



JOYFUL TUNES

Research has shown that singing with others can make people feel happier.

How to...



Have more fun singing

Tune up your voice with these easy tips. Then belt out your favorite songs.

Most people sing at least sometimes. Maybe you like to hum show tunes in the car or sing along with musicians on your streaming playlist. But your voice, just like a guitar or flute, is actually an amazing instrument. And there are steps you can take to more seriously practice the art of singing. Here's what you need to know, plus fun ways to get started.

Think about posture

In the same way that you need to hold a guitar or flute correctly to play music, your body needs to be in the correct position to sing. It's hard to sing if you're slouching, so make sure you're standing up straight to start. Your chin should be parallel to the floor, with your shoulders back and down. Relax your hands at your sides, and keep your feet slightly apart with your knees comfortably bent, not straight.

Breathe smarter

Now pay attention to your breathing. Your breath is what fuels your voice, so it's important to use it correctly for singing. The key is to breathe from your diaphragm, not from your chest. Your diaphragm is a large muscle at the base of your lungs that gives you power to empty out air from your lungs. As you start to sing, keep your shoulders down and put your hand on your stomach. When you breathe from your

diaphragm, your belly will move inward and outward. As you take a breath in, your stomach should feel like it's expanding like a balloon. As you sing and release air, it will feel like it's deflating.

Work on pitch

Your pitch is how you vocalize the different notes that make up a song and how high or low they sound. One way to improve your pitch is to sing scales (a set of musical notes), which will help you learn which pitch goes with which notes. Practicing scales can also expand your vocal range (the number of different notes you can sing). Try it out with the Do Re Mi scale. In this basic scale, each of the notes (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C) corresponds to a syllable you sing (Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do). If you or a friend plays the piano, you can sing the scale while you play the notes on the piano. Or you can look up a "Do Re Mi" scale video on YouTube with help from an adult.



Sing along with piano notes.

Sing out

The best way to learn to sing is by singing often! This could mean belting out tunes at home or doing karaoke with friends. It could also include trying activities that give you a lot of practice, like signing up for your school choir, participating in youth music at a place of worship, or auditioning for a local musical theater production.

4 songs that are great to learn

It's helpful to choose songs with simple lyrics, a small range of notes, and a regular rhythm. You can look up the words on a website like lyrics.com or sing along to an online video. Here are four songs to try.

"How Far I'll Go" by Auli'i Cravalho

Songs from Disney movies are good for learning to sing because they're

written to be easy to memorize. This song from the movie *Moana* also has a repetitive melody that can help beginners work on their pitch.

"Mamma Mia" by ABBA

This high-energy tune from the Swedish group ABBA is also the title of a Broadway show and a movie. It's a perfect way to try out musical theater and a great song for new singers because the entire piece is sung in the same key.

"Shake It Off" by Taylor Swift

If you like to dance, this tune could be for you.

The verses are upbeat and repetitive, which makes it simple and fun to sing. Combine it with your best dance moves for a rocking performance.

"I Can See Clearly Now" by Johnny Nash

Your parents may call this 1970s hit song an oldie but a goodie. The pace is mid-tempo (meaning not too fast or too slow), so the notes can be hit easily.