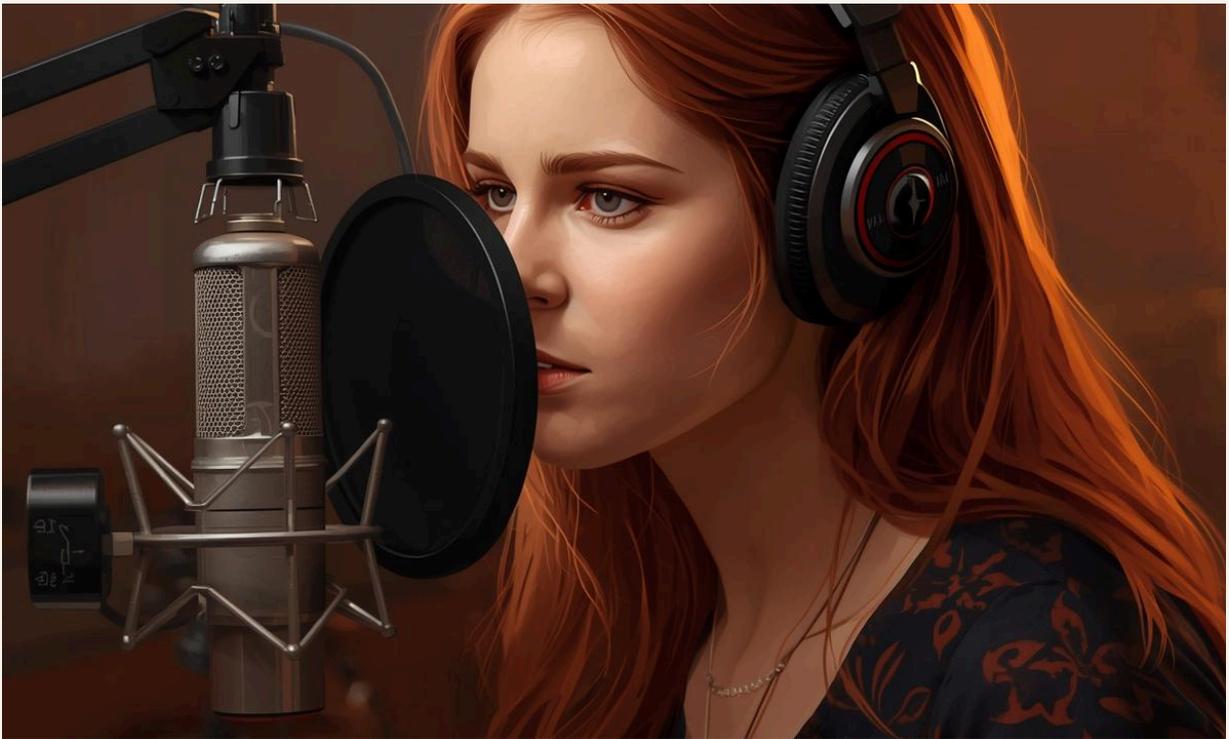


VOCAL HEALTH & SELF-CARE For Narrators



Your voice is your instrument. Taking care of it ensures longevity, consistency and peak performance throughout every production. ,

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Introduction:

This is a comprehensive Vocal Health & Self-Care guide for narrators. It contains vocal & self-care essentials to care for your voice and body during audiobook production sessions.

Vocal Care Essentials

Hydration

- **Drink plenty of water** - Aim for 8-10 glasses daily; room temperature is gentlest on vocal cords
- **Avoid dehydrating beverages** - Limit caffeine and alcohol, especially before recording sessions
- **Use a humidifier** - Keep your studio and home at 40-60% humidity to prevent vocal cord dryness
- **Steam inhalation** - 10-15 minutes of steam before long sessions can help hydrate your voice

Vocal Hygiene

- **Avoid throat clearing** - Swallow or take a sip of water instead
- **Don't whisper** - Whispering strains your voice more than speaking softly
- **Rest your voice** - Schedule vocal rest periods, especially after long recording days
- **Avoid irritants** - Stay away from smoke, strong fumes, or excessive dust

Nutrition for Voice Health

- **Honey & warm water** - Soothes and coats the throat naturally
- **Avoid dairy before sessions** - This can increase mucus production
- **Eat light before recording sessions** - Heavy meals can affect breath support and energy
- **Anti-inflammatory foods** - Ginger, turmeric, and leafy greens support vocal health

Warm-Up Exercises

Always warm up before recording sessions to prevent strain and improve vocal quality.

