

Preparing for Your OAYO Audition

Thank you for your interest in membership in one of our orchestras. [This guide](#) covers:

- different parts of the audition,
- things we'll be listening for, and
- tips and advice from OAYO Music Director, Aviva Segall.

The audition includes:

- Scales
- Solo
- Rhythmic sight-reading (provided at the audition)
- [Excerpt](#)

Scales

Scales are the first impression you will make in your audition. More than “just a warm up,” scales are a part of any serious musician’s mastery of technical challenges. Scales should be played with excellent tone production, fabulous intonation, and preferably without vibrato.

- Youth Symphony: If you play violin, viola, or cello please prepare four major and minor scales of at least three octaves from the NMEA scales for your instrument. Bass and woodwind players should prepare four major and minor scales of two octaves from the NMEA scales for your instrument. Brass players should prepare four major and minor scales of two octaves where practical (the occasional one octave scale is understandable.)
- Youth Philharmonic: If you play violin, viola, or cello please prepare three scales of at least three octaves from the NMEA scales for your instrument. If you have a few two-octave scales they should involve shifting or playing a different position than the first position. Bass, woodwind, and brass players should prepare three major and minor scales from the NMEA scales for your instrument and should note that two octave scales are strongly preferred when possible.
- Youth Concert Strings: Two major scales that reflect your current level of technique. Please play the maximum number of octaves that you can.

OAYO scale requirements are designed to support your teacher’s scale pedagogy. Therefore, you and your teacher get to choose which scales you play based on what you have been focusing on in your current development as a musician. You are allowed to play any scale system, any form of minor and you may bring a copy of the NMEA scales for your instrument into the audition room with you.

Tip from the director: “The person listening to your audition can tell if you make a regular habit of scale practice and if you practice them well. 10-15 minutes of scale practice everyday with a metronome will make you invincible (well, nearly so). Don’t forget the value of a tuner and/or drone note.”

Solo

Your 2-3 minute solo (YCS solos may be 1-2 minutes) should present your best musicality, tone, intonation, technical control, dynamic control, articulation, expression, and understanding of style. You may select excerpts from your given piece to direct our listening to the sections most representative of your top technique.

Tip from the director: “A piece you can play which showcases your best musicianship is far more impressive than a more advanced piece that you are barely holding on to. Your solo piece should give us confidence that you will prepare well for your orchestra music and that you understand what it means to be well polished.”

Rhythmic Sight-reading (Youth Symphony and Youth Philharmonic)

The best thing to do to prepare for sight-reading is to regularly practice with a metronome. The first time you will see the rhythmic sight reading will be at the audition. It is not available in advance.

Tip from the director: "Practicing subdivisions with a metronome while walking can be helpful. Have trouble going from a triplet to a duple? Take a walk with you metronome while practicing that!"

Sight-reading (Youth Concert Strings)

The best thing to do to prepare for sight-reading is to regularly practice with a metronome.

It is also helpful to take your music and read the note names out loud. This will help you recognize which notes are affected by the key signature and improve your accuracy. If you're not concentrating on what the note is, it is easier to play the rhythms correctly.

Tip from the director: "Try to read something new every day! Remember that rhythm is the most important aspect of sight reading. You can also work on your note recognition with flashcards."

Excerpt (Youth Symphony and Youth Philharmonic)

The excerpt is the biggest thing we look at when deciding if Youth Symphony or Youth Philharmonic is the right match for your preparation skills. We cannot accept you into the orchestra of your choice if your excerpt does not represent the level of preparation and detail we would expect of you a month into rehearsals even if your solo playing is far beyond the level of that orchestra. This year the Youth Philharmonic excerpt is part of the Youth Symphony excerpt; just look at the directions to know which sections you should play. If you are auditioning for Youth Symphony only or for both Youth Symphony and Youth Philharmonic, play the whole excerpt.

Tip from the director: "When the excerpts become available the first thing you should do is to listen to a recording. Even better – listen to multiple recordings! This activity will give you the style, articulation, and approximate tempo of the piece (however, please remember that an excerpt played very accurately at a slightly slower tempo is better than an excerpt played sloppily at top speed). Listening to a recording will also help you keep the rest of the orchestra in mind as you play which will come across in an audition."

Please visit us on the web at www.oayo.org to access the excerpt for both orchestras.

Audition Day

You've practiced. Now it's time to showcase your hard work. Below you will find all of the information you need to successfully complete your audition.

What to Bring

- ALL of your music: the excerpt, the solo (even if you have it memorized) and the scales (if you plan on having your scales in front of you)
- A pencil

Remember, the person listening to your audition is listening for what you do right, not counting every mistake. If you make a mistake, let it go. Dwelling on it will hurt your audition more than the mistake will!

Important Things to Note

- OAYO auditions are NOT blind auditions.

Audition Sites

Please plan on arriving to your designated audition site at least 30 minutes before your scheduled audition time. This allows you time to tune your instrument and to play through your scales, solo and excerpt. It also allows for travel time, traffic congestion or any other surprises that may occur on route to your audition.

When you arrive you will be able to warm-up. Note that parents may not be in or near the audition rooms. Additionally should you be running late please notify as soon as possible by e-mailing programs@oayo.org.

Your audition will either be held at either the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Strauss Performing Arts Center (6305 University Drive N. Omaha, NE 68182) or Presbyterian Church of the Cross (1517 S. 114th Street Omaha, NE 68144)

If you are a percussionist, you will schedule your audition independently with Spencer Jones at the Omaha Conservatory of Music. (spencerjones@omahacm.org)

We Want to Help You Succeed

Our Music Director and Principal Conductor of Youth Symphony and Youth Philharmonic, Aviva Segall, makes herself available to all of our students throughout their OAYO experience. She ALWAYS encourages questions and is proud of those students that take the initiative to ask for help. Aviva can be reached by email at aviva.segall@oayo.org or by phone at 402/651-3318.

We understand you may not be happy with the results of your audition. We won't change the results for you, however, we are happy to go over your audition with you and/or your teacher to discuss what you can do for the next audition. We are also willing to do a "mock audition" which is a chance for the Music Director to discuss your audition skills and suggest practice techniques to help you prepare for your next audition.