

A Student's Guide to Preparing for College Auditions

Choosing schools to fit your priorities

- Know the oboe professor/teacher – identify your personal/music priority list
 - o Possibly arrange a lesson with him/her before the audition (be at your best)
 - o Listen to recordings of the professor's playing
 - o Research the professor's professional history
- Know the school
 - o Research the music program
 - Level of music program
 - Styles of the school
 - Amount of playing opportunities
 - o Research the university/college
 - Where is it located?
 - How much does it cost?
 - Can you see yourself at this school for four years?
 - o Explore the degree requirements (conservatory or university?)
 - o Visit the school before the audition
 - o Take tours of the campus, dorms, libraries, and ask questions!
 - o Hear recitals or ensembles
- Know your needs
 - o Conservatory vs. university
 - o Minor field in addition to music major?
 - o Determine which schools would work best for *you*
- Plan to audition at 3 or 4 priority schools and two backup schools

Preparing audition material

- Research the audition repertoire required by each school
 - o Standard repertoire
 - Two solo works of contrasting styles
 - Solo and fast etudes
 - Excerpts
 - Possibly scales with sight reading
 - o For schools that do not provide required repertoire, choose works that you can perform with confidence and enjoyment
 - o Choose works that will help demonstrate your strengths or allow you to grow in the process of preparation
 - o Inquire if an accompanist will be required and provided
- Begin your preparation early
 - o Allow ample time to prepare unfamiliar works and to polish familiar works
 - o Study the work with a recording and piano score – get your ideas
 - o Study the audition material thoroughly with your private teacher for feedback
 - o The longer you live with the music, the more comfortable it will feel at the audition
 - o Consider memorization for the audition presentation, or simply to know the piece better
- Practice Performing
 - o Work out the nerves before the audition
 - o Separate your practicing from “practicing performing”
 - o Create performance-like situations for yourself
 - Play the audition material for family/friends
 - Imitate a high stress situation for your body (racing heart, shortness of breath, shaking, etc.)
 - Play the audition material through without stopping (two to three times daily for two to three weeks before the audition)
 - Rehearse with a pianist to get the harmonies in your ear
 - work with intonation
 - solve ensemble needs should an accompanist be required at the audition
 - Record yourself on a regular basis
 - Practice as if you are in the audition
 - o Perform the music
 - Create more formal presentations of the material
 - Play at nursing homes, give a recital, perform with an orchestra, etc.
 - o Practice other repertoire and other technical/control growth material to keep you fresh

Travel matters

- Make travel arrangements far in advance
- Allow for plenty of time before and after audition
 - o Give yourself enough time before your audition to prepare and relax
 - o Give yourself enough time after your audition to tour the campus, attend a concert, or look at the city
 - o Give yourself adequate time between auditions to allow for your best presentations
- Determine what you need to feel comfortable traveling

The audition experience

- Professional yet comfortable attire – this is a performance *and* an interview
- Arrange for rehearsal with the accompanist should accompaniment be required
- Arrive early to the audition
 - o Find the audition room at least 30 minutes before your audition
 - o Secure a practice room for a solid warm-up before the audition
 - o Be ready and waiting to play at least 10 minutes before your scheduled time
- Be yourself! – remember to smile!
 - o Be professional but be personable
 - o Show the audition committee your personality as well as your playing ability
 - No two committees will be the same
 - The audition could be in front of one person or five people
 - o It's appropriate to thank the audition committee
- Playing the audition
 - o Be prepared to begin with a work of your choice if they should ask
 - o Be prepared to play portions of all your prepared material
 - o Know that you might be stopped before the end of the piece
 - Don't be discouraged! This is very often not a negative reaction to your playing but that the committee wants to hear more of different styles!
 - Be prepared to start at any point in the work
 - Have cadenzas prepared should you be asked to play them
 - o For some auditions the professor may engage you in a lesson-type situation
 - Be receptive to comments
 - Attempt to apply concepts suggested by the professor
 - Be prepared to discuss your ideas of the music – be confident!
 - The professor may ask to see your reed
- Ask questions
- Talk to students as well as the professor

Deciding between schools

- In making the decision, ask yourself questions
 - o Would you work well with the professor?
 - o Scholarship money and financial concerns?
 - o Does the school offer you appropriate opportunities?
 - o Could you enjoy the location of the school?
 - o Could you spend four years at this school?
- Other suggestions
 - o Weigh the pros and cons of each school
 - o Speak with the professor about his/her vision for your playing
 - o Arrange another lesson with the professor
 - o Speak with colleagues, professionals, and those who know you best for advice
 - o Financial concerns
 - Speak with financial aid employees for information on scholarships
 - Ask the professor for a recommendation if you need more financial support from the school
 - Seek outside assistance from local organizations, contests, family, etc.
 - o The wait list
 - If you've been wait-listed, call the admissions office to determine where you are on the list
 - Know that you could likely be accepted from the wait list
 - If you are waiting for word from a wait list school, contact the other schools in question to keep them abreast of the situation

Other Considerations