

CHOOSING AN AUDITION SONG

Be sure to keep in mind the following tips when choosing your audition song:

1. Range

- o It is important to show your vocal range in the piece you are performing. If your “top note” or “bottom note” is not featured in the song, you should have an idea of what those notes are in case the musical director asks.
- o When choosing which 16 bars to sing, always go for the “climax” or end of the song, which will often contain the highest note. Rarely should you choose a cutting from the first 16 measures.
- o Always choose a song that is within your range or, if you’ve done your homework, is within the same range as the role you are auditioning for.

2. Personality...

- o ...of the character in the song. You want to represent a clear understanding of the motivations and emotional content of the material you are singing. Go beyond the actual 16 bars of the song to the bigger picture. Who is the audience? What does the character want? What are the obstacles or conflicts involved?
- o ...of the piece of music. Is the song uptempo or ballad? Who are the composer and lyricist? Doing the research on the song you are presenting will only help you be more comfortable with the piece and, ultimately, make you more castable.
- o ...of YOU! First impressions are everything! The audition is the time for the artistic staff to see you and get to know a little bit about what you have to offer. Make sure that a little bit of your own personality shines through in your performance.

3. Style

- o Again, be sure to understand the song. It’s not just a bunch of notes with a bunch of words. Treat the song like a monologue. You probably would not intentionally perform British Drawing-room Comedy with a Southern accent. Likewise, a song by Maltby & Shire is not to be performed in the same style as a song by Sigmund Romburg.
- o Doing research on the material before you audition is crucial to one’s understanding and complete performance. Listening to recordings of pieces similar to the one you are singing is a great help as is learning about the era in which the piece was written.

4. Difficulty of the song

- o Make sure that you are not walking into an audition with a song you have not worked on and researched. You are assured of a quick “thank you” and “don’t call us, we’ll call you” treatment. Those sitting behind the table are looking for hard-working performers who have taken time to memorize, analyze and not compromise the material they are presenting.
- o Also note how difficult the accompaniment for your piece is and how readable it is. If you don’t know, ask an accompanist!

5. Originality

- o If I never hear “This is the Moment” for as long as I live, I will die happy! Point being, be aware of what others are auditioning with and choose your piece(s) wisely. Finding an audition song that shows you off perfectly and is not being used by anyone else can sometimes take years, but that should be the goal of all performers.
- o It is also very highly suggested that you go into an audition with more than one piece of music. Having a varied portfolio will help when the director asks, “Do you have anything else? Something more uptempo? Something less belt-y? Etc...”

6. Connect to the material

- o Giving the best performance you can is what everyone wants for you. Connecting to the material shows those holding the audition what you, as a performer, are capable of. Connecting to the material on as many levels as possible can only help them connect to you. Be prepared and everything else will fall into place.

7. BREAK-A-LEG!