

ONLINE LESSON GUIDANCE

Kallan Vocals / Olney Singing Studio

Online singing lessons can work extremely well with a simple, reliable setup. Because lessons involve live voice, music, backing tracks and exercises, the setup is slightly different from an ordinary video call.

Essential equipment

1. Main device for Zoom

Use a computer, laptop or tablet with a camera and microphone. A laptop or desktop computer is ideal where available, as it provides a larger screen and usually makes Zoom audio settings easier to manage. Position the device securely so your teacher can see you clearly while you are standing and singing.

2. Separate device for tracks and exercises

Please have a second device available to play backing tracks, accompaniment, exercises or reference recordings. This could be a phone, tablet, second computer or another suitable music-playing device. Keep any tracks or links needed for the lesson ready before the lesson begins where possible.

3. Strong and reliable internet connection

A stable connection is particularly important for singing lessons. Where possible, stay reasonably close to your Wi-Fi router, avoid heavy internet use elsewhere in the household during the lesson, and use a wired Ethernet connection if your Wi-Fi is unreliable.

Headphones or earphones

Headphones or earphones can reduce echo and help you hear your teacher clearly. Wired headphones or earphones are preferable where possible, as Bluetooth devices can sometimes introduce delay or change the way audio is processed.

Your teacher may advise whether headphones are best for your particular setup, especially when working with backing tracks from a separate device.

External microphone - recommended, not essential

An external microphone can improve the sound quality your teacher receives and can be particularly useful for regular online lessons.

You do not need to purchase an external microphone to have an online singing lesson. A good built-in laptop, computer or tablet microphone is usually sufficient to get started.

If you already own an external USB microphone, you are welcome to use it. If you are thinking of buying one specifically for lessons, please ask your teacher or Bethany for advice before purchasing. Professional recording equipment is not required.

Your room and device position

Choose a quiet room where you feel comfortable singing and interruptions can be kept to a minimum. You should have enough space to stand comfortably and move your arms freely.

Good lighting is helpful, and the camera should ideally be positioned around eye level so your face and upper body can be seen. Place the main device on a stable surface and keep the second device within easy reach for starting and stopping tracks.

Where possible, avoid standing a long distance from the microphone or using a very large, echoey room.

Zoom audio settings

Video-call software is primarily designed for speech and may automatically suppress sounds it interprets as background noise. This can sometimes affect sustained singing, higher notes, quieter sounds or musical accompaniment.

Your teacher may therefore ask you to adjust Zoom's audio settings for music or original/unprocessed sound and to reduce automatic noise suppression. The exact options can vary by device and Zoom version, so your teacher can help you identify the appropriate settings if required.

Before your lesson

Please allow a few minutes before the lesson to make sure both devices are charged or connected to power, check your internet connection, open Zoom and check your camera and microphone.

Have your second device ready, open any tracks or exercises you will need, and have any sheet music or lyrics available. Keep some water nearby.

Younger students may need a parent or guardian to help set up the devices and Zoom before the lesson, particularly for their first online lesson.

Sheet music, lyrics and lesson materials

Have any sheet music, lyrics or other lesson materials ready before the lesson. A printed copy can be particularly useful because it avoids repeatedly switching away from the Zoom screen.

If you use a digital copy, ideally display it on a device other than the main device being used for Zoom.

Recommended setup

Main device: Laptop or computer running Zoom

Second device: Phone or tablet playing tracks/exercises

Internet: Strong Wi-Fi or wired connection

Audio: Built-in microphone to begin with, or an external USB microphone if available

Headphones: Wired headphones/earphones where useful

Other: Water, music/lyrics and a quiet, well-lit space

You do not need a professional home recording studio to take part in an online singing lesson. A reliable internet connection, a two-device setup and a suitable space to sing are the most important things.

If you are unsure whether your current equipment is suitable, please contact Bethany or speak to your teacher before purchasing additional equipment.