

Tips for NYAW Music Ensemble Auditions

These tips are designed to try and help you to prepare for your National Youth Arts Music Ensemble audition. Please read through them carefully and good luck!

Prepare Fully!

Choose your pieces carefully

It is better to choose a piece that you can play well and shows your playing off than to try and play a piece that you think will impress but you are not comfortable with.

Practice with a metronome

Timing is everything in music, especially ensemble playing - it is easy to slow down in passages you find difficult and race away in passages that you can play easily. Practicing with a metronome will discipline you to keep in time. This applies to sight-reading and scales as well.

Practice Sight-reading

Sight-reading is one aspect that everyone gets anxious about so give yourself a chance and practice it; pick up a piece you've never played before and give it a go. Remember the most important thing to do in sight-reading is to keep going - no-one expects you to be perfect, however you will pick up marks if you can play musically and in time!

Practice your scales

No-one particularly enjoys playing scales, however if you can do them well, not only are they easy marks, they will also hold you in good stead when playing those fast runs that tie you in knots.

Remember - scales don't have to sound boring, you can still play them musically and in time - controlled and well phrased scales sound much more impressive than if you try and rattle them off as quickly as possible.

Prepare your extracts

If you are given extracts to prepare for your audition - don't leave them to the last minute!

These aren't just marks for your playing but also your attitude to practice. Everyone is on an even playing field, make sure you're ahead of the game by doing a bit of research on the piece, listen to a recording to hear how it should sound and make sure you take in all the markings that are given to you.

Your Audition

Arrive early

Don't put yourself under more pressure by arriving at the last minute, you have time to warm up - use it!

Relax

Easier said than done maybe, however the audition panel want you to do well - if you've prepared fully, there's no reason not to feel confident and enjoy the audition. **Remember** - every tutor has been through auditions themselves, they'll know what you're going through!

Dress

We don't expect you to look like you are going for an interview at a bank, and we want you to feel comfortable, but remember that first impressions count, so think about what you're wearing and make sure that that first meeting with the panel is a good one.