far apart as possible
- Full breath through nose should bring spine to full extension
- Chest expanded but not thrown forward
- Head held high as if you were hanging from your hair
- Chin parallel with floor
- Lips together teeth apart when mouth is closed
- Jaw relaxed when speaking
- Don't pull chin into neck when speaking

Vocal Anatomy

We can only see a small part of our **tongue**. It extends deep into our throats, as you can see in the diagram below. When you swallow, your tongue seals off your mouth by pressing up against your **palate** (the roof of your mouth) and forces the contents of your mouth down your throat. Put your hand on your throat and swallow. Feel all those muscles at work?



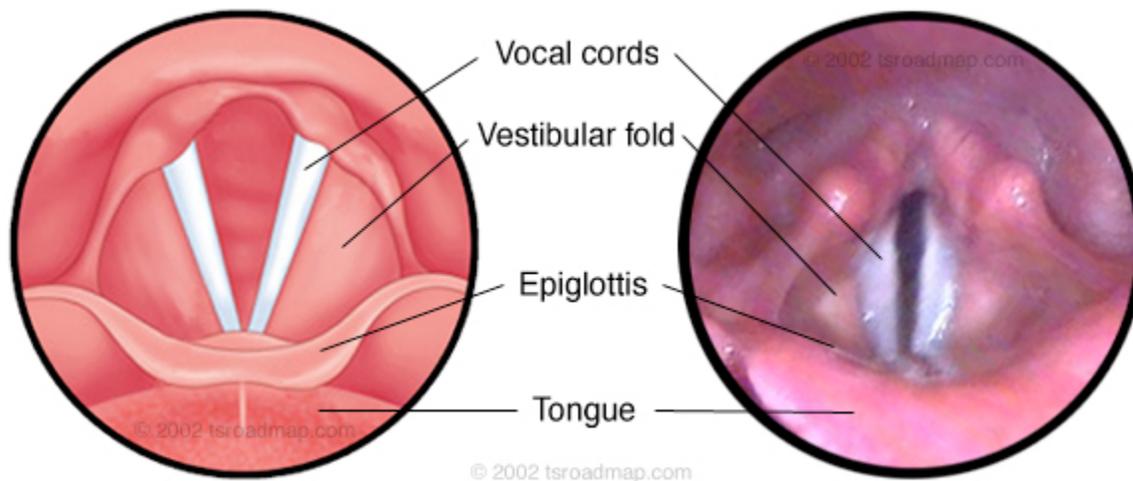
Your throat contains two tubes. The one in back goes to your stomach and is called the esophagus. The one in front goes to your lungs and is called the **trachea**. To keep food and saliva from going into your lungs, a flap of cartilage called the **epiglottis** covers up your air passage as you swallow. When you breathe in and out, the epiglottis moves up and out of the way.



The diagram above shows the cartilage in your throat. Left is a front-angle view, right is a side cross section so you can see where the vocal cord is. The hard stuff that comprises your ears and nose are made of cartilage, too. It's softer and more flexible than bone, but still pretty rigid.

The area made of cartilage is called the voice box or **larynx**. The word *laryngitis* is an inflammation of the larynx, and is characterized by difficulty speaking. Get the connection? If you squeeze your throat with your fingers, starting under your jaw and moving down toward your collarbones, you'll feel all sorts of bumps and ridges. That's because the larynx has several pieces of cartilage. You have all sorts of muscles and ligaments in the area to move the larynx around. Put your fingers on your throat and swallow. Feel all that stuff move? It's a complex process you don't even think about usually.

The **thyroid cartilage** is the biggest piece, and it sticks out the most. It's usually known by its common name, the Adam's apple. When you get a "trachea shave" to reduce the size of the Adam's apple, the surgeon cuts away as much of the cartilage as possible without affecting the vocal cords, which are precariously close to this piece of cartilage. The medical term for a "trachea shave" is thyroid chondroplasty. Technically, it's not on your trachea, but on your larynx.



This is a cross section from inside the mouth looking down the throat at the larynx, showing the vocal cords. On the left, a diagram, and on the right, a photo from the same angle. We see the tongue and epiglottis at the bottom. Directly above them are your **vocal cords** themselves. They are two identical grayish muscles which stretch across your air passage and vibrate when air moves through your larynx, which can be seen between the vocal cords. The muscles can completely seal off the air passage due to **vestibular folds** which connect the vocal cords and the walls of the larynx. Most of the sounds you can make are caused by using muscles in this area to change the shape of your larynx and the tension and position of your vocal cords.