Breathing Exercises (5 minutes)

- **Diaphragmatic breathing** - Place hand on stomach, breathe deeply so stomach rises (not the chest)
- **4-7-8 breathing** - Inhale 4 counts, hold 7 counts, exhale 8 counts (repeat 4 times)
- **Sustained exhale** - Inhale fully, exhale on a steady “sss” sound as long as possible

Lip & Tongue Looseners (3 minutes)

- **Lip trills** - Blow air through relaxed lips while humming, slide up and down your range
- **Tongue trills** - Roll your R's while moving through pitches
- **Jaw stretches** - Open mouth wide, move jaw side to side gently

Vocal Warm-Ups (5-7 minutes)

- **Humming scales** - Start low, hum up and down your comfortable range
- **“Man-may-mee-moh-moo”** - On a single pitch, then move up my half steps
- **Sirens** - Slide from lowest to highest note on “oo” or “ee” sound
- **Articulation drills** - “Red leather, yellow leather” and “unique New York” repeated slowly, then faster

Cool-Down Exercises

Just as important as warming up! Cool-downs help your voice recover and prevents strain.

Gentle Cool-Down Routine (5 minutes)

- **Gentle humming** - Low, relaxed humming for 1-2 minutes
- **Yawn-sighs** - Take a deep breath, yawn, and sigh out on a descending “ahh”
- **Lip trills** - Soft, descending lip trills to release tension
- **Neck & shoulder rolls** - Release physical tension that affects your voice
- **Silent breathing** - 2 minutes of quiet, deep breathing to reset

Post-Session Care

- **Vocal rest** - 15-30 minutes of silence after long sessions
- **Warm (not hot) tea** - Caffeine-free herbal tea with honey
- **Gentle stretching** - Neck, shoulders, and jaw to release tension
- **Hydrate** - Drink water to rehydrate vocal cords

Self-Care for Narrators

Physical Self-Care

- **Posture matters** - Good posture supports breath control and reduces strain
- **Take breaks** - Stand, stretch, and move every 30-45 minutes
- **Eye care** - Use proper lighting and take screen breaks if reading from a tablet
- **Sleep** - 7-9 hours supports vocal recovery and mental clarity

Mental & Emotional Self-Care

- **Set boundaries** - Know your limits for recording hours per day
- **Manage stress** - Stress tightens vocal muscles; practice relaxation techniques
- **Celebrate wins** - Acknowledge completed chapters, projects, and milestones
- **Connect with peers** - Join narrator communities for support and encouragement

Emergency Voice Care

- **If your voice feels strained** - Stop recording immediately and rest
- **Vocal fatigue signs** - Hoarseness, pitch breaks, throat pain, reduced range
- **When to see a professional** - Persistent hoarseness (2+ weeks), pain when speaking, or sudden voice changes

Recommended Resources

- **Apps** - vocal exercise apps, meditation apps for stress management
- **Books** - “Narrating audiobooks” by Brittany Shcank, “How to Narrate Audiobooks: From Novice to Professional” by Steve Carlson, “Voice-Over Voice Actor” by Yuri Lowenthal
- **Tools** - Portable humidifier, throat coat tea, vocal steamer

Remember: Your voice is your business. Investing in vocal health is investing in your career longevity.

Need Help or Have Questions?

Don't stress! I'm here to guide you through every step. Just email me or fill out the contact form and I'll do my best to assist you as you progress forward.

Same goes for any questions you may have. Just email or use the contact form and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

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