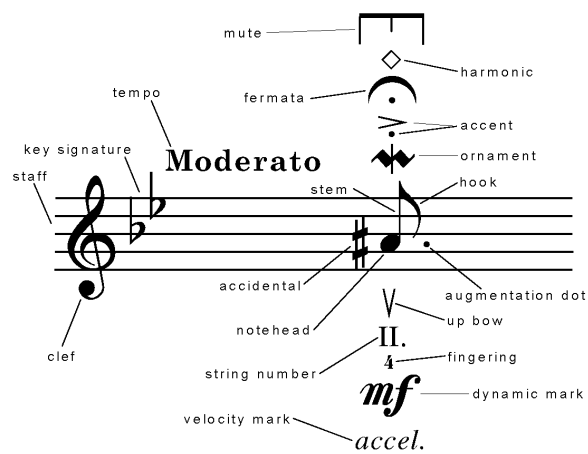


Sing Your Life

A Voice for a Lifetime in 30 Days!



PRESENTS



THE ART OF MUSICIANSHIP

By Chrys Page

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The Art of Musicianship

"How do you know when there's a female vocalist at your front door?"

"She can't find the keys and she doesn't know when to come in."

That was a joke my high school choir director told the entire choir one afternoon after several sopranos missed their entrance. Everyone laughed...except the sopranos.

It's a well-known fact my friends, that singers, especially female singers do not get a lot of respect among musicians. I believe the reason for this, and my experience has born me out, is that many singers fail to learn the basic concepts of music, relying instead on the appeal of their voices and their looks to carry the day.

Voice appeal carries a lot of weight. No doubt, a beautiful voice can capture an audience! I won't argue with that! But the complete entertainer knows that staying power needs more.

I'm reminded of Barbra Streisand's "Broadway" album. She brought the idea for the album, (they called them *albums* in the old days) to her producers. They were shocked! "Why would you want to put something like this out? This doesn't sell. No one will buy this. You gotta stay current...do another rock 'n roll album, not this stuff."

She even sang about it on the first cut of the "Broadway" album, writing new lyrics to the song, "Putting it Together". And she *did* release the album, and it sold a "gazillion" copies.

Okay, so she's a star and can have her own way with her choices of material. But she would not have had those choices if she didn't know what she was doing or talking about. Britany Spears was a big star too. Do you think she chose her material? Think again!

To stay on top, to have control over the orchestrations, the visual effects of performance, the right combinations of instruments that will enhance the song and express your character, personality, your ESSENCE, you MUST KNOW the music!

A student of mine steps up to the mic to sing a song. I sit at the keyboard ready to accompany him or her. I ask, "What key's it in?" The student answers, "uh...I don't know...like this," and starts singing.

This drives me crazy!

But then I realize that you don't know because you don't know music.

- Do you know what keys are best for your voice?
- Do you know solfeggio, (Do-Re-Mi, etc)?
- Do you know what an Interval is?
- Do you know how many measures there are in a standard introduction?
- Do you know the difference between the major and minor scales and chords?

These and many other questions will be answered here in *"The Art of Musicianship"*, and I can hear you already.

"Why do I need to know all that stuff? Just give me the microphone, and I'll sing the song."

Let me tell you a story...

When I was 8, my mother took me downtown to Rockefeller Center to audition for a talent show that was nationally televised on NBC called "The Children's Hour.

I had practiced my song, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and knew the words and melody cold. My mother had purchased the sheet music so we would have something to give to the accompanist that was there at the audition ready to play for all the applicants. I had not practiced with the sheet music, but with a recording I had of Judy Garland singing the song.

When it was my turn, I confidently got up onto the stage while my mother gave the accompanist the sheet music. The accompanist began to play. Never having heard this particular version of "Over the Rainbow", I wasn't prepared and didn't know when to start singing. The piano player banged out my starting note and I began to sing.

Almost immediately, I realized that I was singing in a much higher key than I was used to, or had practiced in, and some of the higher notes were way out of my range so that I was forced to sort of squeak them out.

Needless to say, my audition was total failure! I was devastated! But I learned a good lesson! Even at the tender age of eight, I vowed to never audition for anything again unless I was sure of the music. By the time I got to college, I had studied piano and music theory and I *was* a musician!