Those interested in learning more about laryngeal anatomy should check out Dr. Wesley Norman's excellent illustrated overview online at:

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/wnor/lesson11.htm>

Testosterone effects

At the onset of puberty, it is characteristic for this area to grow significantly, perhaps twice its previous size. That's part of the reason male voices are fuller than female voices. This growth occurs primarily on a big piece called the thyroid cartilage, also called the Adam's apple. Unfortunately for us, the vocal cords are just below the Adam's apple, so when it gets bigger at puberty, the vocal cords also get longer, thicker, and deeper-sounding. If you look in a mirror and then feel for the V-shape at the most protruding part of your larynx, your vocal cords are about an inch lower. That's why surgeons have to be so careful when doing a "trachea shave" to reduce the Adam's apple—too much and they can injure your vocal cords. It's also why it's important to get on antiandrogens before/during puberty if at all possible.

A note on voice surgery

There is a tendency among some in the community to think that popping pills or lying down on an operating table makes you female. Hormones and SRS are a very small part of gender transition. Those who desire to assimilate and be accepted by society as female will need to work on other things, especially speaking and interacting with others. You can say to yourself you are female, but unless you are getting the same feedback from the rest of the world, you will be subjecting yourself to a lot of psychic trauma. People will respond to you based on how female they consider you. In fact, if your voice and other cues are feminine enough, they will consider you female even if they know you are transsexual—they'll ask you about when you were a little girl or ask if you plan to have kids, etc. This level of assimilation is not possible for some in the community, but if acceptance as female is your goal, you need to disabuse yourself of the idea that transition is a medicalized process involving a couple of physical changes. It is more like moving to a foreign country and becoming completely immersed in a culture, to the point that everyone assumes you were born in that country.

I do not recommend existing voice surgery techniques based on results I've heard. Voice surgery is not a quick fix for a voice that is not accepted by others as female. You will not go from male to female from this procedure. It must be combined with voice therapy pre-surgically and post-surgically in order to optimize the results. Even then, it's likely that your voice will sound unnaturally high and thin in most cases. On the other hand, your voice can end up sounding raspy like a bad smoker. Voice surgery can only raise pitch and does little to nothing to your resonance. Resonance is the key to feminizing your voice.

It's cheaper, easier, and less risky to practice. This allows you to maintain your range, and practicing is 100% reversible. You'll need to practice anyway, even if you do get surgery.

If you are still considering this surgery, I suggest you personally speak with at least three women who have done it. Hearing their voices should be enough to change your mind.

NON-MUSICAL EXERCISES

Before we start doing exercises that use the tone we learned about before, we need to do some atonal exercises to understand the foundation we use to make tones with our voices. You already know all kinds of ways to move the muscles in your throat without even thinking about it. Now it's time to think about all the stuff you do naturally!

Throat control

Exercise 1. Yawn

Hold your fingers against either side of your larynx and yawn. This opens your throat to its fullest position. Feel the muscles move things around in your throat. If you were to make a sound while yawning, it would be AAH.

Exercise 2. Look in mirror

As you look in the mirror, open your mouth and press down your tongue. Say ahh as you make a sound like a siren. You'll see your throat muscles tighten up. Look in the mirror and watch your throat as you do this. While you're at it, look at what happens in the mirror when you yawn or swallow. See how your larynx gets moved around by muscles?

Exercise 3. Clear throat

This constricts the throat in different places to clear phlegm from the area. You can clear it from different places depending on how you move your throat muscles. Try clearing your upper and lower throat by matching the examples on the video. Try to feel the different muscles you're using.

Exercise 4. Get a loogie up

This is a rather disgusting slang term for the practice of clearing your throat in a way that brings phlegm into your mouth. This constricts your throat from the bottom and progressively squeezes upward to the top. Do one very slowly from bottom to top (3 – 4 seconds), and feel the muscles.

Exercise 5. Gargle

Gargling soothes your throat by allowing liquid to hit an area for an extended time. Liquids and food usually pass through this area quickly as you swallow. Grab your glass of water and take a small sip. If you're wearing something nice, you may want to have a towel to hold under your chin. Tilt your head back and begin gargling. Do it without making an AH sound at first. Next add tone and gargle up and down in tone like a siren.

The water can help you feel how these muscles work, and the area we're dealing with. You'll also notice you make a GUH sound when you start. That's your tongue unsealing your throat and letting the water travel further down your throat. If you push enough air up from your lungs, you can force the liquid back up into your mouth.

Exercise 6. GUH (technically called an uvular plosive)

When we gargled, we noticed a GUH sound as we started. That's because the GUH sound (or hard G) is caused by pressing the back of the tongue against the palate. You can make a GUH sound further back in your throat or closer to your teeth if you wish. Knowing the feel of these muscles can help with throat control. Say the word ING holding on the N for a few seconds: INNNNNNG. You'll hear a tiny GUH when you release your tongue from your palate and a little air pushes out. Try to hear and feel that. Next say GIFT and feel where the G is happening in the back of your mouth. Now say GUH. Do you feel how it's further back in your throat? Go back and forth: GIFT, GUH, GIFT, GUH. Now try to make the GUH sound, but further back in your throat. It will sound like a bullfrog, or if you go quickly, it will sound like a cartoon character drinking something quickly. Feel the muscles you are using and the parts of your throat that you're moving. Look in your mirror as you make that sound. If you look under your jaw, you can actually see your tongue moving. You can also watch your larynx move up and down. Without making any GUH sound, try to move your larynx up and down silently as you look in the mirror. Keep doing it as you touch your larynx with your fingers. See how much control you have of this area?

