

How to Sing Without Lifting Your Larynx

I get asked a lot on my [YouTube channel](#) about how to sing without your larynx shooting up really high behind your chin. This can be challenging to any singer – beginner or advanced. We naturally raise our larynx when we speak and swallow so it can easily carry over into our singing – unfortunately it's doesn't help our singing at all. A slight raise of the larynx is necessary for some vocal effects like twanging the epilottal tunnel but in general it's unhealthy for singing.

So what can we do to help us disconnect from raising the larynx when we sing? Try this exercise on for size.

1. Imitate the face of an ape or monkey saying "oo, oo, oo" – your jaw should be low and the lips outstretched uniformly to form a small, round opening. (yes -you will look silly)
2. With an "OO" sound, start in your middle range and slide down gently to your lowest note in one continuous sound. It should sound like an old air raid siren winding down. The slide down should be slow and as even as possible.
3. Slip into an "AH" sound at the very bottom each time you do it.
4. Gradually raise the pitch you start on step by step. Continue to let the "OO" sound drop and turn into the "AH" as you reach your lowest note.
5. Continue raising the start pitch until you start singing in falsetto and the "OO" slides through your break area. **IMPORTANT:** Don't make any changes in how you physically do the notes or change your volume to get through the break area.
6. Keep the exercises as deep as possible by keeping your jaw low and the lips puckered forward. Your lips may tremble a bit as a result of the tension you are opposing, but that's ok. Let it happen.

What's Going On

The "monkey face" is not used for singing those vowel sounds, but for disconnecting the muscles that lift the larynx. The "lifter muscles" as they are called, are part of the chain of swallowing and when they are stretched the larynx is given some freedom. The slide down in pitch helps coordinate the muscles used for making pitch – but nothing else. It's common to have some falling off of the notes at first because the larynx isn't used to acting by itself. That's ok. Let it happen. It gets better the more you do this exercise.

The goal of this exercise is to achieve a very slow and smooth slide down through the break area without a flip in the voice or any extra effort. This helps promote depth in your singing and control of the pitch without using any external muscles that just aren't needed.

Once you become comfortable with exercise, add a return slide back up to your starting pitch and that "OO" sound. This not only helps disconnect the lifting muscles but also aids in breath support. If you run out of air before you get back to the top – go back and do some more breathing exercises.

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