And the very first band I auditioned for was a small combo that had advertised for a lead singer on the bulletin board in the Student Union of the college where I got my undergraduate degree. I had never sung with a band before, only a piano, but I needed money to stay in school, and I knew about 1500 songs, having been listening to the radio for years and memorizing all the songs I heard. I was scared, but I got up enough nerve to try out with this band.

I walked into the studio and handed the piano player my music. The song was "Someone to Watch Over Me".

"I know this." The piano player said. "You can keep the sheet", and he started to play an introduction.

"Excuse me," I said, "but you're playing it in Eb, and I sing it in Ab. I've written out the chords for you if you need them." And I again handed him the sheet.

"Wow!" he said. "You know your keys. If you sound half decent, you got the job, lady!"

He started playing...in my key...and I sang the song.

I sang with that band all through college. We got our own TV show in Ithaca, New York, and we had jobs every weekend for the full 4 years I was there. It was just the jump- start that my singing career needed.

I tell you this, not to go down memory lane, but to emphasize the importance of *knowing the music!*

If you want to be respected in the music business, you need to command it! And you command it by knowing your music!

Okay, so let's get started.

The Correct Keys for Your Voice.

The very first thing you're going to need to know is what keys you sing in.

This means you need to know the lowest note you can sing comfortably, and the highest note you can sing.

If you don't have any musical instruments in the house, you can pick up a pitch pipe at any music store for under \$10, and use that. Although once again, I will recommend that you keep a keyboard of some type or guitar around and get familiar with playing it.

Most melodies are written using notes that are within about an octave and a half of each other, that is, 17 notes. Take a look at a keyboard. Count **all** of notes starting with Middle C, up to the C above Middle C, and then 4 more notes.

When I say notes, I mean the white ones AND the black ones.

If you play the Middle C and then go to the black note to the right of it, and play THAT one, you are playing a C# and it's one half (1/2) step away from Middle C.

Let's say you sing a song in the key of "C". If the starting note in the "G" below Middle "C", chances are that it doesn't go much higher than the "C" above Middle "C".

Using your pitch pipe or keyboard, or any musical instrument, play any note and match it with your voice.

Now look and see what note you sang. If it was in a comfortable place for you, then use that note as your starting point. Now, sing the next note up, (using "C" as the starting note, the next note up would be "C#"), and then the next, continuing until you have reached the highest note you can in your *full* voice. That means *without* breaking into your *falsetto* or head voice.

Now go back to your starting note and sing the next note down, (again, using "C" as the starting note, the next down would be "Bb"), and the next until you reach the lowest note you can sing comfortably. It's important that you do not go lower than is comfortable, because you can do damage to your vocal cords by trying to sing too low.

Singing high does not hurt your voice. Singing too low can.

A flute can go as high as piccolo, but a piccolo cannot go as low as a flute. Your body type, frame, weight, etc. governs how low you can go. Going high is only dictated by your desire, commitment and practice. (By comfortable, I mean sufficient volume and tone quality in your natural full voice.)

It's occurred to me since the original publishing of this eBook that many students who read it really didn't understand this concept of range, so let me try to clarify the point, okay?

Singers, especially those who don't play an instrument, have a hard time with the "keys" business, and understanding the **range** and **register** of a song, so I am hopeful that these additional examples will help to have this knowledge "click" into your cell memory.

First, let's go over the basics to know in order to find the best keys for you to sing in: (and I'm going to help you with that)

- The name of the **Lowest** comfortable note you are able to sing with power and quality.
- The name of the **Highest** comfortable note you are able to sing with power and quality.
- The Difference between a **RANGE** of notes, and a **REGISTER**.
- How to Hear the starting note of a song.
- How to Hear and understand "Do" (pronounced "dough", as in "dough, ray, mee") or, **What the Heck is "Solfeggio" and Why Do you need it?**
- How to play a major triad - (example: C - E - G) on a keyboard or guitar.

One of the things I have noticed about singers over the years is that many of them **don't really listen to the music they are singing**.

They only listen to the sound of their own voice, in other words, they only hear the melody, but not harmony or rhythm of a particular song. This is the primary reason that I, while I do favor practicing your craft using backing tracks...

I most certainly discourage using Karaoke CDG's because that process is almost totally visual.

With a CDG,

- ✚ The screen appears,
- ✚ the music starts,
- ✚ the count-down to when to start singing is displayed, and
- ✚ then come the words which are highlighted for your follow while singing the song.