You probably never even noticed all this stuff you can do with your throat muscles, because it seems so second nature. Your female voice will be this second nature in time, too!

Breathing

Safety tip: These exercises may make you lightheaded. Sit down for these and take time. If you feel lightheaded, stop and put your head between your knees for a moment. Wait a minute or two before resuming the exercises.

Exercise 7. Blow on soup

Blow out through your mouth as if you are cooling a spoonful of very hot soup. Put your hand in front of your mouth. See how the air feels cool?

Exercise 8. Warm hands

Open your mouth wide and breathe out as if you are trying to warm your hands on a cold day. This breath feels warm on your hand because you are pushing a lot of air from deep in your lungs through your fully-opened throat and mouth. If you added sound at this point, it would sound like AH, because that's the only vowel sound you can make when

your throat and mouth are fully open. In fact, that's why the dentist has you say AH—you're forced to open your mouth all the way when you do!

Extra tip: if you hold a small mirror in front of your face, it should steam up a bit. This can be a good measure for many later exercises as well.

Exercise 9. Annoyed sigh

Let out a sigh like you're impatient. You'll notice that you can make it sound lower and deeper by moving some throat muscles.

Exercise 10. From depths

If you do it low enough, it almost sounds as if you're coughing or got the wind knocked out of you. Try pushing out air from deep in your chest. Try to feel the difference in your throat position. Switch between this and the annoyed sigh from exercise 9. Feel the difference?

Exercise 11. HHEE - HHI – HHO

If we do our annoyed sigh with different vowel sounds, you can feel how you move your mouth to make different vowels. With a long E, you stretch your mouth apart and move your tongue closer to the roof of your mouth. A long I starts with an AH and ends up in the same position as a long E: HHA-EE = HHI, which makes your throat muscles change position, too. A long O is similar to an AH, but with a slight change in mouth position. Look in the mirror as you do these.

Exercise 12. HHHOW = HHHAH-OO

The reason this is helpful is because HHHOW is actually HHHAH-OO. Feel what happens and listen to the difference as you say HHHOW. Going from the full-throated AH to the OO shows how you use your mouth shape to make different vowels.

Exercise 13. HHHAAAAH

This is what we've been leading up to! The HHAH sound is going to be a very important part of our future lessons. Listen to how the breath sounds, and feel with your fingers where your throat muscles move to. Look in the mirror as you say it. Make sure your posture is good, because this HHAH sound is going to be the foundation for our tonal exercises.

Adding tone

We are going to overcorrect on the upcoming exercises and keep some of the breathiness we've been building on. This is like overpronouncing when learning a language, and then later speaking a little more casually once you understand the basics.

Exercise 14. HHAH with tone

Say HHAH so you can feel the warm air on your hand. You will have to be pretty breathy to do this, and that's OK. Switch back and forth between your no-tone HHAH from Exercise 13 and your tone HHAH. Now do it while you touch your throat. Feel the difference between the two? The vibration you feel on the tone HHAH is your vocal cords. Record some of these so you can hear the difference.

Exercise 15. Falsetto

Remember our "Mickey Mouse" voice strategy to avoid? It's very high pitched, but very fake because the resonance is wrong.

The technical term for a voice like this is **falsetto**. Falsetto is a term used in singing. It's from the Latin word for "deceive" and means false. It's an artificial way of pushing a voice beyond its natural range (or register). It usually has a soft, nasally quality. Think Bee Gees or Frankie Valli.

Try doing an impression of Mickey Mouse, or the Bee Gees. Tape a little and listen back. Hear how pinched it is?

