



Audition Tips & Resources Guide

Below is a list of recommended websites for purchasing audition materials, along with a guide to help you prepare for a successful RMES audition.

Accompaniment Tracks & Sheet Music

<http://www.karaoke-version.com>

<https://pianotrax.com>

<http://musicminusone.com>

<http://sheetmusicplus.com>

<http://www.halleonard.com>

<http://jwpepper.com>

iTunes

Audition Tips

Please refer to the event description to ensure you know exactly what the directors are looking for each day of the auditions, as it may vary per production. This guide covers what typically happens at an adult MUSICAL audition.

Day 1: Vocal Auditions

General Notes:

1. Be on time.
2. Come dressed to impress.
3. Bring a copy of a recent photo (if you did not submit one electronically). If you do not have one, a picture will be taken onsite.
4. Be quiet while others are auditioning.
5. Plan on being there the entire audition time, unless told otherwise by a director or casting team member.

Audition Spaces

At most auditions there are two spaces to be aware of, a **waiting room** and the **audition space**.

1.) The Waiting Room

The waiting room is used for completing audition paperwork (if not completed online), having photos taken (if needed), and to ask the audition crew any questions you might have prior to your audition. You need to report there first to make sure everything is in order before you audition in front of the directors. Once an RMES crew member ensures that you've completed all the necessary paperwork and that we have a recent photo, they will take you to the audition space. Remember, all crew members work with the directors and report to them on everything that's happening in the waiting room. Make sure you're friendly and polite towards any crew member you encounter.

NOTE: *If you need a place to warm-up your voice prior to auditioning, we recommend using your car before entering the waiting room.*

2.) The Audition Space

The moment you enter the audition space, you need to deal with your accompaniment.

A.) MP3 Performance Track

If you are using an MP3 track for your accompaniment, the person you need to seek upon entering the space is the sound engineer. Again, offer a pleasant greeting and provide the MP3 player you'd like to use. Please let the sound engineer know which track and at what time the piece should be started. Ideally your track should only contain your audition piece cut to the proper time and length.

NOTE: Under **no** circumstances is it acceptable to have **ANY** voices on your accompaniment track.

B.) Live Accompaniment

If an accompanist is present, and you'd like to use their services to play your piece, this is the person you should seek upon entering the room (**please do not count on RMES providing a live accompanist**). Offer a pleasant greeting and provide a clean (unbound) copy of the sheet music, give the tempo of the song (how fast or slow you'd like to take the piece), and point out any key spots in the music that need extra attention.

If you are providing an accompanist, please proceed directly to the piano together unless otherwise advised by an RMES crew member.

Before Starting Your Piece

After you've provided the accompanist or sound engineer with the material for your audition, move to the center of the room facing the directors (in some cases there may be an "X" on the floor marking where they'd like you to begin). Once you're in place, wait for the directors to finish writing any notes they may have on the previous auditionee before introducing yourself.

As soon as the directors are all looking at you, introduce yourself and the piece you will be singing (e.g., "Good evening, my name is John Doe, and today I will be singing 'Oh What a Beautiful Morning' from the musical *Oklahoma!*"). Practice your introduction, and make sure you are looking at the directors and speaking slowly enough for them to understand you. Once you're done introducing yourself, give a head nod to the accompanist or the sound engineer to signal that you are ready to begin singing.

As You Perform

While singing your song, we have two recommendations to keep in mind. First, make sure that your staging keeps you at a comfortable distance from the directors. If you get too close to them, you may make the directors feel uncomfortable. Second, avoid direct eye contact with the directors while you are singing. You can still act like you're singing to someone, if that's what the piece requires, but instead of looking directly at the directors, look just past them or to the side, as if you're singing to a person within your scene. The goal is to keep the directors focused on you.

NOTE: *The directors may ask you to stop singing your selection before you are finished for time purposes.*

What are the directors evaluating at the vocal auditions?

During a vocal audition, directors evaluate several key areas:

- **Vocal technique** (posture, rhythm, breathing, note accuracy)
- **Diction** (clarity of consonants, purity and naturalness of vowels)
- **Volume** (projection and dynamic control)
- **Tone** (beauty and control of the natural voice)
- **Song interpretation** (expression, phrasing, style, tempo)
- **Intonation** (pitch accuracy)

Each element helps give a full picture of the singer's skill and musicality.

Once Your Song is Finished

When you've finished singing your piece, thank the directors (e.g., "Thank you"), collect your accompaniment, and move to the area where they will be checking your vocal range (if needed). Relax, because the hardest part of the vocal auditions is now over. At this point the directors mainly need to hear your overall voice type (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, or Bass). Once you've completed that portion of the audition, you are free to go unless otherwise specified by a director.

