

Vocal Projection

Vocal Projection is the ability to “throw” your voice across large or loud spaces. When it is done correctly it allows you to speak or sing to expansive or spread our groups without harming your voice. Contrary to most people’s belief, volume does not come from the throat (this is screaming, and over time will not only lead to a very sore throat but in extreme circumstances can permanently damage your vocal cords) but from the diaphragm.

Examples where projection is used in its purest form are found within army marching “Jody’s.” Dropping the “t” at the end of “Left” and “Right” allows for an unobstructed open sound that will carry longer and farther. Unlike the clipped sound that ensues when the hard “t” is added.

The next few exercises are to get you accustomed to breathing and making sounds using your diaphragm

1. Place one hand on your stomach and one hand on your spine above your tailbone
 2. Take a deep breath from the bottom of your stomach, do not raise your shoulders
 3. Feel your stomach expand. This is the diaphragm, where voice projection starts
 4. Take a few deep breaths to feel where this muscle is
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1. Hold one finger in front of your face
 2. Take a deep breath from your diaphragm and blow across your finger as if it was a candle that you were trying to blow out
 3. Put your other hand on your stomach and feel your diaphragm tense when you blow out “the candle”
 4. Repeat this exercise and this time try to control how much air you release as you blow. (You will notice that with practice you will be able to make each breath last longer than the previous)
 5. Keep in mind what this feels like for later exercises

Practice projecting the following sounds

1. “HO”
2. “Ahh”
3. “Too”
4. “Bee”
5. Make sure you can feel your diaphragm tightening when you say these sounds

Another activity you can practice is to take a small piece of paper, like a 3x5 notecard and place it on the wall in front of your face. Use your diaphragm to blow out, using only your air, not your hands, to keep the notecard from falling down from the wall

Diction

Diction is the ability to speak clearly, without slurring words together. Good Diction not only allows you to be heard over large expanses but helps correct many of the distortions the ear can hear when being inundated with complex sounds. Practice the following sentences slowly, enunciating each syllable clearly.

Exercises

1. Diction is done with the tip of the tongue and the teeth
2. I am not the pheasant plucker, I’m the pheasant plucker’s son. I am only plucking pheasants ‘till the pheasant plucking’s done.
3. Betty Botter bought some butter, but she said the butter’s bitter. If I put it in my batter, it will make my batter bitter. So she bought some better butter and her batter was not bitter.
4. I thought a thought; but the thought I thought was not the thought I thought I thought
5. She sells sea shells by the sea shore