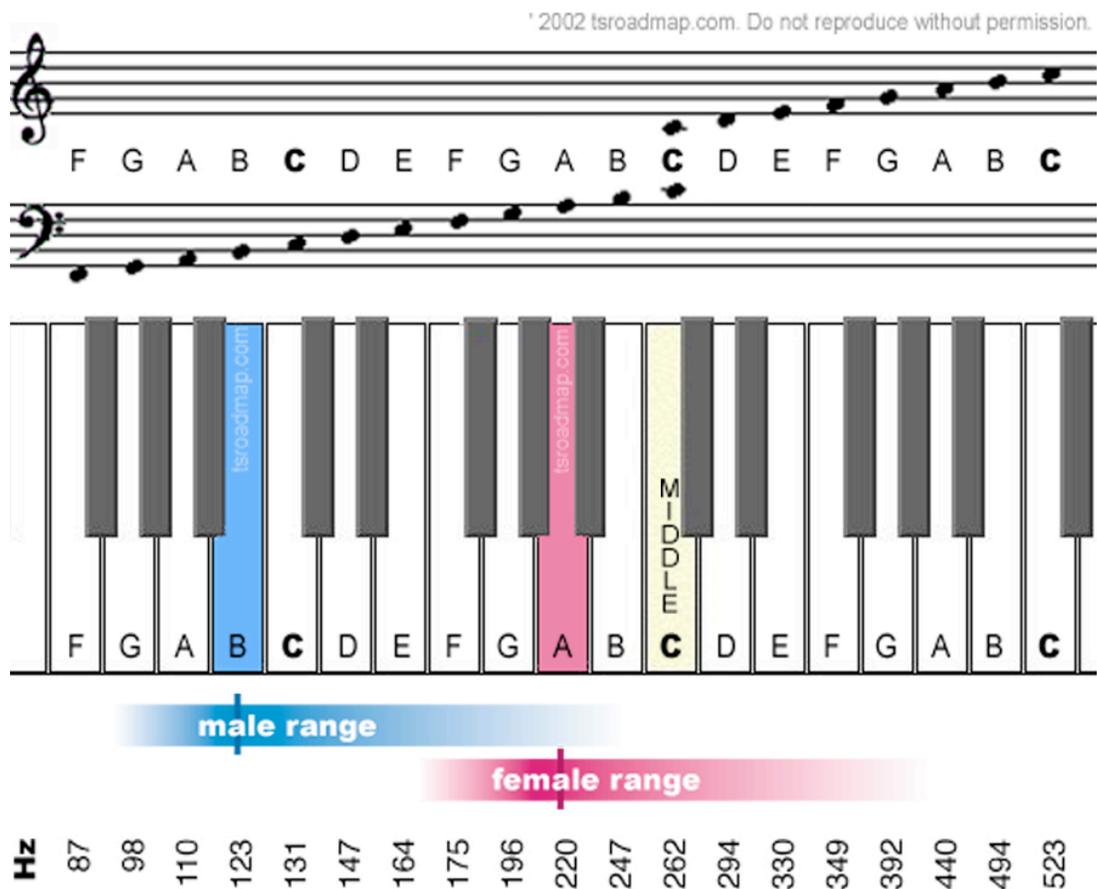
Conclusion

Congratulations! Now that we understand the fundamentals of how we use our lungs, throats and mouths to manipulate sounds, we are ready to start working on our pitch.

The upcoming exercises will involve raising our pitch. In order to help everyone, I have included methods for those of you with a musical background as well as exercises for those of you who couldn't carry a tune if it had a handle on it. First, we'll look at some background on musical terms for those who are new to this or need a little refresher course. We'll also take a look at how female pitch is expressed musically and scientifically.

Pitch: Musical and scientific expressions

Some of you who had music lessons as kids or in school may find it easier to understand these concepts if they're presented in musical terms.



Expressions of pitch

The diagram above overlays three ways to measure and talk about pitch:

1. musical notation
2. a keyboard
3. scientific notation of pitch in cycles per second, or Hertz (Hz)

I've also marked the approximate average and the pitch range for male and female voices.

If this is confusing to you, it's not necessary for you to understand these concepts. I include them here because some readers will better understand what they're trying to do if it's explained this way. Everyone learns differently.

Musical notation

Musical notes (the black dots) are placed in relation to two five-lined clefs, which tell the music reader which note to sing or play on their instrument. A **scale** is the basic vocabulary of music, much like letters are the basic component of spoken language. In fact, they're similar enough that music notes are assigned letters from A to G, after which they repeat. The top part shows an ascending musical scale, so the pitch gets higher as we move from left to right.

If you look at the scale above, I have marked all the C's in bold to help you see the repeating pattern. The reason I chose C instead of the first letter, A, is because there are certain things about C that make all this easier to understand. Many of the exercises we'll be doing will use C as a reference.

Keyboard

You can always find C by looking at the black keys, which alternate in groups of two or three. Just find the left key in a group of two black keys, and C is always just to the left of it. If you look at the partial piano keyboard above, I marked one of the keys **Middle C**. As the name suggests, it's the C in the middle of a piano. You can find it directly under the name of the piano maker on most keyboards. The distance between one C and the next C is called an **octave**. Oct- means "8" in Latin, and there are 8 notes in our octave. This first two notes of the song "Somewhere over the Rainbow" in the Wizard of Oz are an octave apart. Try singing, whistling, or listening to someone else singing it to hear what an octave sounds like. Maybe you also know the cute song in Sound of Music, where she's teaching them how to sing: *doh, a deer, a female deer...* it's a lesson about learning scales and octaves. The whole exercise goes like this: Doh – re – me – fah – so – lah – ti – doh.

