

Baritones

WHAT IS A BARITONE?

The baritone (bari) sings a harmony part, sometimes above the lead, sometimes below. The bari range is similar to the lead range (G below Middle C to B above Middle C). When above the lead, the bari should sing with a tenor-like quality. When below the lead, the bari should sing with more depth to fill in the sound between lead and bass. Because baris flip above and below the lead, the bari must be able to adjust her sound to accommodate the different vocal qualities needed for the chord to "ring". While this skill is acquired through practice, marking the notes sung above the lead is often helpful for beginning baris to get a feel for the part.

The following information was provided by a Sweet Adeline judge and coach, Shirley Kout.

VOCAL SKILLS OF A BARITONE

While keeping all resonators open, strive to join chest and head tones.
Hum with full resonance. Find the center of that hum and maintain that feeling as you sing.
Use "inside smile" and high arch in mouth.
Maintain an open throat and keep tongue away from back of throat.
Use good posture, abdominal lift and expanded rib cage as you exhale / sing.
Use plenty of air behind tone, "spend" it with support.
Develop a bigger capacity for air.

SINGING TECHNIQUES OF A BARITONE

Sing vowel-to-vowel exactly with lead. Match vowels and minimize consonants.
Sing with more pharyngeal resonance, energy and focus below lead, more head resonance and lighter quality above lead.
Be aware of and tune octaves with any part.
Be aware of notes that need to be adjusted sharp or flat for total accuracy - tune them.
Maintain your place in the cone on every chord. You will need to adjust quality and intensity.

BARITONE PERSONALITY

Think about the baritones you know and see if any of them fit these descriptors.
(If you know more characteristics we'd love to add them.)
Baritones are bright.
Baritones know it all.
Baritones want and remember the details.
Baritones plan the menu for the basses party.