Day 2: Vocal Auditions/Dancing/Cold Reading/Sight Singing

Please refer to the event's audition description to ensure you know exactly what the directors are seeking for the second day of auditions, as it may vary per production. **If** vocal auditions continue on the second audition date, please refer to the previous section for your preparation, but make sure you're also prepared for the Dancing/Cold Reading/Sight Singing portion that is typically held on day 2 of auditions.

General Notes:

1. Be on time.
2. Come **dressed to move**. Everyone will be dancing.
3. Bring a sealable bottle of water.
4. Bring a change of clothes for after the dance portion in case time to change is allowed.
 - a. Do not change clothes before the directors give clear instructions that the dance audition is over. The directors will let everyone know if there is time/space to change.
5. Be quiet while others are auditioning.
6. Plan on being there the entire audition time, unless told otherwise by a director or casting team member.

The Audition Space

Unless otherwise stated, you are to go directly into the audition space upon your arrival. Once there you'll find crew members passing out nametags and markers. Take a nametag and write your name on it (the larger the print the better). Find a seat and sit quietly until the directors announce they are ready to begin.

The Song (if needed)

Once the casting team is ready, the vocal director will announce which section of music everyone is going to spend time learning for 5-15 minutes before they begin dancing (only if the directors deem this necessary). Copies of the sheet music for the song will be passed out

as needed and everyone will move into the dance space to learn a simple melody, which will be sung in unison.

The Dance Rehearsal

After the vocal director has finished teaching the song (if needed), the Choreographer will take over and begin teaching some choreography for the piece just covered. Typically, the Choreographer will place people in rows of 5-8 and alternate the rows as they are teaching the choreography. Please don't talk during this portion of the auditions and pay close attention to what the choreographer is asking you to do. It is also recommended that you smile and show the choreographer that you're willing to try what they are asking you to do. This will include some easy and some difficult moves to help the directors gauge everyone's individual skill level. No matter your ability, the directors want to see that you're having fun and willing to step outside your comfort zone.

The Dance Audition

Once the Choreographer has finished teaching the piece, everyone will be given a five-minute break before the casting team begins watching you dance. After the break, one of the directors will have everyone line back up in rows of 5-8 so that the casting team can watch everyone dance one row at a time. Those who are not in the first row may be allowed to continue practicing the dance section while the group in front is performing.

NOTE: *When the dance audition includes singing, you are encouraged to sing out to help your friends who are dancing in front of the directors.*

Once your row has finished dancing to the specified section of music, the directors will ask your row to proceed to the back of the group or to another area in the room to wait. The directors may ask to watch your row a second time before you move on, or they may call you out later to join a new row. Please make sure you listen to any instructions provided.

What are the directors evaluating at the dance auditions?

During one's dance audition, the directors assess the following:

- **Overall form** (body alignment, posture, expression, and how well they maintain control, grace, and proper technique)
- **Timing** (choreography that is in sync with the music)
- **Commitment** (energy, focus, and intention within the performance)
- **Proficiency** (accuracy, control, skill)
- **Ensemble awareness** (stay connected and coordinated with the group)

Evaluating these areas helps directors identify each performer's strengths, readiness, and fit within the overall production.

Following the Dance Portion

After the directors have seen everyone they need to see for the dance portion of the auditions, you'll be provided with a 10–15-minute break to prepare for the next part of the auditions. You may have time to change clothes if there is space for it. Once the break is over, you need to move to the seating area in the audition space and sit quietly until the directors are ready to proceed.

Cold Readings/Sight Singing

Some productions feature a lot of spoken dialogue, while others have none at all. Depending on the show and the director's needs, you may be asked to cold read from the script or sight sing sections from the score. Materials will be provided.

1.) Cold Reading

The principal stage director will oversee this portion of the auditions and will call people up to cold read individually or in groups (depending on the scene being read). If called to read, proceed to the cold reading space. The principal stage director will let everyone know which part of the script they are to read, specifying the page number and section to begin reading and when to start and stop the scene. Be sure to check the RMES website (www.rmesonline.com) to see if a copy of the script is available for perusal the week before

auditions.

While reading in front of the directors, we recommend that you try and get your head out of the script as much as possible. Also, pay attention to any stage directions in the script and try to follow them (as much as possible) unless specifically stated otherwise by the stage director.

What are the directors evaluating during the cold readings?