I guess in a way, this is why Karaoke is so popular, 'cause even if you can't hear music, you can have fun with it in this way, and that's fine.

But for serious students of singing, it's necessary for you to sharpen your listening skills and to be able to sing to a backing track WITHOUT needing a screen to guide you.

So let's start listening, okay?

The next we need to do is define the words **"Range"** and **"Register"**, 'cause it'll be very helpful for you to know the difference between them.

A **RANGE** of notes in any given song is the **NUMBER** of notes from the lowest note to the highest note of the song.

For example, the notes in the song, "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" has a RANGE of 10 notes, or 10 half steps of a scale. In the Key of "C", the range of notes for this song is from Middle C to A. Counting up from Middle C and taking in all of the notes, (black and white), there are 10 steps from C to A.

Anyone who wants to sing this song **MUST** be able to sing at least 10 half steps from low to high, although any 10 steps along the keyboard will do. It doesn't have to be these particular 10 steps. I'll explain this in a minute.

Okay, now let's look at REGISTER.

Your Register is THE UNIQUE place along the scale where the RANGE of notes YOU have in you are sung.

Okay, I can almost see you scratching your head, so let me draw it for you:

Here is the **RANGE** of notes in the song, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star:

C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
---	----	---	----	---	---	----	---	----	---

You read music like you read words, from left to right. In this example, the starting "C" in the first box is the lowest note and the "A" is the highest.

This song spans 10 notes. So that's the **distance** from the lowest to the highest note IN THIS SONG. Do you see this?

Okay! SO now let's say that when you did the experiment with finding your lowest and comfortable notes, you discovered that your **RANGE** spans 13 notes, or half steps...

Can you see now that your RANGE is larger, (contains more notes) than the range of the song, so it stands to reason that you would have no difficulty singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"? If not please read these last few paragraphs again.

Okay! Let's look at the REGISTER of the song and YOUR REGISTER!

Song's range:

C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
---	----	---	----	---	---	----	---	----	---

Your range:

Ab	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#
----	---	----	---	---	----	---	----	---	---	----	---	----

See how your range is bigger than the song's range?

But can you also see that although you have a larger range, if you try to sing this song starting on "C", you will not be able to hit the high note because it's outside of your REGISTER!

However if the starting note of the song were moved to a lower REGISTER, you would have absolutely no problem. See that?

Children have very small ranges when they're small, which is why they can't always hit the right notes of any given song they're given to sing in school.

Let's look at the song again. Here's its range:

C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
---	----	---	----	---	---	----	---	----	---

Now what if the child's range is this:

C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#
---	----	---	----	---	---	----

It's easy to see that it would be hard for a small child to sing this song because it's impossible to fit the song's range into the child's range. The child just doesn't have enough notes in his/her vocal range yet.

Remember! The songs you sing need to FIT into YOUR RANGE!

If the range of notes in a song are greater than the range of notes you can sing, you will trouble singing that song.

However, if your range is as large, or larger than the song's range, but the song's range is set in a **particular place along the tone scale**, then it's a matter of changing the starting note of the song to fit **YOUR REGISTER!**

This is why at Sing Your Life, we offer to transpose (Change to key) any of the tracks we sell to our singers. You must always sing in the correct keys for your voice.

The songs should FIT into YOUR COMFORTABLE REGISTER!

Nothing can throw off your concentration and ruin your performance like singing a song that is outside of your range, or in the wrong key for your voice, so it's important for you to know the comfortable keys for your particular voice.

Even if you don't play an instrument, knowing what keys you sing in will ensure that you don't ever have to sing too high or too low.

If you've gone through the first eBook in this series, **"The Art of Singing"**, you know that your natural voice is the one you should be singing in as a solo artist. So, finding your keys to sing in is all about **knowing the range and register of your natural voice.**

So, to review:

✚ What's a range?

✚ **It's the span of notes from low to high in a song.**

✚ What's a register?

✚ **It's the place on the tonal scale where the span of notes are occurring.**

Great! Let's move on...

Solfeggio!

What is Solfeggio, and why does it matter that you learn it?

Okay! I realize that most of you right now do not feel that you need to have a degree in music theory to make it to MTV or where ever you want to be vocally, but I include this section because I want you to get the respect your talent deserves.

