

C college Audition Guidelines:

The guidelines below apply to both classical voice auditions and musical theatre auditions:

- Schedule auditions in 3 categories. Reach schools, Hopefuls, and Safe schools. Reach schools accept very few students annually, Hopefuls accept a larger number, but are still competitive. Safe schools accept large numbers of applicants, but don't be deceived. These schools often weed students out of the program later if they do not meet a certain standard.
- **Do NOT** schedule your first audition at your top choice school.
 1. You will need time to feel acclimated to the audition process, and you will not want that learning curve to be at the expense of your most important audition.
 2. Unlike academic programs, performance programs are very likely to wait list you if you try for early action or early decision. It is in the music program's best interest not to accept the majority students until they hear from most of their candidates in any given year.
- **Do** memorize your material at least a full month ahead of your first scheduled audition.
- **Do NOT** change your audition material immediately before auditions.

DO PREPARE A SPREADSHEET OR CHART

Each school's requirements will be different, so it is important to organize information early. Ultimately, you should prepare a spread sheet which clearly shows the school, the audition date and requirements specific to that audition. In order to take advantage of our experience and expertise, Please share that spreadsheet with your voice teacher.

lassical Auditions

Voice Performance: We will select and prepare audition material in voice lessons. If advice is received from friends, accompanists, or other instructors in class, be gracious and respectful, but remember that the ultimate decisions must be made here in the voice studio. By the time you are auditioning for college, I will have the advantage of knowing your voice intimately. We have had 20 years of success in this arena, and while no one can offer a guarantee, we have had students accepted to many top conservatories in the country and we take our responsibility to you seriously.

- Most classical programs require 2 to 3 contrasting pieces. Some have specific language and time period requirements; perhaps an early Italian piece and an English piece. In classical music, contrast is achieved not through tempi, but through time period and language. For example, pieces by Cesti, Schubert, and Barber might all be lyrical, but they would still be considered contrasting by virtue of those qualifications.
- As a Voice Performance major, you are studying a discipline that focuses on a career in opera. Opera singing is athletic. You will be assessed in terms of vocal ability and the potential for the voice to be heard over an orchestra without a microphone. In this particular situation, dynamics are far less important than they are in the choral setting.
- If you coach your repertoire with a pianist who does not work with professional opera singers every day, it is more important to remember your goal. It is more important to demonstrate a full, well supported voice and beautiful tone, than it is to demonstrate dynamic control. This makes sense when you consider that as a historical art form, opera is performed live in a hall over a full orchestra with no amplification.

Choral Arts

As a Choral Arts major, you will also be assessed in terms of musicianship skills and potential within your major instrument. Piano skills are also important to a career in choral arts, so it is advisable to begin as early as possible.

Choral Arts audition requirements are often the same as those for voice performance majors.

Music Therapy

Different music therapy programs will allow you to specialize in different styles of vocal music. You will need to investigate each program separately to decide what is right for you. For classical programs, the audition requirements are likely to mirror those for voice performance majors. For jazz and contemporary music therapy programs, the audition requirements will differ widely. These programs are still too new to have established a general expectation.

Y our Accompanist and Your Notebook

Most college auditions will take place in established music school environments, which means your pianist is likely to be of the highest professional caliber. However, it is important to take any steps you can to ensure that your audition goes well. See the list below for specific pointers on this subject.

- Do prepare an audition notebook. Today 's standard for both classical and musical theatre college auditions is a 3-ring binder with clean copies of your music arranged back to back in book fashion. It is best to avoid sheet protectors, as even the non-glare plastic reflects light. The preference is music that is taped at the outside corners and hole punched.
- You will need a 3-hole punch and scotch tape. The corners should be taped in both directions so that the entire corners top and bottom are covered with tape. You can also “dog-ear” the corners ahead of time for easy page turning. I will demonstrate for you in lessons.
- Do prepare your various musical theatre cuts as “cut & paste” copies. It is important that they be prepared as cleanly and concisely as possible. If there are measures that need to be blacked out, use a sharpie pen and completely cover the cut measures. The fewer pages you need, the better. If a page turn is necessary and is going to be awkward due to blacked out measures, you might consider an additional preparation with your individual music pages attached to pieces of card stock so that they are stiff and supported. You can offer your accompanist the option of using the notebook, or laying the music out on the cardstock sheets.
- Do discuss any tempo changes and cuts with your audition accompanist. Keep this discussion respectful and brief by planning ahead of time exactly what you 'll need to say.

Do arrange to rehearse your audition pieces with one of the professional accompanists on our list prior to your first audition. In voice lessons, we are working with pre-recorded accompaniments which we alter to provide you with a custom fit. These accompaniments are wonderful tools, but they do not entirely prepare you for working with a live pianist. Your piece will feel slightly different with each pianist at each school so rehearsing with at least one professional will help prepare you. Allow the pianist to use the notebook you will be giving to your audition accompanists so that they can give you feedback. This will help ensure that your audition notebook is prepared in a pianist friendly fashion.

W hat To Wear

Classical Voice Auditions

- **LADIES:** A dress or dress suit is most appropriate. The skirt or dress should reach your knee. Jewelry and shoes should be classic, not chunky or trendy. Pumps or dress sandals are fine. Remember to rehearse your audition material in the shoes you intend to wear for your audition. The change in stance can affect your support. Wear your hair neatly back from your face.
- **MEN:** A suit is most appropriate, but dress slacks, collared shirt and tie are also fine. If your hair is long, be sure to wear it in such a way that it is not falling into your eyes.
- While it may seem overwhelming to consider all of the details involved in a well prepared series of college auditions, the rewards can be enormous. Remember, you are not alone. We will be here to assist you every step of the way toward your goals for college and beyond.