

Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies

Audition Tips

Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies • 408 St. Peter Street, The Historic Hamm Building, Suite 300 • St. Paul, Minnesota • 55102-1497
TEL 651.602.6800 FAX 651.292.3281 email mail@gtcys.org www.gtcys.org

AUDITION! While the word audition can make us all sweat a little, we would like to offer some helpful hints and suggestions to make this a more comfortable situation. We look forward to the upcoming auditions for all instrumentalists. We want this to be a successful and enjoyable audition for all students.

The GTCYS audition consists of three components; scales, a prepared solo and sight-reading. Please make sure that you have looked at the list of requirements for each orchestra (found on the auditions page at www.gtcys.org). The scales for each orchestra are specific, and you need to know what these are BEFORE you enter the audition room. The scales and prepared solo should be representative of your best playing.

Preparation of scales and repertoire:

- 1) **Practice slowly**
Practice your scales and repertoire at half tempo. Listen to the tone and pitch of every note. Often, we do not hear pitch and rhythm inaccuracies when we are playing things through at a faster tempo.
- 2) **Practice with a metronome**
Use the metronome at a slow speed and performance tempo. Many times our internal clocks and tempi do not match the metronome. Remember that the metronome is your friend!
- 3) **Perform for an audience**
Yes, perform even your scales for an audience of three or more people. Scales are the building blocks of your pieces. The more accurate and solid your scales, the more accurate and solid your repertoire. The more you perform in front of an audience – even a small one – the more comfortable you will be.
- 4) **Work constantly on the difficult spots**
You can never practice the difficult passages too many times. You should be able to play the most difficult passages with the greatest of ease. This only comes with careful and constant repetition. Practice makes permanent!

When the audition day has come, your work is done. Preparation is the biggest key to having a performance/audition that you can enjoy. Until then, keep practicing!!

On the audition day:

Plan ahead! Make sure that you know where and when your audition is.

Warm up! It is a good idea to play through your scales and pieces SLOWLY before you arrive at the audition site. Once you arrive, start your pieces and scales. There will be plenty of space for you to do this.

Continued on back...

Think Positively! As you think about the audition, imagine your sound as one of confidence and clarity.

Enjoy! This is what you have been working for. The adjudicators are there to listen to you play well and really enjoy listening to each and every student. Keep breathing and relax!

Pointers from a Pro:

Roger Frisch has been a violinist with the Minnesota Orchestra for over thirty years. He has heard many auditions and works with many students who are preparing for professional auditions. When talking about auditions he offers these practical tips:

1) **Read all the information that pertains to the audition**

Roger fondly recalls one of his first auditions – one that he thought he was prepared for. When he got into the room, the audition panel asked him for a piece that he didn't see on the list. Roger encourages all students to "take the time to read all of the requirements." Needless to say, he was quite rattled after that point and the audition did not turn out so well.

2) **Prepare yourself psychologically**

Students spend many hours practicing scales, etudes and repertoire. Musicians are great at practicing and rehearsing, but often times forget about the psychological preparation that needs to take place. "Students should not only learn the notes and technique, but should also visualize what a performance or audition will sound like. Athletes do it in preparation of games and meets, and musicians should do it also. Picture yourself playing in the performance room and imagine what the sound is," says Roger.

3) **Prepare for sight-reading by playing chamber music**

Roger says "There is no way to prepare for sight-reading on your own. The only way you can practice sight-reading is by playing chamber music. You have to learn this by doing. The more you can expose yourself to sight-reading with others, the better prepared you will be. Get together and play chamber music with your friends. Play duets, trios, quartets-anything!"

Finally...

Remember to arrive at the audition site at least 20 minutes prior to your scheduled time so that you may register, receive your audition room assignment and warm up. String, woodwind and brass auditions are approximately ten minutes in length; percussion auditions are approximately fifteen minutes. Selections do not need to be memorized and no accompanist is required.

For any other questions, check the website at www.gtcys.org, or call the office at 651.602.6800. We look forward to hearing you soon!

Sincerely,

The GTCYS Artistic Team

Amir Kats, Artistic Director & Symphony
Mary Sorlie, Philharmonia
Sarah Chelgren Duffy, Sinfonia
Barbara Flooding, Concertino
Andrew Bast, Concert Orchestra
Jeffrey Stirling, Philharmonic