

Guidelines for Sight Singing

For Sight Singing & Ear Training I-IV

Sight singing is an important component of your education in music, and when you're in your field, whether than be education, performance, production, or anything else, you'll find yourself needing to sing through a melody more often than you might guess. For you to be able to do that effectively and efficiently, you'll need to practice.

1. Determine key

Using the written key signature and your starting/ending pitches, determine the tonal center.

- If you see a significant number of the same raised pitch, determine if that is raised 7 in minor (If I see 1 flat in the signature and a few C#'s, I am most likely in d minor)
- Always ask yourself what scale degree the starting pitch would be in the Major/minor key associated with the signature; remember that melodies usually (but not always) start and end on 1, 3, or 5.
- Don't let other accidentals fool you; just because they're there doesn't mean the excerpt in minor!
- The ending pitch is helpful in determining tonal centers if the starting pitch doesn't help you

2. Internalize your scale

Sing the scale, Major or minor.

3. Visit the hard parts first

Anything from large leaps to heavily chromatic passages should be visited first; workshop this in your head or out loud (whichever is permitted) to get it out of the way.

- For large leaps, step up or down to the next pitch diatonically, and then remove the inner steps, repeat

4. Check in your head

Before you start, internally sing the full passage, just to be aware of where you may stop; wherever you stopped, repeat step 3

5. Sing!