

Mayo Clinic Minute

Why your voice sounds the way it does

Video	Audio
Vivien Williams	Everyone's voice is unique.
Vivien Williams	But what makes your voice sound the way it does?
David Lott, M.D. Otorlaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery Mayo Clinic	"This is what the voice box looks like."
Vivien Williams	Dr. David Lott says your diaphragm and lungs push air up to the vocal cords, which vibrate.
David Lott, M.D.	"Once it hits there, there are waves in the air, and those waves are going to vibrate in your pharynx, the upper part of your throat, the back part of your nose, and in the sinuses in your head."
Vivien Williams	It's similar to what happens when you play a guitar.
David Lott, M.D.	"The guitar strings are what your vocal folds are. They just vibrate and make a buzz sound."
Vivien Williams	The vibrations resonate in the body of the guitar — just like they do in your head. How the tones sound depends on the shape and sound of the instrument.
David Lott, M.D.	"And because everybody's throat, nose and head are different, we all have our own signature sounds."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.