

# So You Want To Sing Jazz

Jazz singing is a unique and challenging art form that requires a combination of vocal technique, improvisation skills, and a deep understanding of the jazz tradition. If you're an aspiring jazz singer, there's a lot to learn, but with the right approach and dedication, you can develop the skills you need to succeed.



## So You Want to Sing Jazz: A Guide for Professionals

by Chessie King

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## Vocal Technique

The foundation of jazz singing is vocal technique. You need to have a strong and flexible voice that can handle the demands of jazz singing, including scatting, improvisation, and singing in different registers. There are a number of vocal exercises you can do to improve your technique, such as:

- Lip trills

- Tongue twisters
- Vocal scales
- Arpeggios
- Melismas

It's important to practice these exercises regularly to improve your vocal range, flexibility, and control.

## **Improvisation**

Improvisation is a key part of jazz singing. It's the ability to create melodies and harmonies on the spot, based on the chord changes of the song. Improvisation can be challenging, but it's also one of the most rewarding aspects of jazz singing. There are a number of ways to learn how to improvise, such as:

- Taking lessons from a qualified jazz vocal coach
- Attending jazz workshops and masterclasses
- Listening to jazz recordings and transcribing solos
- Practicing improvisation with other musicians

The more you practice, the more comfortable you'll become with improvisation and the more you'll be able to express yourself musically.

## **Performance Skills**

In addition to vocal technique and improvisation skills, jazz singers also need to develop strong performance skills. This includes being able to

project your voice, connect with your audience, and create a memorable performance. Here are some tips for improving your performance skills:

- Practice performing in front of an audience, even if it's just your friends or family.
- Record yourself singing and listen back to it to identify areas where you can improve.
- Attend jazz concerts and observe how professional jazz singers perform.
- Take classes on stage presence and performance skills.

The more you perform, the more confident and comfortable you'll become on stage.

## **Repertoire Selection**

The repertoire you choose to sing is an important part of your jazz singing journey. It's important to choose songs that you enjoy singing and that showcase your vocal abilities. Here are some tips for selecting repertoire:

- Start by learning the standards. These are the classic jazz songs that every jazz singer should know.
- Once you're comfortable with the standards, you can start to explore more contemporary jazz songs.
- Choose songs that are appropriate for your vocal range and style.
- Don't be afraid to experiment with different arrangements and interpretations of songs.

Your repertoire should reflect your personality and musical style.

So you want to sing jazz? With the right approach and dedication, you can develop the skills you need to succeed. Remember to focus on vocal technique, improvisation, performance skills, and repertoire selection. And most importantly, don't be afraid to have fun and express yourself through your music.



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