When you walk into that recording studio, you want to be able to say to the guitar or synthesizer player, something like, "Give me 4 bars in, G, and leave out the 3rd of that first chord 'cause that's my starting note and I want it to stand out". Trust me...that'll get their attention and respect!

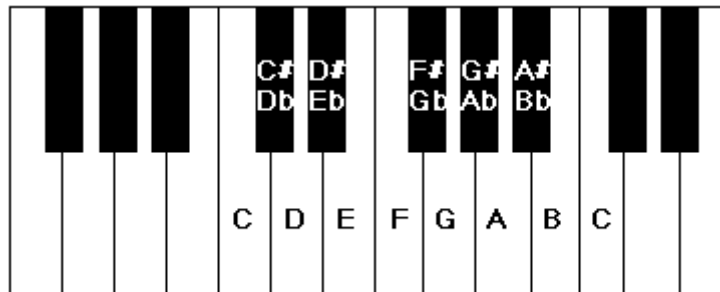
Right now, let's identify the **starting notes** of songs. Now that you know how to find your keys, you will learn how to automatically know where the starting note of *your song* is.

Here's a simple way to understand Solfeggio. Let's take a simple major scale. If you ever saw, (and who hasn't) "The Sound of Music", you'll remember the song the children sang with Maria called "Do, Re, Mi", or "Doe, a Dear". Remember it?

The notes they sang, that they labeled

"Do", "Re", "Mi", "Fa", "Sol", "La", "Ti", "Do",

are actually the notes that comprise the **major scale**.



↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
			D	R	M	F	S	L	T	D			
			o	e	i	a	o	a	i	o			

Notice how on the Keyboard are listed the names of the notes, and directly under each note, the name of the solfeggio note.

Now, looking at the keyboard, the space between each note, starting on "C" is:

- ❖ From C to D = 1 whole step. (Whole step because there's ONE note between C and D. Anytime there's one note between 2 notes, the distance between the 2 notes is called a WHOLE STEP.)
- ❖ From D to E = 1 whole step
- ❖ From E to F = ½ step
- ❖ From F to G = 1 whole step
- ❖ From G to A = 1 whole step
- ❖ From A to B = 1 whole step
- ❖ From B to C = ½ step.

This is the formula for a major scale.

Whole step, whole step, half step, whole step, whole step, whole step, half step.

If you were to start on any note on the keyboard and follow this formula, you'd be playing a major scale or

Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do

Note: I suggest you print out these pages as you will be having to refer back to them as we go on.

Understanding the major scale is a vital factor in recognizing where the starting note is.

Most of you have learned the songs you know by listening to CD's and singing along with your favorite artists. That's how we all have learned the songs we know.

But now you are serious about a career as a singer, and you need to be able to **hear** your starting note without the benefit of the arrangement you're used to hearing.

So how are you going to know where your starting note is?

You have to HEAR it in your head while the introduction is playing and where it is in relationship to DO!

Let's look at this chart for a minute.

The Key	Sharps # and/or Flats b	Where is "Do"
C	none	C
G	One # - f	G
D	Two #'s - f, c	D
A	Three #'s - f, c, g	A
E	Four #'s - f, c, g, d	E
B	Five #'s - f, c, g, d, a	B
F#	Six #'s - f, c, g, d, a, e	F#
C#	Seven #'s - f, c, g, d, a, e, b	C#
F	One I - b	F
Bb	Two I's - b, e	Bb
Eb	Three I's - b, e, a	Eb
Ab	Four I's - b, e, a, d	Ab
Db	Five I's - b, e, a, d, g	Db
Gb	Six I's - b, e, a, d, g, c	Gb
Cb	Seven I's - b, e, a, d, g, c, f	Cb

These are the keys in music, from the key of C with no #'s or b's, to the key of Cb with 7 b's.

Okay, let's take a minute right here to sing the scale. (*Oh, but leave out the "...a deer, a female deer" part.*) Just sing the "Do", "Re", "Mi", etc.

[Click Here](#) to listen, and sing along. (right-click to save).

Okay! Now let's number the notes you just sang from 1 to 8. "Do" will be 1, "Re" will be 2, "Mi" will be 3, etc.

Sing the scale again, but this time, sing the numbers. If you do it right, you should sing the melody of the major scale, which is "Do", "Re", "Mi", "Fa", "Sol", "La", "Ti", "Do", using 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8.

