

Quartet Rehearsal Organisation

Always Have a Plan!

- Know where you're going.
- Plan how to get there, including milestones along the way.
- Recognise success, and celebrate as you achieve each step by objectively monitoring your progress.

Warming Up Your Quartet

It doesn't have to take forever, but before you start singing your songs, you need to throw off the speech mechanisms you've been using all day and engage good singing technique instead.

Breathing

Stand in a lifted, relaxed, poised position, then do a few repetitions of a breathing exercise to flush out stale air and wake up muscle memory to the correct technique for singer's breathing.

Phonation / Resonance / Vocal Tone / Vowel Articulation

Use any simple exercise which displays a variety of vowels to practice efficient articulation of all vowels. Vowels are formed at the top of the windpipe, so we must keep our mouths and throats relaxed and open so as not to disrupt the tone flow. Keep all resonators open so that the tone can ring in the most natural way. Remember to match/compliment the lead tone quality.

Chord Tuning

Use a four-part exercise to practice correct Pythagorean tuning of chords as well as tone quality and instant intonation.

Other exercises for consonant enunciation (helpful for speedy word delivery) or sync can be added if they have particular relevance to material you want to cover that rehearsal.

These warmups should only take five minutes, but will leave you primed for correct technique as you start your songs.

Sound Ideals

The Judging Category Description Book (Sound Category) describes well-produced voices as having the following general characteristics:

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- The voice has consistency, with a seemingly even tone quality from the lowest register to the highest.
 - The voice has both ring, giving a sense of focus to the sound, and roundness, emanating from a throat that is open and free from tension.
 - The voice has energy and words flow smoothly.
 - The voice is free from tension and has warmth and colour.
 - The voice is flexible and capable of a wide variety of dynamics.
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