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## Warm-ups and Cool-downs



***Every singer needs a “ramp” from their speaking voice to their singing voice – says Kim Chandler.***

This week I’m going to address what I’ve found to be a largely misunderstood area: vocal warm-ups and cool-downs.

I’ve met many singers who “warm-up” for upwards of half an hour to an hour before a gig – this is complete overkill and eats into the reserves of vital energy needed for the performance.

Warm-ups and cool-downs can be likened to the vocal equivalent of pre- and post-training stretches you’d do before and after a run or working out in the gym.

The warm-up phase prepares the voice for a workout and cool-down phase

stretches the vocal cords out again afterwards.

## **Where? When? What? How long?**

**Where?** Wherever you can, I say! Somewhere where you're not disturbing others too much. The car isn't an ideal location because: a) you're probably driving(!), b) the posture isn't right for singing, and c) you're competing with road noise.

**When?** Whenever you're about to vocally exert yourself, i.e. at a live gig, recording session, practice session, rehearsal etc.

**What?** General body stretches are a good place to start, releasing the body of tension and giving the mind the chance to focus the task ahead. The easiest, most effective vocal exercises for warming up in my opinion are 'sirens', i.e. sliding smoothly over your whole vocal range on lip trills, tongue trills, humming, "ng", "vvv" or "zzz" etc. They should start gently and increase in intensity & range as you warm-up. Cool-down sirens should be gentle and preferably descending in order to calm everything down again after a vocal workout.

**How long?** If your voice is healthy and in good shape, a warm-up or cool-down should only be around 5 minutes long. After all, warm-ups are only a 'ramp' to get you into your singing voice from your everyday speaking voice (vice versa for cool-downs). However, they may need to be a little longer if your voice is tired, out of condition or you're a little ill.

*-Kim Chandler*

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

**Lydia Drayton** – "Someone Like You" (Adele Cover)

It was an interesting angle to use guitar accompaniment for this song when the original uses piano accompaniment. You have a sweet, fresh-sounding, honest vocal, however I don't feel you found the emotional 'gravitas' that this song requires. There needs to be a big dynamic contrast between the vocal delivery of the verses and choruses. On a technical note, watch your posture when you sing and make sure your louder singing isn't too breathy.

**Rose-Marie** – "Perfect" (Pink Cover)


Whilst it was admirable that you accompanied yourself on piano for this

song when the original is very guitar-based, unfortunately it seemed to be a somewhat of a distraction to you in this performance. Your voice though is strong, appealing and shows real potential. The fact that you can still belt it out so well sitting down and playing leads me to want to hear you when you're standing up and really going for it – watch out world!

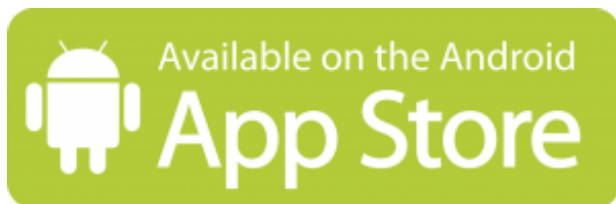
*If you're signed up to VoiceCouncil's Peer-Review, you'll be receiving unique coaching feedback from Kim for the next 5 weeks. You can sign up [here](#)*

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**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.**

***Kim's Voice Cross Trainer App is available now. It's based on her popular “Funky ‘n Fun”  vocal training series.***



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