You can also get the pitch of Middle C online at Big Ears Keyboard:
<http://www.ossmann.com/bigears/keyboard.html>

Note: the piano on the WWW Virtual Keyboard is very out of tune – it's an F#. Don't use this one: <http://www.xmission.com/~mgm/misc/keyboard.html>

Scientific notation

Pitch is measured scientifically in **Hertz**, or cycles per second. That means that if a pitch is 220 Hz, there are that many up-and down vibrations each second. It turns out there's a lot of math found in music, too. If a pitch is half the Hz (220), it's an octave lower. If it's twice the Hz (440), it's an octave higher. There is only about a one octave difference between typical male and female voices. So, wherever you are now, you probably need to raise it an octave. Average female pitch is about 220 Hz, which corresponds with the A that's two white keys below Middle C. It's also the second-lowest sounding string on a guitar or cello. For our exercises, we are going to overcorrect a little and use Middle C for our reference point.

Adjusting your pitch

Exercise 16. Finding your break musically

Everyone has a certain point in their voice where they can't sing any higher in their natural voice. This is the note where their voice switches from their normal register to falsetto. Singers call this the *passagio* or break. We need to find this point. The key to a good female voice is to talk in a higher voice that's still in your natural register. That is your base note.

1. Get out your recorder
2. Hold your hand in front of your face and sing HHAH in any note that feels comfortable. You should feel warm air on your hand.
3. Sing the next note up on a scale.
4. Continue up the scale until you can no longer feel the breath on your hand
5. Listen to the recording—see how it sounds different as you get higher? More pinched? That's what we're trying to avoid. You want to speak in a pitch that's in female range, but that has that open-throated sound.

Exercise 17. Finding your break non-musically

This may be easier for some of you without doing it in steps like a scale, but rather in a slide up like a siren.

1. Get out your recorder
2. Hold your hand in front of your face and sing HHAH in any note that feels comfortable. You should feel warm air on your hand.
3. Start to raise your pitch like a siren or a teapot. When you run out of breath take a deep one and start going up from where you left off.
4. Continue until you can no longer feel the breath on your hand.
5. Listen to the recording—see how it sounds different as you get higher? More pinched? That's what we're trying to avoid. You want to speak in a pitch that's in female range, but that has that open-throated sound.

The video conducts all of the upcoming exercises with a pitch set at C. After you have practiced, you may find it better for you to practice at a higher or lower pitch.

Adjusting resonance

Controlling a pinched voice and a breathy voice takes practice. It's important that you feel the difference between these two voices, and hear how they differ, too.

Exercise 18. Ah-Ah-Ah! (technically called a glottal stop)

When you say "Ah-ah-ah," like you're telling someone not to do something, you're pinching your voice to say it. This is called a "glottal stop" in linguistics. It's also present in some British dialects, where they pronounce the T as a glottal stop in words like "little". Record yourself as you hold your hand in front of your mouth. Ah. Ah. Ah. HHAH. HHAH. HHAH. You should feel much more air on your hand when you say the HHAH sound. You can get the same effect saying "uh-uh" (as you would if you were casually saying no). Uh. Uh. Uh. HHUH. HHUH. HHUH. Record these as well.

Exercise 19. Exaggerated buzz (pinched voice)

You can give your voice more of a cartoony sound or a buzz if you hold an Ah and tighten your throat. Record yourself saying AH for about five seconds as you pinch your throat tighter and tighter. By the end it should sound like an insect buzz or a cartoon character. Listen to the examples on the video.

Exercise 20. Creaky voice

Make a sound like a creaky door: errrrr. You have to pinch your voice to make this sound. Now try to make the creaky sound but stay on one note. Next say HHER in a very breathy voice so you can feel it on your hand. Record yourself going back and forth between these two sounds, trying to stay on the same pitch. Errrr. HHER. Errrr. HHER.

In order to find the right resonance, you want to find a place between these two exaggerated voices. The right resonance is just the proper combination of pinched and breathy.

Exercise 21. AH resonance

AH pinched then breathy AH. HHAH.
 AH breathy then pinched HHAH. AH.
 AH from pinched to breathy AH->HHAH (no break in between)

Exercise 22. EE resonance

EE pinched then breathy EE. HHEE.
 EE breathy then pinched HHEE. EE.
 EE from pinched to breathy EE->HHEE (no break in between)

If it's helpful to break between your pinched and breathy voices, that's fine, and it's a good exercise. The real goal of the next three is to do the slide between your pinched voice and your breathy voice.

Exercise 23. AY resonance

AY from pinched to breathy AY->HHAY (no break in between)

Exercise 24. I resonance

I from pinched to breathy I->HHI (no break in between)

Exercise 25. O resonance

O from pinched to breathy O->HHO (no break in between)

Now that we have our vowels A, E, I, O, and U figured out, it's time to use various vowels with consonant combinations.

Full-throat vowels with consonants

Below is a table with full-throated vowels with consonant combinations. Some combinations will be harder to do full-throated than others. You will be reading down each column slowly as you record yourself. When you're done with a column listen back to see which way sounds most female. Your female voice is somewhere between the breathy and the pinched. Once you are able to do both consistently, we will be working on finding a middle ground.

