

# 13 Step System

## Learning Barbershop Songs

This is a 13-step Program to assist you in learning your music. It is only a suggestion until you find the system that is best for you.

The success of this program is contingent upon the effective listening skills of the learner much more than upon the musical background or ability to read music.

Your sheet music or "Score" is your guide, like a map of your song. You do not have to be an accomplished musician to use it.

Make yourself a couple of copies of your music. While you are listening to the Learning Tracks use a Highlighter and pencil to mark up your copy sheets. Use yellow highlighter to mark your notes so you can follow them quickly with your eyes as you are watching and listening to where the notes are going.

Any of the 13 steps may be repeated before continuing on to the next step. But, remember...EACH step is important to the overall successful results of learning ALL the right notes, words and timing of the new song.

DO NOT eliminate any of the steps because they may appear to be insignificant to you.

STEP 1 - Listen to the music on the Learning Track while you close your eyes. (This will familiarize you with notes, timing and general flavor of the song.)

STEP 2 - Watch the notes on your music while you listen to the Part Predominant Learning Track. DO NOT SING YET!

STEP 3 - Again, watch the notes on your music while you listen to the audio. DO NOT SING YET! Listen to your part and determine where the breaths are being taken. Mark them with a PENCIL line. Your director may want to change them later.

STEP 4 - Watch the words on your music while you listen to the Learning Track. Please...no singing yet!

STEP 5 - On a separate piece of paper, write down all the lyrics to the new song. (you can refer to your music if you need to). Now, watch your own paper while you listen to the Learning Track. No, not yet...don't sing, please!

STEP 6 - Watch the notes again while you listen to the audio. Remember...no singing! While you are listening, MOUTH THE WORDS. Again Do Not Sing. Note where tricky word combinations "tongue-tie-you". Mark them on your sheet music. Listen to how the singer on the Learning Track gets across the phrase. Re-write the word to make it easier to navigate. It may be hyphenated or shortened somehow.

STEP 7 - Watch the words on your music while you listen to the Learning Track. Be careful...not a sound!

STEP 8 - Try to write down all the words again on a separate piece of paper without looking at your printed music. If you have trouble, listen to the audio again while you watch the words. Then try writing it again without looking. Stay on this step until you have all the right words written without looking back at the printed music. Now proceed to Step 9.

STEP 9 - OK, now that you have listened to this song over and over while mouthing the words (and getting your mouth to navigate the tricky lines at tempo), marking up your sheet music, and figuring out where you are going to get your breaths taken, you can finally add YOUR voice! Now watch the notes on your music while you hum along with the Learning Track. Hum...Hum...SINGING IS NEXT!

STEP 10 - Watch the words on your music while you SING along with the Learning Track. If you have any difficulty, circle the spot on your music as you go all the way through. Then, go back and listen (don't sing) those parts again. Turn the volume down so you can hear the your voice-part on the Learning Track and your own voice at the same time. TRY TO MATCH HIS SOUND AND QUALITY EXACTLY. By this I mean if he sounds like Elvis, Frank S. or Jerry Lee, so should you. Try to match their "timber" and sound perfectly. ALWAYS DO THIS. Also if he goes loud so do you (mark your music). If he goes softly, oh so softly, so do you (mark your music)

STEP 11 - Using some type of audio recorder (computer, phone, etc) SING the new part all the way through WITHOUT looking at your music.

STEP 12 - Watch your sheet music and listen to your own audio recording to see if you are correct. You should be wonderful but, should you have any doubt, go back and check your part again on the Learning Track.

Practice, Practice, Practice. 100 times. Practice the way you would like your audience to hear you sing. REMEMBER: Practice Makes Permanent! So permanently cement your voice with good habits.

STEP 13: Now listen to the Part Predominant Learning Track again. Notice your part is in one ear piece and the other three are in the other ear piece. ONLY LISTEN TO THE OTHER THREE AND DO NOT PUT YOUR PART IN YOUR EAR. NOW WITH NO MUSIC CARRY YOUR PART! YES, YOU DID IT! How long?

Match your part. You should no longer be "Predominant". Blend, Blend, Blend. LEADS: Lead, Lead, Lead. Basses, Baris, and Tenors. remember the CONE: Soft on top, broad on bottom.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

With a little bit of luck plus all your hard work, YOU are now the proud possessor of one more selection of music made beautiful by your addition of.....all the correct notes, words and timing!