

## **LOOKING AFTER YOUR VOICE IN COLD WEATHER**

On cold days, or in a cold environment like a rehearsal hall with doors and windows open for ventilation, our voices may suffer in a number of ways.

Hopefully this advice will help you to look after your precious voice even when the conditions are less than ideal.

1. Breathe in through your nose initially and especially to acclimatise after a warm car journey. When you breathe in through your nose, the air is filtered and heated up to your body temperature, sending it to your vocal cords.
2. Keep your body warm when you are in a cold environment to eliminate tension. Wear warm clothes and keep moving. The physical warmup is very important to help us free up our bodies and release any tension we may feel because we are cold. Wiggle fingers and toes, slap the inside of your arms and legs. Shake your body without experiencing tension.
3. Keep well hydrated. Your vocal cords dry out in extremes of temperature so in order to maintain flexibility in your voice drink plenty of water. As a general rule dehydration makes your vocal cords less agile and much harder to work with. In cold weather it's always tempting to bring along a warm drink to rehearsal but do try to avoid caffeine drinks like tea or coffee as these will contribute to dehydration.
4. Remember that your voice takes longer to warm up during colder weather.
5. Try gentle vocal warmup exercises like humming. Progress to NG sirens and 5 note exercises like 5-4-3-2-1. Be gentle with your voice at first before you progress to other exercises using EE, OO and other vowels.