

How To Prepare for Your Audition

Auditions are a challenging, yet exciting process. Auditions are an essential part of being a performer and so should be taken seriously. To achieve the best possible result in your audition this year, try following these steps:

1. Consult with your instrumental teacher as soon as possible to choose a piece to play which best shows your ability – both technically and musically.
2. Devote 10 minutes of your practice time each day to working on this piece. This does not mean playing it through from start to finish. This means breaking the piece apart, isolating the difficult sections, working on them then putting them all together again. Make sure you can play each note confidently and spectacularly - don't wait for the rousing finale to do your best playing because the audition panel may stop you before then! During this practice time, prepare yourself mentally for being in the audition room. Pretend you are playing in front of a panel - the more you know what to expect, the less chance there is of getting nervous on the day.
3. When you receive your excerpts, make sure you spend time with your instrumental teacher going through them. Prepare them with as much attention to detail as you would any other piece – the panel will be listening out for articulation, phrasing, tempo, bowings, rhythm, intonation, vibrato etc.
4. It is worth listening to different recordings of the excerpts (Spotify, YouTube, etc.) and even researching your part within the full score (possibly available from IMSLP.org). This gives a very good idea of the context of the excerpt and your orchestral part – tempi, expressions, phrasing etc are all assisted by listening to reference recordings.
5. Sight reading and scales should not be overlooked during audition preparation. Sight reading will show the panel that you have the skills to approach new works confidently and scales demonstrate sound technical knowledge of your instrument.
6. Make sure you've had plenty of sleep the night before your audition and are mentally and musically prepared. On the day of your audition, it is essential that you warm up at home beforehand. Pack your music, rosin, valve oil, spare strings etc.
7. Smile and enjoy yourself - remember everyone wants you to play well as much as you do!