



Song Learning Method

(Easy, Accurate and Fast!)

The key to fast song learning is to use the brain efficiently. Notes and rhythms are learned in one area of the brain. Lyrics are learned in a completely different part of the brain. When picking up a new song, the brain is capable of reading notes, rhythms and lyrics all together by “cross-firing” rapidly from one brain area to the other. Though the brain can accomplish the task, it does not remember well when cross-firing.

Instead, a method that allows the brain to focus only on notes and rhythms, then separately on lyrics, uses brain power much more efficiently for purposes of memorization. Accurate song learning becomes easier and faster.

Method: balance the left and right channels of your stereo so your voice part on the learning recording is loud enough to be easily heard above the other 3 parts.

1. **Listening Step**—While following your voice part notes on the sheet music (if you do not read music, follow the notes visually by contour—**do not read the words, follow the notes**), **listen to your part without singing 2 to 4 times through** depending on difficulty. Listen extra times to places that seem tough or that do not seem to match what you see on the sheet music.
[The recording and sheet music are pre-checked and should match—if you do find an error, please notify the music committee.]
2. **Doo-doo-doo Step**—**Sing “doo-doo-doo” on your part 2 to 4 times through. Follow the notes with your eyes (as well as your ears)—do not look at the words.** Learn to match the pitches and rhythms of the learning recording. Set the recording louder than your “doo-ing” and let it lead your learning. Again, “doo” extra times on the tough places. If there’s a place too tough to get from the recording, see your section leader—do not “shrug-off” and rehearse mistakes. On the final doo-ing pass, set the sheet music aside and let the recording lead your ears to the right pitches and rhythms.
3. **Muscle Memory Step**—**Stand and silently mime the song 2 to 4 times through with the recording. Breathe and support as if actually singing words and notes.** Form vowels and consonants with lips and tongue as if you were singing a perfect rendition. Silently create the physical throat and larynx formations for accurate pitches and freely produced tone as if singing a perfect unison duet with the recorded voice. On the final muscle memory pass, set the sheet music aside and let the recording lead your ears to the right muscle memory patterns.
4. **Full Singing Step**—**Put it all together and fully sing with the recording.** Let the recording continue to lead your learning on the first run-through or two. Then, on successive reps, gradually shift the channel balance on the stereo until you are tuning your voice to the other three parts quartet-style.

[Sectional break-outs: First learning session 30 to 50 minutes depending on song length and difficulty. Second “brush-up” session at next chapter meeting 15 to 25 minutes if needed.]

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