	AH	OH	OW	AR	AW
A	AYAH	AYO	AYOW	AYAR	AYAW
B	BAH	BO	BOW	BAR	BAW
C	CAH	CO	COW	CAR	CAW
D	DAH	D'OH	DOW	DAR	DAW
E	EEAH	EEO	EEOW	EEAR	EEAW
F	FAH	FO	FOW	FAR	FAW
G	GAH	GO	GOW	GAR	GAW
H	HAH	HO	HOW	HAR	HAW
I	IAH	IOH	IOW	IAR	IAW
J	JAH	JO	JOW	JAR	JAW
K	KAH	KO	KOW	KAR	KAW
L	LAH	LO	LAU	LAR	LAW
M	MAH	MO	MAU	MAR	MAW
N	NAH	NO	NOW	NAR	NAW
O	O-WAH	OH	O-WOW	OH-AR	O-WAW
P	PAH	PO	POW	PAR	PAW
Q	QUAH	QUO	QUOW	QUARR	QUAW
R	RAH	RO	RAU	RAR	RAW
S	SAH	SO	SOW	SAR	SAW
T	TAH	TOE	TAO	TAR	TAW
U	YUAH	YU-O	YU-OW	YAR	YU-AW
V	VAH	VO	VOW	VAR	VAW
W	WAH	EO	WOW	WAHR	WAW
X	KSAH	KSO	KSOW	KSAR	XAW
Y	YAH	YO	TOW	YAR	YAW
Z	ZAH	ZO	ZOW	ZAR	ZAW

Exercise 26. Read down the first column

Say the sounds into your tape recorder, reading down the first column: AYAH, BAH... down to ZAH

Exercise 27. Breathily chant down the first column

Chant the sounds with your breathy voice (on a C note if you can hear it)

Exercise 28. Pinched chant down the first column

Chant the sounds with your pinched voice (on a C note if you can hear it)

Exercise 29. Alternate chant on each word

Chant the sound with your pinched voice immediately followed by your breathy voice (on a C note if you can hear it) AYAH pinched, pause, AYAH breathy.

Exercise 30. Repeat with other vowels

Repeat Exercises 26 – 29 with the OH column, OW column, AR column, AW column.

Tight-throat vowels with consonants

We will now be doing the same thing with tighter-throated vowels:

	AD	AY	I (eye)	EE	OO
A	AYAD	AY	AY-EYE	AYEE	AYOO
B	BAD	BAY	BI	BE	BOO
C	CAD	CAY	KI	KEY	COO
D	DAD	DAY	DI	DEE	DOO
E	EEAD	EEAY	EEYI	EEYEE	EEYOO
F	FAD	FAY	FI	FEE	FOO
G	GAD	GAY	GI	GEAR	GOO
H	HAD	HAY	HI	HE	HOO
I	EYE-AD	EYE-AY	EYE-EYE	EYEE	EYE-OO
J	JAD	JAY	JI	JEE	JOO
K	KAD	KAY	KI	KEE	KOO
L	LAD	LAY	LIE	LEE	LOO
M	MAD	MAY	MY	MEE	MOO
N	NAD	NAY	NIGH	NEE	NOO
O	OH-AD	OWAY	O-WHY	O-WEE	O-WOO
P	PAD	PAY	PI	PEE	POO
Q	KWADD	QUAY	QUI	QUEE	QUOO
R	RAD	RAY	RI	REE	ROO
S	SAD	SAY	SIGH	SEE	SOO
T	TAD	TAY	TIE	TEE	TOO
U	YU-AD	YUAY	YU-IGH	YU-EE	YU-WOO
V	VAD	VAY	VY	VEE	VOO
W	OO-AD	WAY	WHY	WE	WOO
X	KSAD	KSAY	KSI	KSEE	KSOO
Y	YAD	YAY	YI	YEE	YOO
Z	ZAD	ZAY	ZI	ZEE	ZOO

Exercise 31. Read down the first column

Say the sounds into your tape recorder, reading down the first column: AYAD, BAD... down to ZAD

Exercise 32. Breathy chant down the first column

Chant the sounds with your breathy voice (on a C note if you can hear it)

Exercise 33. Pinched chant down the first column

Chant the sounds with your pinched voice (on a C note if you can hear it)

Exercise 34. Alternate chant on each word

Chant the sound with your pinched voice immediately followed by your breathy voice (on a C note if you can hear it) AYAD pinched, pause, AYAD breathy.

Exercise 35. Repeat with other vowels

Repeat Exercises 31 – 34 with the AY column, I column, EE column, OO column.

It should take you quite a while to get through these, but they are important. They are the building blocks for our next section, where we will be working with a sentence repeated over and over.

Chanting our mantra

In this section, we are going to be using a sentence to adjust our resonance. The sentence is:

This is the voice I want to use.