Okay Good!

Now let's take a simple song that everyone knows like "Mary Had a Little Lamb". We're going to assign each note of this song to a number first, and then to the corresponding *Solfeggio* tone, (those being the Do Re Mi's, etc.)

[Click Here](#) to sing along with me. Right click to save.

The first tone of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" starts on step 3 of the major scale, so the first line of the song would be sung,

3 2 1 2 3 3 3 2 2 2 3 5 5

Ma ry had a lit tle lamb, lit tle lamb, lit tle lamb.

Starting to get the picture?

Okay, let's go on...try finishing the song yourself using the numbers and then check below for the answer:

3 2 1 2 3 3 3 3 2 2 3 2 1

Ma - ry had a lit tle lamb whose fleece was white as snow.

Okay, that was real good! Now we're going to sing the song again using the corresponding Solfeggio tones.

Go back to where we numbered the notes of the scale. If the song starts on number 3, then the corresponding Solfeggio tone is what? Yes! "Mi"!

Okay now sing it with me...

Mi Re Do Re Mi Mi Mi, Re Re Re, Mi Sol Sol,
Mi Re Do Re Mi Mi Mi Mi Re Re Mi Re Do.

That may have seemed like a pointless exercise to you at this point, but let me tell you this...

Remember in "The Art of Singing" how I told you about the body's **cell memory**? Well, doing silly little exercises like this teaches your cell memory where all the notes of your song are in relationship to "do", the "Home Base" of your song, or the key of the song you're in.

What does this mean to you?

It simply means that that if you want to sing with a band, or even a Karaoke machine, you're going to have to know which note to start singing on after the introduction, without it having to played *for* you.

Doing this exercise, singing in **Solfeggio**, is the beginning of understanding the music, which gains you respect among musicians you will deal with in the business.

I suggest practicing this simple exercise with a number of very simple songs at first, like the one we just did, and then gradually increasing the difficulty until you can sing more complex songs, like, say, "Killing Me Softly", which adds some sharps (#) and flats (b).

While Do, Re, Mi, etc. are the notes of a Major scale, additional Solfeggio tones are used for the Chromatic scale, that is the scale that goes up and down by *half* steps only.

Here is the Chromatic scale going up sung in Solfeggio:

Do, Di, Re, Ri, Mi, Fa, Fi, Sol, Si, La, Li, Ti, Do.

The notes of the Chromatic Scale, (if we started on "C") would be:

C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B, C.

That's going up...

[Click Here](#) to sing along with me.

Coming down the notes would be:

C, B, Bb, A, Ab, G, Gb, F, E, Eb, D, Db, C

or in Solfeggio...

Do, Ti, Te, La, Le, Sol, Se, Fa, Mi, Me, Re, Ri, Do.

Looking at these notes you find that C# for instance is the very same note as Db. And F# is the very same note as Gb. #'s are used for raising a step while b's are used for lowering a step. Note: When two different note names share the same sound, it's called an **Enharmonic**. Example: F# is the Enharmonic of Gb.

The most common Minor Scale is called the Harmonic Minor where the 3rd and 6th steps of the major scale are lowered or flattened. The rest of the scale remains the same as the Major Scale. To see this clearly here is the major scale with the minor scale right under it:

C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C

C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab, B, C

...or in Solfeggio as:

Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do.

Do Re **Me**, (pronounced "May") Fa, Sol, **Le**, (pronounced "Lay")Ti, Do.

[Click Here](#) to listen. Right-Click to save the audio.

In this version of the minor scale, (there are 3 different types of minor scales), the space between each note, starting on "do", or 1 is: whole, half, whole, whole, half, 1 ½, half.

Spaces between notes are called "**Intervals**".

Looking at the major scale of "Do" "Re" "Mi" "Fa" "Sol" "La" "Ti" and "Do", let's explore these spaces, or intervals.

From "Do" to "Re" is called a Major 2nd. [Click Here](#) to listen.

From "Do" to "Mi" is called a Major 3rd. [Click Here](#) to listen

From "Do" to "Fa" is called a Perfect 4th.

From "Do" to "Sol" is called a Perfect 5th.

From "Do" to "La" is called a Major 6th. [Click Here](#) to listen

From "Do" to "Ti" is called a Major 7th. [Click Here](#) to listen

And from "Do" to "Do" is called a Perfect Octave. (Octave comes from the Greek word for 8).

