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## The Well Developed Ear



### ***Every vocal ‘ship’ needs a great ‘rudder’ – says Kim Chandler***

This is an area that I’m most passionate about, which is why I’ve left it till near the end of my residency to cover – the necessity of training the ear equally alongside the voice.

So much vocal coaching emphasises the technical aspects of singing, as it rightly should.

But in my opinion, there’s not much point building a mechanically perfect vocal “ship” if it doesn’t have an equally excellent “rudder” to guide it through the seas of singing performance.

Your ear is that rudder.

Of course it’s necessary to have dynamic posture, effective support, optimised breathing, balanced & varied tone production, even & controlled vibrato, a well-developed vocal range, precise agility and articulation.

But your pitch accuracy, rhythmic phrasing and general musical tastefulness are the province of the well-developed ear.

## **How Do We Develop Our Ear?**

I strongly believe all singers should be every bit as musically educated as instrumentalists.

After all, we are all musicians together and should be equally knowledgeable about the 'grammar' and 'vocabulary' of music.

You can learn the main musical concepts and terminology through music theory training, but then it's also very important to be able to effortlessly recognise musical patterns with your ear via extensive ear training.

There are many affordable ear training packages available online such as [www.earmaster.com](http://www.earmaster.com).

## **Vocalising Musical Patterns**

However, I encourage vocalists specifically to routinely vocalise the musical patterns they encounter in the music they sing: intervals, the major scale, the various minor scales, pentatonic scales, blues scale, the various modes, the main 3, 4 and 5-note chords arpeggiated etc.

I developed my third product "Funky 'n Fun 3" to aid singers in this quest.

The benefits of routinely vocalising different musical patterns are numerous.

Apart from the obvious improvements to technique and making you a better singer/musician, it can positively influence your song-writing and make you more effective in the recording studio where precision is paramount.

-Kim Chandler

## **My Reactions to This Past Week's Peer Review Vids**

[Alex Holmes](#) – I Just Can't Lie (Original)

You have a sweetness and honesty that comes through your voice. You sing with a heartfelt delivery and good dynamic contrast. However, the note definition in your vocal embellishments could be better executed with more practice, and your sung accent is slightly unusual & quirky in places – if you like this then that's your prerogative as an artist, but if you don't, then it's


something to work on with a coach.

## Naelene Camillo – Please Don't Go”(Cover)

I'm a great supporter of people doing covers with their own flavour & style and your version of this song works well. You have the makings of a good commercial pop voice, but currently your vibrato is too slow and this will need addressing with a coach. Finally, as much as it sounds nice, the breathy tone you're using is causing noisy in-breaths and some vocal instability (see my article on this site: [“Breathing & Support”](#)).

-Kim Chandler



**Kim Chandler is one of the UK's top contemporary vocal coaches. She has a busy private studio in London and her clients include well-known artists, artists in development, professional singers and other vocal coaches. She is a director of the British Voice Association, and is the creator of the popular [“Funky ‘n Fun”](#)  vocal training series.**

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