

Audition and Interview Dos and Don'ts!



The CVYO audition format exists to help musicians find the ensemble where they will grow and succeed the most as musicians, and to help the directors get to know each incoming musician. Our directors consider the technical ability, ensemble experience, work ethic, and musical maturity of each incoming candidate.

All auditions are excellent practice. Below are some helpful guidelines:

Research who you are auditioning or interviewing for. Know the names of your directors and be able to address them by name (Mr. Benson or Mr. Tseitlin), and get to know them through their bios on the website. These will be your leaders and mentors in the coming years.

Dress appropriately for the occasion. Concert dress is not required and is likely too formal. Wear nice business/casual clothes. Please don't audition in flip flops or shorts.

Demonstrate that you know the people and repertoire you work with. Make sure you know your teacher's full name. Know the composers and titles of all of your pieces (including your excerpts). Be able to communicate the key signature and number of octaves of your scale. Not knowing these fundamentals will not result in a good audition.

Be positive in your performance and show perseverance. If you make a mistake, correct it quickly and continue. Keep a smile on your face and a positive attitude. This is a key skill in ensemble playing.

Prepare well and don't make excuses. If you prepare well, you can trust in your work. Our directors know the difference between expecting perfection and assessing your capabilities. They are listening for your best moments and assessing how you handle your mistakes. Try not to say "sorry," or "it's not my best day," or "I didn't have enough time to prepare this excerpt," just do your best and continue.

Research the style and tempo of your piece. Knowing the appropriate tempo and style you should play your excerpt speaks volumes. This demonstrates an understanding of the repertoire and your maturity as a musician.

Arrive early enough to warm up and collect yourself before in-person auditions.

Be reasonable with your goals. If learning the excerpts for an ensemble took months of work, please consider if you have the time and capability to learn 10 to 12 times the amount of material in an even shorter amount of time (remember, we don't sight-read at rehearsal). While your work ethic is directly taken into consideration, our directors want you to be successful with your placement in the orchestra.

During the audition process, be respectful and thank the directors for their decision and your placement. If you feel you were not placed in the appropriate ensemble and section, consult with your private teacher and contact your directors if you feel it is appropriate. Be prepared for a candid discussion on your qualifications and the skills required.

Communicate with your directors throughout the audition process. If you're preparing an excerpt or material for the season but aren't sure about something, e-mail us for clarification (it shows initiative and interest).

Helpful Guidelines for Video Submissions

Rehearse your entire run-through (including the verbal portion) one to two times before recording.

Don't stop for minor mistakes. Most mistakes are less noticeable than you realize. If you stop and re-do your video based on a mistake, you are also giving up on all the parts that you played WELL.

Take 2 or 3 full takes and pick your favorite, even if it isn't perfect. Having more than one to choose from will give you confidence.

Most importantly, once you have rehearsed and are prepared to record, commit to NOT STOPPING. Know that no-one has the "perfect" audition, just do your best and it will show! Good luck!