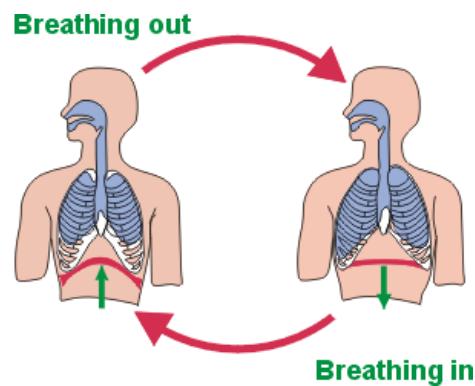


## Voice Control

There was a test once, and it was found that people that have a **deep bass voice**, people that know how to **make plenty of pauses**, and people that **take their time when they speak**, are more interesting to listen to.

You can control your voice by how you breathe. This is done, by trying to breathe deeply from your diaphragm and not shallow from your upper lungs. Open your mouth, stick out your tongue and pant like a dog. That muscle you feel yourself using is the diaphragm.



All babies and animals breath using the diaphragm. As we stress and move on in life, we make the error and start breathing shallower. There is a misunderstanding in western society. Breathing high, will not only make you less calm, but will also make you seem more defensive.

Normally, a high pitched voice reminds us of being less calm. Remember the first time you spoke in public, or the last time you were defending your self about something. Your voice was a pitch higher than normal.

If you want to stay calm: keep your breathing deep and your voice as bass as it can go. This will stop any unwanted stress feedback.

### Exercises:

#### **Breathing from your diaphragm.**

Inhale from your diaphragm. Push your stomach up like a balloon. Count silently 1-2-3-4 while inhaling. Count 4-3-2-1 silently while exhaling.

**Resonance**

Inhale deeply again. Exhale slowly while resonating from your chest. You should feel the resonance down to your belly. Avoid the nose or the throat. Your exhale should be stable with no tone changes and with no added effort.

**Resonance Speaking**

Perform the same, but this time say all the different vocals in the alphabet, until all of them sound with the same tone. You may spot some that are less bass than others. Work them.

**Volume**

There are two main ways to speak louder:

1. take a deep breath, increasing lung volume to take advantage of higher pressures due to the natural “push” lungs provide when they are over filled.
2. increased muscle tension and pressure by squeezing abdominal or stomach muscles.

1 & 2 together. A combination of increased recoil pressure and increasing expiratory muscle tension appears to be the most efficient, and requires the least muscular effort from the speaker. Make sure you take deep, slow breaths while speaking-- not quick gasps of air.

**Other tips:**

- Be sure your voice is warmed up. All you need to do is practice a bit or do some vocal exercises.
- Drink water to keep hydrated and make speaking easier.
- Practice speaking over noise (like the vacuum cleaner or the shower) to help increase volume. Don't strain your voice, but work up to increasing volume and projection over the noise.

**Speaking Speed**

If you slow down your speech rate it improves intelligibility of what you say. In a large room there is more echo, and your voice will take longer to reach the far seats.

The average rate of speech is about 125-150 words per minute, but this can really skyrocket if you get nervous.

Listen to the following famous speech. How fast is the man speaking?

**Pronunciation**

You should aim to pronounce each word properly. This might mean you have to practice or change the word if you are having difficulties with it.

**Tongue-twisters**

"A sequence of words, often alliterative, difficult to articulate quickly." (Oxford English Dictionary)

1.

Betty Botter had some butter,  
"But," she said, "this butter's bitter.  
If I bake this bitter butter,  
it would make my batter bitter.  
But a bit of better butter--  
*that* would make my batter better."

So she bought a bit of butter,  
better than her bitter butter,  
and she baked it in her batter,  
and the batter was not bitter.  
So 'twas better Betty Botter  
bought a bit of better butter.

2.

She sells seashells on the sea shore.  
but the seashells that she sells aren't seashells at all!  
So the shells she sells are surely not seashells.  
I'm sure she sells seashore shells no more.

3.

A flea and a fly flew up in a flue.  
Said the flea, "Let us fly!"  
Said the fly, "Let us flee!"  
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

4.

How much wood would a woodchuck cut  
if a woodchuck could cut wood?  
He would cut, he would, as much as he could,  
and cut as much wood as a woodchuck would  
if a woodchuck could cut wood.

5.

A tree toad loved a she-toad  
Who lived up in a tree.  
He was a two-toed tree toad  
But a three-toed toad was she.  
The two-toed tree toad tried to win  
The three-toed she-toad's heart,  
For the two-toed tree toad loved the ground  
That the three-toed tree toad trod.  
But the two-toed tree toad tried in vain.  
He couldn't please her whim.  
From her tree toad bower  
With her three-toed power  
The she-toad vetoed him.

6.

You've no need to light a night-light  
On a light night like tonight,  
For a night-light's light's a slight light,  
And tonight's a night that's light.  
When a night's light, like tonight's light,  
It is really not quite right  
To light night-lights with their slight lights  
On a light night like tonight.

7.

Pretty Kitty Creighton had a cotton batten cat.  
The cotton batten cat was bitten by a rat.  
The kitten that was bitten had a button for an eye,  
And biting off the button made the cotton batten cat cry.

8.

Theophiles Thistler, the successful thistle-sifter,  
in sifting a sieve full of un-sifted thistles,  
thrust three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb.  
Theophiles Thistler let out a whistle,  
professional thistle-sifting's no fun.

## Verbal Fillers

Verbal fillers or “Junk words” are used in speech to give the speaker time to think of what he or she wants to say. These words are used during everyday conversation to tell the listener, “I’m not finished talking yet; I’m still thinking.”

Junk words are great for everyday conversation management, but they become a problem when they leak into public speaking.

**Some junk words:**

uh  
um  
ah  
well  
you know  
kind of  
like  
and

The problem stems from the fact that public speaking is NOT everyday conversation, therefore everyday conversation management techniques are redundant.

At a speech the audience is passive and very unlikely to butt-in and start talking. This is the primary use of junk words - to stop the other guy talking.

During a speech the audience does not have to think about what they will say next. This releases some of their brain to concentrating on other things; including noticing the junk words.

### Counting Junk Words

We will record a spoken interview and then listen and count the junk words!

### How to reduce the junk words

When you feel or sense a junk word coming, STOP TALKING! That’s a dramatic way of saying, pause. Then you can start talking again with a valuable word rather than a junk word.

*Talk like you write, not like you think.*

For practice, read aloud the message in the box below. Then read it again, substituting a pause every time you get to a junk word (in brackets).

Our new (uh) program will add significantly (you know) to our (uh) bottom line. (and uh) We can move to the top five (uh) companies in (uh) customer service rankings. We can enter the (uh) emerging markets in (you know) India and (uh) Brazil. (and) Our shareholder value (uh) will be enhanced.

**Substituting Junk Words**

Another technique is to substitute junk words for similar filling words that sound more formal. For example:

- therefore
- in terms of
- as I said
- again
- I mean