We're going to call this our mantra, because we want to chant it to the point that we're not thinking about the words, but the sound and feel as we say it. We'll be recording all of these

Exercise 36. Chant pinched

Chant in a monotone pinched voice: *This is the voice I want to use.*

Repeat five times into recorder, then listen back.

Exercise 37. Chant breathy

Chant in a monotone breathy voice: *This is the voice I want to use.*

Repeat five times into recorder, then listen back.

Exercise 38. Chant breathy, then pinched

Some women find it easier to begin with HHAH breathy, the AH pinched, then doing the sentence: [breathy] *This is the voice I want to use.* (pause) [pinched] *This is the voice I want to use.*

Repeat five times into recorder, then listen back.

Exercise 39. Chant pinched, then breathy

Some women find it easier to begin with AH pinched, then HHAH breathy, then doing the sentence: [pinched] *This is the voice I want to use.* (pause) [breathy] *This is the voice I want to use.*

Repeat five times into recorder, then listen back.

Exercise 40. Switch mid-sentence

This time we are starting pinched and going to breathy by the end of the sentence.

Repeat five times into recorder, then listen back.

Exercise 41. Raise your pitch

Once you have completed Exercises 37-41, repeat them with your pitch raised one note. Continue up the scale toward your break.

Speaking our mantra

Exercise 42. Say it as a sentence

Start with the chanting, then take out the breathiness gradually.

Repeat five times, then listen back. Keep trying until all five sound female, but a little breathy.

Exercise 43. Change inflection

Women's voices have much more inflection than men's. Men tend to speak in a monotone, and women speak in a sing-song style. Once you have a fairly monotone peaking sound that's good, we need to add inflection. Record yourself saying our mantra with different inflections.

This is the voice I want to use.

This is the voice I want to use.

This **is** the voice I want to use.

This is **the** voice I want to use.

This is the **voice** I want to use.

This is the voice **I** want to use.

This is the voice I **want** to use.

This is the voice I want **to** use.

This is the voice I want to **use**.

This is the voice I want to use?

This is the voice I want to use!

This is-- the voice-- I want to use.

This. Is. The. Voice. I. Want. To. Use.

Reading and reciting

Exercise 44. Read quotations aloud

Pick some short prose quotations you like and record yourself saying them with several inflections. Below are a few great quotations to get you started.

“One is not born a woman, one becomes one.” — *Simone de Beauvoir*

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” — *Anais Nin*

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” — *Eleanor Roosevelt*

“If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it.” — *Margaret Fuller*

“Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.” — *Helen Keller*

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” — *Margaret Mead*

“The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.” — *Gloria Steinem*

“I've learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances.” — *Martha Washington*

“If we want a beloved community, we must stand for justice, have recognition for difference without attaching difference to privilege.” — *bell hooks*

“A lot of people are afraid to ask for what they want. That's why they don't get what they want” — *Madonna*

“When I care to be powerful — to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.” — *Audré Lourde*

Exercise 45. Longer rote passages

Pick longer prose passages you know by heart:

- the Pledge of Allegiance (I pledge allegiance to the flag),
- the Lord's Prayer (Our Father...),
- the Preamble to the Constitution (We the people...)

Record yourself and listen to where your voice slips or sounds shaky, then practice those phrases over and over.

Exercise 46. Cold reading

When you are cold reading (i.e. reading something you've never read before), you have to concentrate on the words more. You need to learn to control your voice even when concentrating on other things. Grab a magazine or newspaper and record yourself cold reading. Listen back to make sure your voice isn't changing resonance, especially as you run out of breath.

Exercise 47. Laughing

Laughing is an involuntary response, so it's important to practice laughing so that you laugh in a female voice as second nature. Practice laughing alone.

Exercise 48. Laughing while speaking

Try laughing while saying our mantra. Laugh as you start the sentence, then laugh in the middle, then laugh at the end.

Exercise 49. Coughing, sneezing, and other mouth and throat sounds

Coughing is another involuntary response. You need to work on finding a throat position when you cough that sounds female, and you also need to learn how to "recover" into a female sound if you get caught off-guard by a cough or sneeze.

Real world practice

Once you've mastered your voice at home, it's time to test it in a real-world setting!

Exercise 50. Speaking on the phone

Record yourself calling people. Call restaurants and ask about the specials and how late they're open. Call toll-free numbers and ask about their products. Just open the phone book and call random businesses and act like you want to buy something. It's good practice, and they'll be happy to chat with you for a while. Call friends and record yourself as you talk. You will notice at first that it's hard to maintain your voice—that's why you're recording. When you hear something you don't like, record yourself saying it a few times till it sounds right.

Remember, speaking on the phone is the ultimate test of your voice, since it's all they have to go on to determine your gender. It's very important to practice by calling strangers and friends alike and working on your phone voice. Try not to give your name or cues that

you're female. In time, you'll get people saying, "Well, ma'am we're open till 8," or "Just a moment, miss, I'll check that price." That's when you know you're getting somewhere.

