

Issues to consider when singing with a jazz band

How to choose the right key for you

- * What are the highest and lowest notes?
- * What's your first note and how will you find it?

Sourcing a good chart or lead sheet

- * There's a good choice of reputable volumes available from, for example, Hal Leonard and Chuck Sher; but what if the printed edition isn't in your key?
- * Consider getting the *iReal* app because it will transpose your song to any key, and many musicians now have it on their phones and tablets; however you'll need to establish if the chart in the app is structured the same as the version of the song you've maybe been learning..

Knowing the song's structure

- * Songs may have an intro, a verse, a chorus, an interlude, a tag and a coda. What does it all mean?
- * Singers and musicians can have different terms of reference. The band may regard the song as A A B A in structure; but do you know how that corresponds with your lyrics? The band may say; "come back in at 'B'.." but which lyric does that refer to?
- * If there's an instrumental solo, when should you come back in?
- * Do you know where you are at all times during the song, even during the solos?
- * Does the vocal resume at the top or halfway through, and what may determine this?

How to set the tempo, communicate the rhythmic feel of the song and count it in

- * What factors determine the song's tempo?
- * Is the song 'straight' or swing? How can the way you count in communicate the rhythmic feel to the band?

Will the band know the same version of the song as you? Can you expect them to?

- * If you're new to singing jazz, or at least have learned a particular version of a song, it's important to check with the band that they're familiar with that recording, too (so make sure *you* know whose version it is!) The ideal scenario is to be able to offer a decent chart that proclaims itself to be the "*Frank Sinatra - Live at the Sands*" version (or whatever!) in which case the music will be set out as per the recording. As you gain experience you'll become more comfortable with things happening on-stage that deviate from the recording you know best, but yet remain cheerfully unflustered. And, well - that's jazz!