Mic Techniques Cabaret Connexion 2026 Susan Dennis

Beginning singers

Strive for Consistent sound and Posture maintenance

The "Ice Cream Cone" Trap: Never hold a handheld dynamic microphone vertically. If you sing over the top, the microphone cannot capture your sound. **Hold the mic horizontally or at a 45-degree angle**, pointing the mic directly at your mouth like a trumpet. When you are **not singing**, release your arm to your side.

Establish a Consistent Distance: Start by keeping the microphone roughly **1 to 2 inches (or about two fingers)** away from your lips. Maintaining a steady distance helps your volume and tone stay consistent throughout your song.

Never "Cup" the Mic: Never wrap your hands around the top of the mic. Cupping creates a muddy or muffled sound and increases the risk of high-pitched piercing **feedback**. Always grip the center of the handle or put your thumb underneath the mic for stability.

Maintain Posture Alignment: Keep your head level. Beginners often strain their neck upward or reach toward a microphone in the stand. This strains the throat and limits breath support. Bring the stand up to your natural height so your spine and head stays aligned.

Experienced Singers

The mic is an extension of your voice with active manipulation.

Distance from your mouth for Intimate Sections: When singing soft lyrics or low notes, **bring the mic closer** (almost touching your lips). Directional microphones naturally boost low-end frequencies when you get very close. This will add warmth, bass, and intimate texture when whispering, vocal fry or very soft singing.

Active Dynamic Pull-Backs: When transitioning into loud belts or high notes, **pull the microphone back slightly** to prevent distortion. Be precise. Pulling the mic back too dramatically can cause your sound to drop out, losing the effect.

Singing for Plosives: When delivering hard consonant sounds (like "P", "B", or "T"), sing **slightly off the mic** by turning your chin or angling the microphone a few degrees away. This reduces the loud “pops” in the mic.

Managing Arm and Shoulder Tension: Learn to crook your wrist slightly to reduce arm weight rather than holding a rigid, straight arm. If needed, place both hands on the microphone handle—this opens and expands the rib cage rather than tensing the shoulders