

SINGING SKILLS IN THE BARBERSHOP STYLE

- ★ Unaccompanied
- ★ Balance: cone-shaped sound (tenor, lead, baritone, bass)
- ★ Bass sing louder than other three parts (producing bass-y unit sound)
- ★ Director directs vocal line
- ★ Down beat vowel
- ★ Forward placement: hard palate focus
- ★ Rubatto style delivery for ballads
- ★ American English vowel sounds
- ★ Pythagorean tuning
- ★ Individuals produce a ringing, full, round sound with width, height and depth of resonance
- ★ Pleasing regular vibrato
- ★ Open throated sounds
- ★ Unity of sound
- ★ Performing art form (both sing and dnace)
- ★ Memorise literature

HEALTHY VOICE CHARACTERISTICS

- ★ **Well-coordinated sound:** one instrument with even quality from lowest register to highest register. Singer may be aware of difference – not apparent to the listener.
- ★ **Ping and roundness:** shimmer in tone. Buoyant and expressive – height, width, and depth in each tone.
- ★ **Forward quality:** words seem to pour naturally from lips.
- ★ **Flexible:** more than one type of tone available. Singer adds vocal colour and texture and becomes a musical actress. Use of tone colours and textures.
- ★ **Same vocal quality with wide variety of dynamics.** Warmth of interpretation results in ability to command constant graduation in dynamics.
- ★ **Pleasing and regular vibrato:** not a bleat. A *free* sound.

UNIFIED GOAL

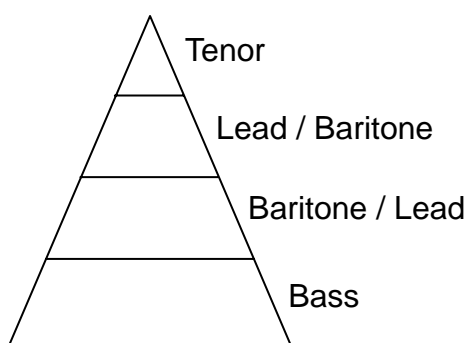
The goal is:

To sing the same thing, at the same time, with heart and soul.

A unit section barbershop sound can be developed by singing aggressively with good posture and proper vocal production, giving special attention to things like target vowels, singable consonants, proper breath support and vocal balance.

Reminders:

1. Keep our “**cone-shaped**” volume relationship / balance at all times.



2. Give your 100% all the time, not just at performances.
3. **Energy** in your body, face, and voice will make a better quality sound.
4. Good **vocal production** is the key to everything!

ROLES OF EACH VOCAL PART

Tenors	Work on accurately singing soft, light tones with no vibrato.
Leads	Work on singing pretty, using inflection (dynamic changes within words and / or phrases) and keeping the pitch “true”. Always lead.
Baritones	When you are above the leads: work to sing like a tenor; When you are below the leads: work to sing like a bass. This coning process helps to make the chords ring.
Basses	Sing hearty. Sing like a lead on your high notes and like a bass on the lower ones. You are responsible for keeping the tempo.

BREATH SUPPORT:

- ★ Good posture is the key. Visualise a smiley face stuck to your sternum (chest bone), and work to keep it raised as tall as you can when singing. This gives the lift in the right places.
- ★ Aim to have the appropriate breath support mechanism in place so you are able to sing your part alone, on pitch, while sitting down.

Rib expansion exercise: inhale 5 short breaths and hold, then 5 more and hold, and one final time 5 more and hold.

Building the abdomen: pretend that Brad Pitt has just walked into the room... pull tummy muscles in so as to make him think that you are ten pounds lighter.

ASSERTIVENESS / ENERGY:

- ★ Good posture is once again the key!!! It is always the first step towards good singing.
- ★ You must learn to sing your part assertively. This means that you will need to have confidence in what you are singing as well as your vocal production techniques.
- ★ Don't be afraid to make mistakes... to err is human! Hear them, accept them, and correct them. It's ok. Don't waste time covering up / justifying mistakes – just learn from them and “FIX IT”!

CONING:

- ★ We tend to blurt out the higher notes at full volume, and then we wonder why we can't sing the low ones louder / fuller than the high ones. We need to bring our awareness back to the way it needs to be done – which is just the opposite!
- ★ Use a yellow high-lighter and mark on your music all the notes that you feel are above your chest voice. Then use this as a reminder only:
 - When you have notes **above** the line, you need to sing with the **sound *right* behind your eyes**, travelling upwards toward the sky;
 - When you are **below** the line, you need to sing with more **width and depth**.