



**Vocal tone therapists**

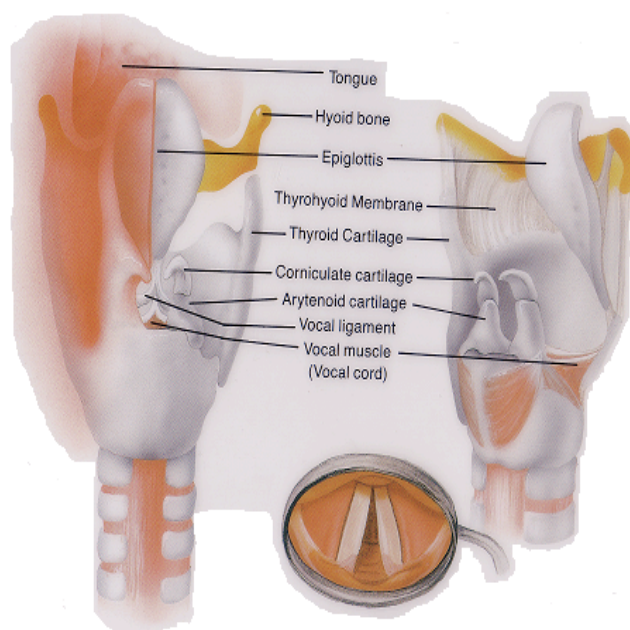
**Free Online Lessons**  
**An Introduction**  
**to**  
**The Inner Vocals**  
**Technique**  
**Lesson 3**

## Vocal tone therapists

### Lesson 3: The Larynx

#### The Role of The Larynx

**The Larynx (voice box)**



**Vocal Folds or cords**



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The larynx lies between the Trachea (windpipe) and the Pharynx (throat), the upper part of the airway (see Fig 1).

It consists of sections of tough flexible cartilage that protrudes at the front of the larynx to form the 'Adam's apple'. Partly covering the larynx is the epiglottis - a pear shaped sheet of elastic cartilage - which moves on swallowing, blocking the larynx so preventing food from entering the windpipe.

The thyroid cartilage is linked to the trachea by the cricoid cartilage, which is shaped rather like a signet ring.

Between this and the inner surface of the Adam's apple, are two fibrous membranes, known as vocal folds, which are responsible for voice production.

Men's vocal folds measure between 20--35mm and women's between 15-20mm. If the muscles of the larynx, which are activated by nerves leading to the brain, are damaged the vocal folds become paralysed leading to voice loss.



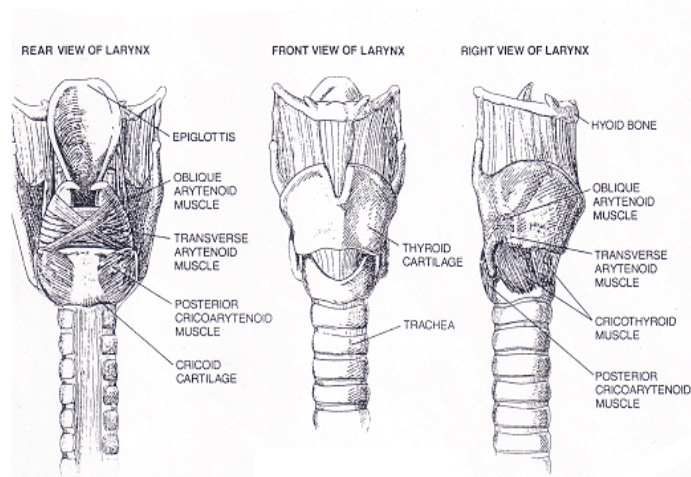
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Now, imagine a trumpet player and a trumpet. The trumpet player takes a breath and blows through his lips. The lips become the vibrator or vocal folds of the trumpet. Try this little experiment; hold your lips together very tightly and blow, you will hear a buzzing sound. It is this vibration of the lips that first sound the trumpet, enabling it to resonate.

So, as you can see, the mouth of the trumpet player becomes the larynx for the trumpet and the lips the vocal folds. This is a very crude and basic explanation of the larynx, but I am sure that you get my drift. Just as with our voices, it is the air passing through the vocal folds that caused them to vibrate and go on to be resonated.