What's the interval from "Re" to "Sol"? How 'bout "Mi" to "Ti"?

It's important to practice singing various intervals, so you can know the distances between the notes of your song.

If you can always hear where "Do" is, then you'll know where the other tones of the scale are as well.

What if you've just learned a new tune to sing. You've practiced the song and think you know it fairly well. Let's say you learned the song from listening to it on the radio.

You bring the sheet music to your teacher or accompanist and the pianist plays the intro. Clearly, the intro that you hear is **not** the one you heard when you learned the song from the radio. How are you going to know what note to start on?

If you can hear "Do", you will know!

Again, begin with simple songs you have known all your life and start to consciously identify whether or not, they begin on "Do" or some other note of the scale.

Take this test:

What note, number, and solfeggio tone do these songs start on?
(using "C" as the key)

- a) Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
- b) Three Blind Mice
- c) The Star Spangled Banner
- d) London Bridges
- e) God Bless America
- f) Someday My Prince Will Come (from "Snow White")
- g) Somewhere Over the Rainbow (from "The Wizard of Oz")
- h) On Top of Ol' Smokey
- i) Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer
- j) The Way We Were

The answers are at the bottom of this page, but don't look ahead! Try hearing the starting notes to these songs in your head before checking to see if you were correct!

As you get really good at this, you can choose more difficult songs that you know and see if you can hear the starting point. For example, Do you know the song "Stormy Weather"? It's an old classic standard from the movie "Cabin In The Sky". Listen to it and pick out the starting note.

answers to the test

**a) C, 1, Do - b) E, 3, Mi - c) G, 5, Sol - d) E, 3, Mi - e) C, 1, Do -
f) G, 5, Sol - g) C, 1, Do - h) C, 1, Do - i) G, 5, Sol - j) A, 6, la**

Keep reading...

Let me say right here that

IT DOES NOT MATTER THAT YOU DON'T TOTALLY GET THESE CONCEPTS.

What matters is that you practice singing the Major scale, Harmonic Minor Scale, Chromatic scale and Intervals:

- using the names of the keys, like C, D, E, etc.,
- using the numbers, and
- using the Solfeggio name

Your cell memory will store this information and give it back to you when you least expect it...when you need it, and your total understanding of the music will result.

It's a question of forming a habit and the process of practicing these drills bypasses the conscious mind and goes straight to the subconscious, so you don't have to think about it...just do it!

Ask any pianist and they will tell you that after many hours of practice, their fingers know exactly where to go on the piano as if their fingers have a mind of their own...and they do.

Your internal "keyboard" operates the same way. By practicing Solfeggio, you are teaching your body where the notes are in relationship to the key you are in, and after a while you just *know*. It doesn't matter much how you got there...just that you did.

Time (or Meter) and Tempo

So many singers lose respect specifically due to a lack of understanding of time, meter, and tempo. (remember the joke?)

What is **Time** in music?

It's what you know as the "beat" of the music. Most rock music is written in 4/4 time or meter, which means that there are 4 *beats* or unit of time components in each measure of music.

When you hear a band play a favorite song and you start to clap your hands, you are usually clapping on the 2nd and 4th beat of each measure.

When you sing, you must always be aware of the time – that is the amount of beats within each measure of music you are singing. Nothing will give you more credibility in the music world than knowing the time of your songs.

A waltz, for instance, contains units of 3 beats each, or “**oom** pah pah | **oom** pah pah | **oom** pah pah | etc.”, while a rock song usually contains units of 4 beats each, or “oom **pah** oom **pah** | oom **pah** oom **pah** | oom **pah** oom **pah** | etc.”

Meter sets the form around which a song is constructed. What we call a Standard, a classic song of the 30's, 40's and 50's, is constructed in 32 measures. An 8 measure introductory phrase, a 2nd 8 measure phrase with the same melody but different words, a middle section called “the bridge”, also 8 measures in length, and a final 8 measures which repeats the 1st and 2nd phrases with additional lyrics. This is called **A A B A** form and is the “standard” format for a song, thus the label, “Standard”. Many new songs in the rock and country genre, start with this simple format and expand upon it.

