5-minute

NERVOUS-SYSTEM-FRIENDLY VOCAL COOL DOWN

This 5-minute, nervous-system-friendly cool down is ideal for singers, choir leaders, voice teachers and performers.

It is designed to help singers wind down after a busy period of singing, whether that's rehearsal, performance, teaching, or community singing. It balances vocal health with emotional and physical regulation, ideal for ending the day calmly. After completing this cool down, make sure to hydrate, rest, and let your vocal folds recover fully.

1. GROUND AND BREATHE

Purpose: Let the body know it's safe to rest.

- Sit or stand comfortably.
- Drop your shoulders. Let your jaw hang loose.
- Take a slow inhale through your nose (count of 4).
- Exhale with a soft "fffffff" (count of 6–8).
- Repeat 3–4 times.
- On the last exhale, gently hum on an "M" (lips together, soft buzz).

Tip: Feel your feet on the floor or your sit bones if you're seated - this helps bring you out of 'perform' mode and into 'rest' mode.

2. LIP TRILLS OR GENTLE SIRENS

Purpose: Release tension and rebalance the vocal folds.

- Start with a lip trill (like a horse), sliding gently from low to mid-range (no high notes now).
- If trills aren't accessible, use a soft "ng" (as in "sing"), sliding in pitch.
- Explore just 3 or 4 gentle sirens from bottom to middle range.

Tip: Keep it light and effortless; this isn't about pitch accuracy but vocal decompression.

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3. DESCENDING HUMS

Purpose: Decompress the voice and soothe the nervous system.

- Hum softly on a comfortable note, then slide down your register: "Hmmmm..."
- Repeat 4–5 times, letting each one feel like a soft sigh or a yawn.
- Keep your lips relaxed and your tongue soft in your mouth.

Tip: Think of this as a lullaby for your voice. Minimal effort, maximum ease.

4. GENTLE SPOKEN RELEASE

Purpose: Reconnect to natural, unstressed speech.

- Speak a few calming phrases aloud, such as:
  - "It's time to rest now."
  - "My voice has done enough for today."
  - "Thank you, voice."
- Let your voice be relaxed, unprojected, almost whispered (but not breathy).
- Let each phrase taper off at the end with no "push."

Optional: Speak a favourite line of poetry or lyrics that bring you peace.

5. SILENT STRETCH AND JAW RELEASE

Purpose: Physically reset jaw, neck, and breath muscles.

- Gently massage your jaw hinge with fingertips in small circles.
- Do a slow neck roll or side stretch, breathing into the side of your ribcage.
- Open your mouth into a yawn-stretch (tongue down, throat soft), then exhale on a "haaah."

Tip: Finish with one final soft hum or sigh.