

PURSUING A MUSIC MAJOR: APPLICATION AND AUDITION CHECKLIST FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The decision to pursue a college major in music performance is gigantic. The effort required far surpasses that of an application for non-performance academic majors. Not only must you complete all the requirements for applying to the college, you must also gain consideration by the music school within the college through a separate application process and audition. The following checklist is designed to help you reduce your stress and stay on track with the array of application details so that you can devote the maximum amount of time and effort to your audition preparation.

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR YEAR

- Clarify your career interests and aptitude while reconfirming your commitment to music.
- Build up and sustain good study and practice habits.
- Participate in extracurricular activities, especially music-related.
- Plan senior year schedule and fit in helpful courses such as music theory.
- Prepare for and take the SAT or ACT when ready.
- Research colleges with music programs and teachers of interest to you.
- Plan your college visits for spring break, summer, or early fall of senior year.
- Request application materials and audition requirements from colleges.
- Create a list of 4-6 colleges that you are seriously considering. Aim for two that are easily in reach, two that are most difficult, and two that are in the middle.
- Discuss these options with your parents and your music teacher(s).
- Choose audition repertoire with the help of your private teacher.
- Compile your audition list and notebook.
- Set up a practice calendar beginning with the most difficult audition pieces and instruments.

SUMMER BETWEEN JUNIOR & SENIOR YEAR

- Keep up your practicing and performing over the summer months.
- Attend a summer music program/festival, if possible.
- Create a resume that highlights your academic achievements, your work experience, and your music training/experience. Give this resume to your guidance counselor and to the people that you ask to provide a recommendation.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YEAR (August-December)

- Visit your high school guidance counselor to discuss your college planning. Go over the application process and the deadlines for all applications and forms that you and the high school must complete. Don't forget to bring a copy of your resume.

- Make a master calendar and note important deadlines such as: college application and recommendation due dates, deadlines for submitting pre-audition CD's/DVD's (if required), and deadlines for mandatory financial aid and scholarship applications.
- Distribute recommendation forms as early as possible to the individuals that you are requesting complete them. Be sure to provide them a copy of your resume.
- Complete college application materials for all schools on your final list.
- Write your college essay, if required. This is excellent preparation for your audition, as you may be asked questions about your career goals and music experiences either at the audition or in a separate interview.
- Keep up your practice schedule and your academic requirements. Remember, you cannot attend college until you complete high school!
- If a preliminary CD/DVD is required with your application, make arrangements for that process. Check the college requirements carefully and seek the assistance of your private instructor.
- Strive to have all of your college application materials completed and submitted by the second week of November.
- By early December, all of your pieces should be learned.
- Enjoy the holidays with your family and friends and use the opportunity to practice performing your audition pieces for them.

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YEAR (January - March)

- Federal financial aid forms must be completed. Ask for help from your parents or guardians and be sure to adhere to deadlines. Most schools will not award scholarships, even for merit, unless the financial aid forms are submitted and processed. Estimate income for previous year and revise figures after income tax forms are filed.
- Make travel arrangements for auditions once you have received your date. Aim to arrive the day before your audition so you can get a good night's rest and have some time to practice at the school.
- Schedule as many mock auditions as you can with teachers, professionals, and friends. Your private teacher may be able to help you make some arrangements. Keep in mind that you will have to pay professionals for their time.
- After you have completed an audition, compose a thank you letter or e-mail to send to the professor(s) who listened to your audition.

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