



703

Register

If you have any trouble with these exercises, there may be some physiological or other reason affecting your voice, in which case please seek professional advice, either from your doctor or from a qualified voice coach.

In all these cases, it will pay to record yourself doing the exercise and listen back afterwards.

If your home base is in the **falsetto** register, take a deep breath and sing a comfortable note, then move it down like an elevator smoothly descending until you feel a break in your voice. Below that is your modal register. Explore it. Sing some notes there, each time taking a deep breath. Now read some text and listen to the difference in your voice. This is where your power lies. Practice, and you can stay here.

If your natural home base is in the **modal** register (nasal, head, throat or chest voice), then your task is to practice moving from one voice to another. It takes practice to do this without sounding comical – in my workshops, people exploring chest voice for the first time tend to sound very unnatural and they always end up laughing! Be persistent in your practice and you will develop proficiency and consciousness.



Simply start speaking, either repeating something meaningless like the 'one-two' used by live sound engineers, or reading some text. Now visualise your voice coming from your nose, then your head, then your throat, and finally your chest. Feel the resonance and vibration in each location, and listen to the difference as you move your voice from one place to the next. In particular, when you move down to chest voice, put your hand on your chest and feel it resonating; really experience the greater depth and lower tone that result. This exercise will develop your ability to place your voice appropriately for every occasion, and especially to deploy the chest voice when you want to speak powerfully.

If your home base is the **vocal fry** register, you need to move to modal if you want to be well received (unless you happen to be in a social circle where vocal fry is the norm and it would be socially alienating to speak normally). Use Jane's breathing exercises in chapter eight, because vocal fry tends to result from using very little breath when speaking. At the very least, take a deep breath before each sentence and focus on hearing your full, rich voice, with no pops or croaks. Also concentrate on making the last word of your sentences as strong as the first, because vocal fry tends to be strongest at that point.