

# IG LIVE VOCAL CHEAT SHEET

*Last updated: November 2022*

*If I could wave a magic wand and make your biggest vocal challenge disappear...*

## Day 1

### Biggest Vocal Challenge:

"Developing a clear chest voice, instead of only singing a mix of mid & head voice"

[Check out the video](#)

**Key Tools:** Talking vs. Singing

1. Speak the tricky phrase **in rhythm** and roughly **at pitch**. Notice how little air you needed to speak the words for the appropriate duration and pitch.
2. Now, prepare to sing the tricky phrase but **stop before you sing** - NOTICE, how was your preparation to "sing" different to your preparation to speak? Did you recruit extra "work" that you didn't use when you were simply speaking?
3. Release any extra tensions or "projection" that you recruited from your singing habits and try the phrase again. Merely speak on pitch to find your clear "chest voice"

Helpful cues while practicing

1. Think "up and back"
2. Cover your ears as in the video (hands facing away from your mouth), which will change your acoustic perception of your voice and encourage you to stay in a more speech-like vocal posture

Key Traps

**Blowing too much air.** The thing that makes "chest voice" feel uncomfortable is pushing air. There is no need to take a gulping big breath or squeeze your abs or throat to make this sound - in fact, those things just make your voice want to crack or close up!

Want to work with me or join a class? Check out [www.scotthallvoicestudio.co.nz](http://www.scotthallvoicestudio.co.nz) for all of the options or send me an email at [scot@scotthallvoicestudio.co.nz](mailto:scot@scotthallvoicestudio.co.nz) :)

## Day 2

### Biggest Vocal Challenge:

“The inability to do pretty singing! It’s belt or nothing around here 🤪”

[Check out the video](#)

**Key Tools:** Find your hungry puppy dog whimper!

1. Whimper like a hungry puppy dog. Notice where you feel the effort (I feel it across my cheek bones heading back towards my ears)
2. Sustain this feeling (really!) and breathe in and out.
3. Whimper some more!
4. Sustaining the feeling of the whimper (quieter, sweeter, longer) sing the target line from your song.

Helpful tools while practicing

1. Sing your target phrase on the word “you” with a smooth onset, as described in the video. Then shift between “you you you” and the text.
2. Cup your ears as in the video (hands facing towards your mouth), which will change your acoustic perception of your voice and encourage you to stay in a more singsong-like vocal posture

Key Traps

**Blowing too much air.** The thing that makes sweet, lyrical singing turn breathy is... breath. Pushing air is never your friend. Avoid squeezing the sound/breath out using your abs or your throat. It can help to imagine the sound is coming from your soft palate (the roof of your mouth at the back). (Even though it isn't). (Really). (the sound comes from your vocal folds). (in your throat). (and that's ok). 🤪

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## Day 3

### Biggest Vocal Challenge:

“Mixing 😞”

[Check out the video](#)

**Key Tools:** Find your larynx!

1. Put your fingers on your larynx (also known as your adams apple or voicebox). You can find it by putting two fingers on the front of your throat and swallowing - you'll feel it rise and fall.
2. Say 'hey, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (your name)
3. Say “I’m a sleepy bear” in a tired, pre-yawn skilly voice. Feel your larynx lower
4. Say “oh my gosh you guys!” in a young, childlike voice. Feel your larynx rise.
5. Notice which movement (low/high) feels more natural for you. This is just data. Both movements are natural and happen every day.
6. Practice these movements so you can do them on demand
7. \* look out! Check that when you move in the less natural direction, you aren't pushing breath to try to make the movement happen. You're practicing just isolating the movement of your larynx in this training exercise

### Let It Rise

1. Now sing a simple scale from you low to middle range or just do a slide on “ee”
2. Repeat and think of the sleepy bear as you go, your larynx will lower.
3. Repeat and think of “oh my gosh you guys” as you go. Your larynx will rise.

Let your larynx rise when it wants to and add a little bit of cry (whimper - check out yesterday's video) and you'll be well on your way to what most people think of as a musical theatre mix! The work is in the setup, not the breath! Hooray!

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## Day 4

### Biggest Vocal Challenge: “Straining when belting”

[Check out the video](#)

**Key Tools:** Spontaneous call.

1. Find your spontaneous “call” across the street. “Ay!” “oi!”. This is an open, clear sound. If it’s coming out strained or angsty, make it into a happy call - like seeing an old friend.
2. Notice how much breath you take. Likely, none at all if it’s really spontaneous.
3. Take the word that you’re belting in your song, and call it out in the same way
4. Prepare to sing the target phrase
5. Did you take a much bigger breath when you went into your singing habit?
6. Restart. Breathe out a little, so you don’t feel internal pressure, then sing the phrase
7. Did that feel more comfortable and belty?

#### Common Traps

1. Sometimes our singing habit is to always have a little breath “just in case” when we sing. This will really compromise your belt. Find that spontaneous call.
2. You might feel that without a bigger breath you don’t have anything to push against. **Great.** Go with that. Everything might start to get easier.

Look, there’s more to belt than one little magic trick. This is a tool to put into your existing practice to see how it helps - it’ll get you pulling on a thread for your own vocal journey. Working with a teacher on your belt might identify further shifts that really make that belt fly! But taking the breath pressure away is a surefire way to make it safer, clearer, louder and more fun! (and stop the cracks 🙌).

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