During one's cold reading, the directors are assessing the following:

- **Believability** (authentic reactions, natural delivery, and emotional truth— so the performance feels genuine rather than “acted”)
- **Volume** (proper vocal technique to match the size of the space and the emotional tone of the scene)
- **Physicality** (posture, movement, gestures, facial expressions that convey to convey their character, mood, and emotions)
- **Control of material** (ability to authentically express and regulate their character's emotions while maintaining professional discipline and staying true to the scene's tone)

2.) Sight Singing

Much like the cold readings, the music will be provided. This may or may not be music from the show for which you are auditioning. The vocal director will oversee this portion of the auditions and will call people up to sight sing individually or in groups (depending on the song). If called, proceed to the sight singing space. The vocal director will let everyone know which part they are to sing, specifying the page number and measure to begin and when to start and stop the song. The vocal director may also have the entire group sing through a song once or twice together before singing individually or in small groups.

While singing in front of the directors, we recommend that you try and get your head out of the music as much as possible. We also encourage you to pay attention to any stage directions in the music. Try to follow them (as much as possible) unless specifically stated otherwise by the stage director.

What are the directors evaluating during the sight singing?

During the sight singing portion of the audition (if needed), directors continue evaluating vocal technique and also observe a performer's:

- **Sight Reading** (the ability to read and perform a piece of music *on the spot*—without having seen or practiced it beforehand)
- **Rehearsal Etiquette** (the respectful, professional behavior expected from cast and crew during rehearsals)
- **Memorization** (a person's ability to **quickly and accurately remember** information—like lines, lyrics, choreography, or cues—in a short amount of time and retain it for performance)

Day 2 or 3: Call Backs (if needed)

Please refer to the event's audition description to ensure you know exactly what the directors are seeking for the second/third day of auditions, as it may vary per production.

General Notes:

1. Be on time.
2. Come dressed to impress but be sure that you can sing/dance in your attire if needed.
3. Bring a bottle of water.
4. Bring a change of clothes in case you are asked to dance.
5. Be quiet while others are auditioning.
6. Plan on being there the entire audition time, unless told otherwise by a director or casting team member.

What to Expect

In most cases, the directors have already made decisions on certain roles based on what they've seen during the audition process. This means the directors are typically only calling back those they are undecided on for one or more characters. **Not being called back does not mean that you have not been cast.**

Call backs are primarily focused on cold reading and/or sight singing. Sometimes the directors may need to see more dancing, but this is very rare. Be sure to bring a positive attitude and follow the same general instructions provided for the second day of the auditions.

What else do the directors evaluate at auditions?

1.) Availabilitiy

Directors will compare the conflicts you listed on your audition form to the production calendar to see where conflicts (if any) fall.

2.) Preparation

Directors usually give auditionees guidelines for a successful audition, and it's essential that these are followed closely.

3.) Personal character

Are you dependable? Do you have a good attitude? Do you have a good work ethic? Are you a team player? Directors will try to answer these questions during the auditions.

4.) Do you fit the Director's vision for the show?

Each director usually has a vision for how characters should look and/or sound in their production, which might differ from your expectations—but that vision can evolve based on what they see during auditions.

Casting the Show

Following the conclusion of the auditions, the directors will meet to finalize the cast. An official cast list will be sent via email within a week of the auditions. Those cast in the show will need to respond ASAP to let directors know whether they've accepted the part(s) they've been offered. The cast list may also be posted on the RMES Facebook and website at a later point.

Unfortunately, not everyone will be cast after auditions due to limited roles and varying cast sizes from show to show.

If you aren't cast this time, don't be discouraged! It doesn't mean you're not talented, it just means your journey isn't over! In fact, every great performer has faced auditions that didn't go their way. We encourage you to keep growing and auditioning — we would love to see you at future auditions!

If you wish to continue developing your skills as a performer, RMES suggests exploring private voice, acting, or dance lessons.

Below are some resources on these options:

Acting Instruction

While we're not aware of any private acting instructors in Ridgecrest, you can still grow as a performer by auditioning for local productions and exploring online tutorials. To stay informed about local theatre opportunities, be sure to follow the Facebook pages for CLOTA, Master Mystery Productions, and RMES.

Vocal Instruction

The **High Desert Music Teachers Association** (HDMTA) can help you find the right vocal instructor:

<http://www.hdmta.org/>

Dance Instruction

There are two excellent dance studios in town:

The Sierra Academy of Dance

1008 Kyle Ct, Ridgecrest, CA 93555

<https://www.sierradanceacademy.com/>

Simplicity Performing Arts Studio

133 Panamint Ave, Ridgecrest, CA 93555