Knowing how to count the measures when you are **NOT** singing is important too. Why? So you can know when to resume after the band has played for a while. For example, listen to any favorite song on the radio or CD. You never hear the singer first. No! The first sound you hear is the band playing.

How does the singer know when to come in?

He/she *counts*. A standard song usually has at least 4 measures of introduction before the singer begins. Listening and counting beats and measures is the best way to teach your cell memory about time and meter. You may be counting at first, but after a while, you don't have to any more. Your body just *knows*!

If it's true that the best writers are ravenous readers, then the great singers are voracious listeners.

Listening is the best teacher of music theory.

Tempo... is very simply, how fast or slow the song you sing should be. You should know going in how fast or slow you want the song and be able to communicate this to the band, or accompanist.

How awful would it be if you had practiced in the shower for hours singing a song like, let's say, "Mack the Knife" for an audition in a night club. In your mind, you've decided to sing it like the Bobby Darin hit version, and you're sure it'll be a big hit.

You go to the audition with a piece of store-bought sheet music, which reads *"The Theme from the "Three-Penny Opera"*, but the store clerk has assured you that this is indeed the song, "Mack the Knife". You hand your sheet to the accompanist and he begins to play what is written in front of him. He plays it as a ballad.

You try to sing the way you practiced in the shower, but what you are singing and what the accompanist is playing are two different things. What's going on?

If you knew music, you would have handed the sheet to the accompanist and said,

"Please play it like a straight-ahead swing tune, transpose it to Bb, and after the first two verses, raise each succeeding verse up a ½ step...okay? And I'll count it off!"

Of course, if you really want to be taken seriously as a singer, you would never ever use store-bought sheet music in the first place. You would write out your own "charts", (arrangements) in your key in your tempo and meter.

...which leads me to the subject of Chords.

I strongly urge you, singers to learn an instrument, for this is the best way to learn how to ultimately write your own "charts" in your key.

You don't have to become an accomplished instrumentalist, but knowing where notes on any instrument are found can only help you find them on your instrument...that being your voice.

However, it *is* possible to learn chord structure without having to become an accomplished guitar or keyboard player.

I'm going to give you some extremely basic chords and explain how they are constructed.

Believe me, when you hear an accompanist hit a wrong chord, you will not only hear it as incorrect, as you undoubtedly can now, but you will be able to tell him or her, what the chord should actually be.

So let's start:

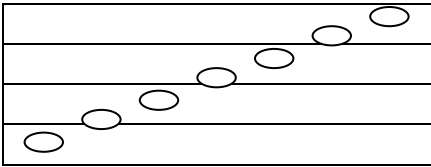
If the major, minor, and chromatic scales are dictated by the spaces between the notes or tones, then chords are built similarly.

The basic difference between a scale and a chord is the space between the notes.

In a chord, there always more space. Instead of a whole or half step as with a scale, a basic chord is built by intervals of 1/3. Chords are built *within* scales using the same notes, but not *all* the notes.

Look at this example:

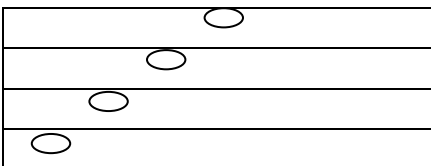
Figure #1 shows a scale. In written music, you can see that a scale has notes on the lines and the spaces, **indicating steps, and not leaps.**



These notes are sung or played in steps.

**The notes in this example are:
F G A B C D E**

But In Figure #2, we see that basic chords use *either* the lines *or* the spaces, indicating wider distance between each note, **therefore jumps, not steps.**



In this example the notes skip from space to space.

**These notes are:
F A C E or ROOT, 3rd, 5th, and 7th**

We're talking about *basic* chords because as you get proficient with them, you'll develop a variety of chord structures that utilize steps *and* leaps, but let us not confuse the issue by introducing complexities that you don't necessarily need.

When we talk about Roots, 3rds, 5ths, etc, we are discussing chordal structure, and as you will soon see, chords can have a Root note on any step of the scale.

The ROOT, is the base note of the chord on which it is built.

- ❖ We add a third, (which is the 3rd step of the scale from which we are building our chord)
- ❖ We add another third, (which is the 5th step of the scale from which we are making our chord).
- ❖ We can add another third on top of that, (which is the 7th step of the scale).

You will notice if you look at a keyboard, or even a picture of a keyboard, that the tones or notes of chord are separated by at least 3 or 4 half steps, depending upon the chord being a major or minor chord.