Exercise 51. Speaking in person

Speak with your therapist or friends and record yourself. Don't listen back until you're by yourself. It's important to get the knack of speaking in conversations face to face. At first, it will be hard to maintain your voice, but in time, you'll get more and more comfortable until you don't even think about it.

Advanced exercises

Once you have your voice stabilized, you will run into some real-world issues which are major stress tests on your voice. The following exercises are designed to help you improve the strength and stamina of your new voice, and to help you prepare for real-world situations where you will need to have your voice strong and sure.

Exercise 52. Singing

Finding a couple of low-voiced female singers to sing along with can be helpful for strengthening your voice, **but only if your resonance is right!** If you sing in a pinched voice, you will only be learning bad habits. Sing along, but record yourself to make sure your resonance is still open-throated. Some suggestions for artists from a few different genres and times:

k.d. lang	Lauryn Hill
Cher	Diana Krall
Shawn Colvin	Tracy Chapman
Norah Jones	Indigo Girls

Exercise 53. Raising your break

Work on Exercise 16 to increase your range. Try to get your break to happen higher up the scale by holding the notes just at or below your break.

Exercise 54. Using your falsetto

Falsetto is bad if it's the only thing you're using, but women frequently use their falsetto when speaking as part of their inflection. One of the most exaggerated forms of this is Valley Girl talk, which is characterized by falsetto on emphasized words and "uptalk," i.e. ending sentences with an upward lilt. It almost sounds like a question when they end a sentence because of the uptalk.

Try saying sentences that end in EE sounds in a Valley girl kind of talk.

- Are you going to that party?
- Have you ever seen a cute baby?

Your voice will naturally trail up into your falsetto. You will find yourself using more of the falsetto lilt as you improve the range of your inflection. Record yourself saying “Hi” starting in your falsetto and moving down into your natural register. At first it will quaver a bit, but in time you’ll be able to control it with more practice.

Exercise 55. Speaking in a loud place

Talking in a club or a loud workplace can be a real stress on your voice. Once you have your pitch and resonance set, try to increase your loudness. Go out to a loud club with a friend and try to talk over the music without putting your mouth right by her ear.

Exercise 56. Yelling

Start by yelling in a voice as if you were yelling to someone in the next room. Record yourself to make sure you’re OK with resonance. Try the same thing outside, as if you were yelling to someone down the street. Record yourself yelling as you walk away from your running recorder and adjust if your resonance is changing when you listen back.

Exercise 57. Talking for long periods of time (party, phone, work)

Talk up a storm on the phone to a friend, recording bits every few minutes. Have a friend over for dinner and have her or him record you without telling you when every now and then during your dinner conversation. Listen back and make adjustments.

Exercise 58. Waking up

It’s very hard to find your note right when you wake up, but it’s important to train yourself to do this in case you’re awakened by your phone or your boyfriend/girlfriend. Keep your recorder by the bed and talk into your recorder as soon as you wake up. It’s OK to sound groggy, but make sure you sound like a groggy female!

Common questions I get

My voice sounds so strange as I'm speaking—am I doing something wrong?

Yes, you are. Don't listen to your voice resonating in your head as you speak. It's very different than how others hear you. That's why listening to recorded samples is so important. The key is to know by feel when your voice is right.

My friends say I sound fine, but I still get clocked. What am I doing wrong?

Well-meaning friends may say things that aren't true to spare our feelings. While their hearts are in the right place, they aren't doing us any favors. Get honest opinions from non-TS friends if possible. If you are getting an opinion from another TS woman, consider the source. How is her own voice? If she says you sound great, but she doesn't have a voice that's accepted as female, then you should weigh that.

I'm already full-time. Am I supposed to just show up at work with a new voice?

Yes. The only way to get better is to take the plunge. You may be worried that you sound silly, but most people will be impressed that you're working on it. You have to look at it like a foreign language. If you ever go to another country and try to speak a new language, you will make all sorts of mistakes and stumble over your words. That's OK. Everyone does. The only way to get better is to forge ahead. Believe me, an attempt at a more feminine voice is no worse than the voice you're using now.

I seem to have some mental block that keeps me from getting it. What should I do?

If you've done all the exercises on this video and still do not feel like you're doing it right after several months of practicing, we offer voice consultations. Email us at info@deepstealth.com for details.

A note on the video's appendices

The video has an appendix with scales for helping you to find your pitch. Once you find your target pitch, I recommend recording a few seconds of it onto the front of your practice recording. That way you can always have your pitch on hand when you practice.

Conclusion

We are confident this book and the companion video will help you find your female voice. Many of the concepts in this book will make more sense when you have seen and heard them demonstrated on the video. You can purchase the program at <http://www.deepstealth.com/store> or by calling our distributor CustomFlix 1-800-853-6077.