

VO Beginner's Guide & Resources
(With a Queer Focus)
Cricket Michel (They/Them)

1. Space, Structure, Setup

- Budget Setups ([8 page Google Doc with links & resources](#)) : **Space affects the structure, affects the setup, affects the planning**
 - Space/Living situation
 - Structure
 - Planning the set up
 - Foam, Curtains, Blankets
 - Shelves
 - Lights
 - Equipment
 - Microphones
 - Mic Stands
 - Interfaces & Pre-Amps
 - Software
 - Extras (helpful add-ons)
 - Resources

2. How to treat your Mic / aka: Mic technique

- Hand distance from you to mic
 - If you're in a studio **DO NOT TOUCH THE MIC**. Let the audio engineer handle it
- Pop screen (mine was discounted with tare, used pantyhose & twist tie to fix)
 - Divert a Plosive "p" by using finger or pencil/pen to divert the air
- Familiar with the "Gain" of your mic setup for loud or soft moments
 - Unless you're in a studio, and then you **DO NOT TOUCH THE MIC**
- Stay "on mic"
 - Plant your feet and mouth, everything else moves!
- Beware of clothing/jewelry or other things that a mic can pick up
- CABLE MANAGEMENT (get organized)
 - Links and examples available in "Budget Setups" [Google Doc](#) in "Extras" section (Downloadable PDF available through [website](#), under "Press & Media" section)

3. Energy, Acting, Imagination

- Acting is #1, voice/character follows ([adding Layers to a character voice](#))
 - ACTING is the foundation on which the character's "voice" stands
- Improv is your friend to imagination (play with your inner child)
 - Classes (specifically improv or/also acting classes)
 - Improv, Misner, Cold Reading, Script Breakdown

- Misner: school of acting from Stanford Misner that emphasizes being “in the moment” and behaving truthfully under imaginary circumstances (lends itself to voice acting that’s typically isolated in a booth with no props, costumes, no sets, ect.)
- Camera vs VO classes
 - Camera: Expressive in your voice but toned down physically
 - VO: Purely voice expression. Over-expressive in the face and body is good!
- Jobs/volunteer work that will train you/give you experience
 - Ex: GA Ren Fair - Improv, Live performance, Character breakdowns, accents, Shakespearean language, Music/Singing
 - Student Films/ check out local Colleges
 - Performance venues
 - Community theater!
 - TTRPG / LARP / aka: Roleplaying in character
 - Musicians/Singers
- MOVE! BE A MUPPET (But stay “on mic”)
 - Plant your feet and mouth, everything else moves!

EXTRAS

4. 7 Physical Character Placements in the body

- How to find “Layers” to add to your acting
 - Top: top of the head
 - Eyes: Bright sound, “Disney channel” voice
 - Adenoidal: “Surfer Dude”
 - Nasal: Nerdy
 - Throat: Pirate
 - Chest: Hero
 - Diaphragm: Villian
- “Typical” Stereotypes, but a Top voice can also be a villain! Play!
- Extra placements
 - Bubble: the “Stich” voice
 - False folds: Metal/screaming and creatures
- If it ever hurts, STOP!
- Find where the voice sits comfortably for you, it’s YOUR body!

5. How T and E can affect the voice

- 1st puberty: Estrogen = small voice box, thin vocal folds
 - 2nd: Testosterone = small voice box, thicker folds
 - Masculinization: open and broadening the voice

- 1st puberty: Testosterone = large voice box, thick vocal folds
 - 2nd: Estrogen = large voice box, still thick vocal folds
 - Typically train the falsetto or higher in the vocal placements
 - See Resource: [Zheanna Erose](#)
 - Speaking in a forward placement, narrowing
- Pitch **does not** equal gender, it ALSO needs Resonance
 - Pitch is the “High & Low” sound
 - Resonance or “Weight,” or formant (dark vs bright), is JUST as important
 - Size of the voice box affects the resonance | folds effect the pitch
 - Requires a new placement, new manipulation of the larynx/resonance chamber/voice box

6. **Resources for people who are gender expansive and/or who’ve gone through a 2nd puberty & physical voice changes**

- Seek out SLPs (Speech Language Pathologists) who understand a trans or gender expansive voices
- [Chris Gallego](#)
 - Non-Binary voice coach (singing focus)
- Zheanna Erose of [TransVoiceLessons](#)
 - Voice Feminization
- [Queer Vox Academy](#) and their Discord
 - FANTASTIC Resources/Classes for Queer and gender expansive people in voice over
 - They have a talent directory
 - President and Founder JP Karliak ([@jpkarliak](#))
- [The Undead Voice](#)
 - This is a FREE guide aimed to provide people with essential information, resources, and exercises to help them navigate the voice transition process.

More resources!

- [Voices of the Global Majority](#)
 - BIPOC voice acting directory and Resources
- [Disabled Voice Actors Directory](#)