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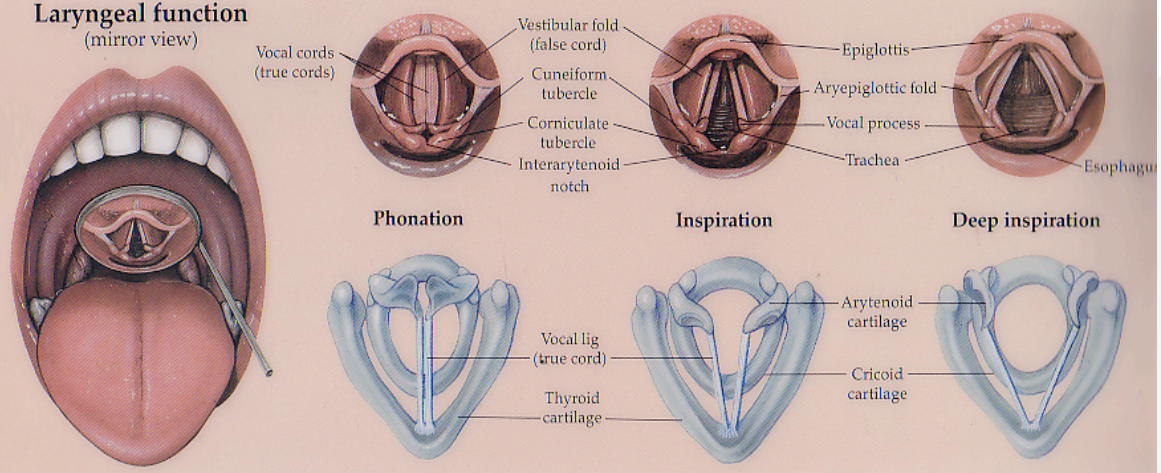
### The Larynx



### Anatomy of the Voice

The function of the vocal folds largely depends on the amount of air flowing up the trachea from the lungs. The vocal folds can produce three main tones and they are: "Creack" = least air pressure, "Modle" = medium air pressure and "Falsetto" = highest air pressure. For optimum use of the larynx, correct breathing technique is essential (Diaphragmatic breathing). Remember, minimum effort equals maximum output.

### Laryngeal function (mirror view)







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Most of the time the vocal folds lie apart forming a triangular space called the Glottis, through which the air we breathe passes (see Fig 2). When we speak, the muscles beneath the vocal folds close, forming a narrow slit that vibrates as the air passes through. Surprisingly, it is not this passage of air that causes the vibration. Nerve impulses from the brain travel to the larynx causing change in the pressure in the vocal folds. It is this that creates sound. The pharynx, mouth and nose act as echo chambers, which modulate sounds and create vocal resonance.

The vocal folds can vibrate in one of three ways: creak, mode or falsetto, it all depends on how much air is used. The least amount of air makes a creak sound; the intermediate amount makes a mode sound and the most makes falsetto.

Controlling the vocal folds largely depends on how we control the air we let out of our lungs before it reaches the vocal folds.



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We use our modle voice a lot for speech. It is our main speaking voice, but our modle voice can lean from one extreme “creak” to another “falsetto”. We must learn how to control our vocal folds with our breathing, so that we can choose which tone we would like to use instead of being limited to just one tone.

**Remember, when using the vocal folds it's: Minimum effort for maximum output, because it's the breathing that counts!**



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### Practice and Warm Ups

Practice once or twice daily but not for two hours after a meal.

We recommend that you practice at performance level for at least one (1) hour a day after a good warm up session and scales for anything from thirty minutes to an hour.

It often helps to decide on regular practice time and stick to it. It is easy to miss your practice if you do it at a different time each day.

You could visit our website and practice with our Free Online Lessons, where you can find our vocal gymnasium.

#### **REMEMBER:**

***The voice is a living instrument and is just as important as any other organ in the body. And just as our bodies need some form of exercise so do our voices.***

The Singers' Surgery  
[info@singersurgery.co.uk](mailto:info@singersurgery.co.uk)  
[www.singersurgery.co.uk](http://www.singersurgery.co.uk)

Tel: 08712 003 707





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