

Straw Exercises 1

Breathing through a straw enables you to practice controlling your breath stream. Singing through a straw narrows the vocal tract and enables you to exercise the vocal folds whilst putting very little pressure on them. This can help both to relax and 'reset' your voice if it is sore and tired, and also to warm up and gently exercise and stretch the muscles in your voice before singing or speaking. If you find the exercises fatiguing, just do a couple of minutes at a time, resting when you need to. The little and often rule will help your voice most effectively.

With all of these exercises, remember to let other parts of your body relax, especially shoulders and neck.

Breathing:

1. Hold a straw to your lips and breathe out. Try to control the breath and keep the flow steady and slow.
2. Put the other end of the straw in a glass of water (just a little water and a tall glass if possible, to reduce splashing!). Try to control the breath and keep the flow steady and slow.

Singing:

You can do these exercises first just through the straw into mid-air, and then repeat them into the cup of water.

1. Slide notes up and down - start in the middle and go as low as you can then travel up from the middle as high as you can.

2. Make a sound like a motorbike revving, feel like each rev is coming from your belly, not your throat.
3. Sing your favourite song through the straw.

Don't let any air out through the corners of your lips or your nose. Pinch your nose to check that no air is escaping that way. When the water

Problem solving: if there are bubbles in the water when you do the humming part, you're aiming to reduce the flow of bubbles whilst still making a humming noise. If you are not making bubbles when you hum through the straw and into the water, you can try these things (they won't all help, but hopefully one of them will help you crack it!)

1. Pinch your nose and/or the corners of your mouth to stop air escaping that way.
2. Start by making bubbles in the water and then adding the singing without stopping the bubbles.
3. Start by singing into the straw and then try to add the blowing without stopping the sound.
4. Start by humming without the straw, with your mouth in the shape it would be if you had a straw there, and put the palm of your hand near your lips so you can feel if the air is coming from your mouth. If it isn't, stop making the sound and just blow (as if through a straw) onto your palm. Then try to add the singing sound. Once you've got it without the straw, add the straw and try to keep doing the same thing, first out of the water, then in.

Good luck and enjoy! 😊