

Registers

Have you ever wondered why your voice cracks? There could be a simple answer. If your crack or break occurs in the same spot in your voice each time, meaning around the same note in the scale, then it is because of a register shift. Your most common [registers](#) are head and chest voice. Shifting between them can be tricky, because they both use your vocal cords in a different way. It sounds complicated, but it is a lot like shifting gears when you drive a manual car. It takes time to learn to drive without stopping and jolting your passengers, the same goes for learning to shift between registers.

Mix Registers to Stop Cracking Especially in the Middle of the Voice

Let's start with the obvious. The only way you are going to stop cracking is by learning how to [mix your vocal registers](#). For beginners, higher notes are sung in [head voice](#) and lower ones in [chest voice](#). So, when you start on a low note in full chest voice and your voice rises in pitch (going up the scale), you will want to lighten the sound and [add head voice](#). The very middle of your voice should be a 50/50 blend between the two registers. Most likely your most obvious crack will be smack dab where the two registers meet.

First Develop Both Chest and Head Voices

Some people push their chest voice up as high as they can, causing [tense high notes](#) and cracks on at the top of their range. Others sing high well and peter out as they sing lower. If your voice never shifts or you have a limited range, then you probably use one vocal register instead of two. That means you will want to find either your head or chest voice and learn to mix the two. If you don't sing high, then [work on head voice](#). If your low notes are weak, [find your chest voice](#).

Slur to Practice Mixing Registers

Slurs are your break's best friend. What is a slur? It is exactly what it sounds like. You go from one note and "[scoop](#)" into the next one. Imagine throwing a ball in the air, it doesn't jump from your hand to the air, but swooshes up. That is what you are doing with your voice. Slurs might sound ugly to you, but they are most effective when you hit every incremental micro-tone between pitches. There are many exercises based on this one concept. One of my favorites is called the "yawn sigh." Rather than singing, you swoosh from the top to the bottom of your voice with a relaxed, voiced sigh. When I am working on a problem spot, I first "yawn sigh" that area of my voice until I am more comfortable. Then I sing while trying to [imitate the voiced sigh](#).

What If My Break Isn't In the Middle of My Voice?

For some, there might be a crack in a different spot in the voice. If the break is caused by the lack of mixing registers, than slurs will still help. For instance, one of my biggest vocal challenges has been a small register shift in my lower register. I used to flip into full chest before middle C. In order to get rid of the break, I added a small amount of head voice to my lowest notes. I learned to do this by slurring carefully up and down the scale