



AUDITIONING FOR RDYO: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Come Play With Us!

New members are always welcome. Bring your instrument and join us for one of our designated Open Rehearsal days, which are announced on our website and through social media.

Auditions

All new prospective members to the orchestra must audition, so that we may assess the student's ability in order to determine placement. Auditions are also held for those members of the Orchestra who wish to move from one division up to another. Auditions are formally held in June and September, although entrance auditions may be arranged at any time during the season. The audition panel consists of members of the musical staff. Auditions are taped to help the musical staff determine placement.

Audition format

Musicians who are auditioning for the Orchestra are asked to arrive at least 10 minutes before their scheduled audition time. They must bring their completed audition form with them, along with a copy of all their music for the conductors.

Musicians will be called into a room to perform for an audition panel of RDYO conductors. The audition panel will make a recommendation, which will be to the sole determinant of where the musician is placed. All decisions are final. The audition panel may ask students to re-audition at a later date if the panel feels the student is unprepared.

Audition Requirements

The audition may contain any or all of the following elements:

- Technique: two scales
- Performance of two contrasting pieces (required)
- Orchestral excerpts for the ensemble you are auditioning for
- Sight reading

Further notes:

- Musicians auditioning for the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Strings and Symphony divisions are required to prepare two contrasting pieces.
- Auditions for Senior Strings and Symphony should also include at least one movement from a standard concerto, or standard work for solo instrument and piano in accordance with the RCM grade level required.

Private Lessons

String musicians are expected to be enrolled in private lessons. Winds musicians may audition for RDYO after several years of band lessons, but they will find that they progress more rapidly if they also enroll in private lessons.

Musicianship Levels

Many parents and musicians ask us which division they should audition for, and when they should consider moving up to the next division. RDYO's conductors have prepared some guidelines to help families make these decisions.

At RDYO, we believe in the importance of offering a musical education in a social setting. Therefore, as much as possible, we try to keep our young musicians together with their friend groups. In some cases, friend groups blur the boundaries of age and musical levels. We are fully prepared to support our young musicians who are playing slightly out of their comfort zone.

The first discussion that should happen is between our young musicians and their friends in their current division. Knowing that their friends are also auditioning for the next level can help kids feel more comfortable with the whole process.

Each orchestra's minimum musicianship levels are based upon Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) grade levels, as published in the RCM syllabi. Current copies are available in the music

library and may be referred to upon request. We also specify Suzuki levels, for those who are studying that format.

Orchestra members are not required to participate in the RCM examination system. The grade levels specified below are guidelines used by RDYO's faculty to place musicians into an appropriate orchestra. If you do not take RCM examinations, it is a good idea to consult with your teacher to assist in determining your RCM level, and to prepare for orchestra auditions.

A final note: the age and grade levels noted below are guidelines only. By design, there is overlap among the various divisions, so that we can try to place our young musicians together with their friends.

RCM grade levels noted for each division are considered to be a minimum level.

Beginner Strings

- Beginning violin class with no experience necessary
- A second more advanced class may be offered, by audition
- RCM Grade I-III, by audition
- Students enroll through the City of Richmond's Arts and Culture program

Junior Strings

- RCM Grade III – V
- Knowledge of 3rd position necessary, with developing vibrato

Junior Winds

- RCM Grade 1 -2
- This is the minimum requirement, depending on instrument

Intermediate Strings

- RCM Grade IV – VII –
- Knowledge of 3rd to 5th positions, with more advanced vibrato

Senior Winds

- RCM Grade IV – VI
- This is the minimum requirement, depending on your instrument

Senior Strings

- RCM Grades VI – IX
- Repertoire focuses on baroque and classical string music

Symphony Orchestra

- Entrance level Grade VIII for strings and Grade VII – VIII for winds and brass, depending on the instrument

- Orchestral and ensemble experience is required

Chamber Ensembles

- Grade VII and above for both strings and winds
- Chamber musicians received advanced coaching and performance opportunities