Using Solfeggio, and the numbering method we used to sing scales, let's now sing a basic major triad. A triad is a 3-note chord and is spelled: Do Mi Sol, or 1 3 5.

Sing it!

[Click Here](#) to sing along with the piano.

If you have trouble finding "Mi" after "Do", you can silently sing "Re" first and then hit the "Mi". And the same goes for finding "Sol". If you silently sing "Fa", then you'll find "Sol". Okay, did you sing Do Mi Sol?

Now sing it with numbers. 1 3 5.

There's a lullaby from the opera, "Hansel and Gretel", that uses these same notes, as the children sing, "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep". In Solfeggio, they would be singing, Do Mi Sol Sol La Sol Sol.

Okay!

Now let's sing this same triad but this time, we're going to lower the middle tone by ½ step, so that "mi" becomes "me", or 3 becomes 3I.

Sing "Do **Me** Sol". Did you hear the difference between these 2 chords. The first was a major triad, Do **Mi** Sol, while the second was a minor triad due to the injection of a flatted 3rd.

Let's review with a glossary of terms:

- **Key** – a particular range of notes in which a song is written and sung.
- **Major Scale** – A group of notes going up by steps from 1-8, ("do" to "do") where the space between each note, starting from 1 is: whole, whole, half, whole, whole, whole, half.
- **Chromatic Scale** – a group of notes from 1 – 13, ("do" to "do") where the space between each note is ½ step.
- **Enharmonic** – Two identical sounding notes with different names.
- **Minor Scale** – A group of notes from 1-8, ("do" to "do"), where the space between each note, starting from "do" is: whole, half, whole, whole, half, 1 ½, half.
- **Solfeggio** – Italian names given to the various steps in a Major, Minor, or Chromatic scale.
- **Interval** – the space between 2 notes.
- **Measure** – a unit of time with a pre-determined # of beats within it. Also known as a bar.
- **Meter** – That which dictates the number of beats, or units of time in each measure of music.
- **Tempo** – the fastness or slowness of a song.
- **Range** – a measure of the vocal instrument from the lowest note to the highest note.
- **Register** – The particular place on the tonal scale where you sing.
- **Chart** – A vocal arrangement written out for an accompanist.
- **Chord** – A group of notes built by 3rd's starting with the ROOT, then the 3rd, then the 5th, then the 7th, etc. (there are 9th's and 11th's and 13th's, but that's another lesson altogether).

I cannot stress it more strongly that it's **just not enough** to have a pretty voice, a pretty face and good charts. To establish yourself as a singer of merit, to be respected in the profession, and to have staying power, that is, to last longer than one or two hit singles, you need to have a sufficient grasp of these musical concepts in order to get the best out of your performance and that of those who will play for you.

Just by practicing the drills shown in this volume, without even understanding the musical meaning of them, you will be teaching your cell memory everything it needs to sing as a musician.

It's the difference between being a "recording star" and a respected vocalist AND a recording star. It's being able to tell your producer that the arrangement he has chosen for you isn't what you have in mind and

getting your way because you are a musician, and you know what you're talking about.

An actor friend of mine has made his entire living doing small character parts in great films. I asked him once,

"Don't you ever wish for stardom?"

"Sure", he answered. "Who wouldn't? But I am living my dream. To do what I love for money... What could be better than that? And the quality of my work is something I can be proud of. The Directors and Producers that I work with respect me as an actor and believe me, that counts for a lot. Besides, I've been doing it for 30 years, and I'm hardly ever out of work, while some of the "stars" I've worked with go for months, sometimes years between projects. I've got a great life!"

So, it's really up to you. In a world where instant gratification seems to be paramount, maybe just being a one-shot star is enough for you. I doubt that 'cause, look! You read this whole thing! Good for you!

Once you know a little something about music, it's time to get cracking and start playing out and promoting yourself.

"The Art of Promotion" is the next eBook in this series, and I urge you to pick up a copy from our store. We will discuss

- your demo recording,
- what goes into it,
- how to make it, and most importantly,
- how to promote it...and yourself!
- The Music Biz
- Who can you trust...or NOT!
- Taking total control

Hope to See you there...

Visit our Sister site for free advice from the Voiceguru at Sing Your Life Studios – <http://www.singyourlife.com>