

WESTWOOD ORCHESTRA AUDITIONS

Welcome future member of the Westwood High School Orchestra! We are excited to have you in the orchestra program next year! This is the official audition packet for 2024-2025.

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS

VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, BASS: SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AUDITION

Prepare the pages labeled "All Auditions" and "Symphony Audition Only." Additionally, there may be a sight-reading round after the video submissions round. If there is sight-reading, violas, be prepared for Treble Clef, and Cellists, be prepared for Tenor Clef in the sight-reading.

VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, BASS: STANDARD AUDITION

Prepare the pages labeled "Standard Audition Only" and "All Auditions." There will be no sight-reading.

HARP AUDITION INFORMATION

All harpists will prepare a prepared piece of music of 2-5 minutes length that best demonstrates your technical skills. Please scan your music and email it to Mr. Thompson at Joshua.Thompson@roundrockisd.org after you submit your video. There will be no sight-reading.

Audition Submission Deadline

Sunday, April 7, 6:00 PM

See pages 2-3 of this document for specific instructions for the video submission process. If you choose the Symphony Orchestra audition but do not make that orchestra, you will be placed in another orchestra based on your placement audition. For the music requirements, please adhere to any bowings, fingerings, dynamics, style and tempo markings the best that you can.

Should I audition for the Symphony Orchestra or take the standard audition?

Only you can answer that question for yourself. A good place to start is to ask your orchestra director or private teacher for their thoughts.

Realize that orchestra placement auditions at Westwood High School are very competitive. The Symphony Orchestra often has the most All-State students in the state of Texas, and 2/3 of the Symphony Orchestra is often juniors and seniors.

When choosing your audition, realize that the Symphony audition will be weighted heavier than the standard audition. **However, a poorly played Symphony audition will rank below a well-prepared standard audition.** So if the music for the Symphony audition is too far above your skills that you cannot play it well, you should opt for the standard audition. (A good rule of thumb – if you can't make it through the entire Symphony etude or excerpt at tempo without stopping, you should opt for the standard audition).

Which audition you should take comes down ultimately to a personal choice. **Your goal should be to showcase your best playing.** By choosing the audition that best shows your strengths, you'll score higher.

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Westwood Orchestra Placement Auditions Video Submission Instructions

All students auditioning for the 2024-2025 Westwood Orchestras will submit a video to the Google Form listed at the end of these instructions. These are the rules and instructions to submit these videos:

- 1. Your video must be one continuous shot with no splicing or editing between selections.** Any auditions that appear to include editing, or any students that submit multiple audition files, will be placed into an orchestra at the directors' discretion rather than through the audition process. One exception: if you forget your introduction before playing, you may edit that into the beginning of the video.
- 2. You must start your video by saying "My name is _____, my student ID number is _____, I play the _____, and I am taking the [standard or symphony] audition."** For example:
 - My name is Hilary Hahn, My ID number is 12345, I play the violin, and I am taking the Symphony Audition.
 - Basses and harps, as there is only one audition, you may simply say "I am taking the Bass/Harp Audition."
- 3. Play your music in the order of the audition packet.** So you'll start the video by saying your name and other information listed above, and then play through all of the excerpts in order.
- 4. You may not use a metronome for the audition.** However, if you wish to check your tempo before any of the excerpts, you may do so. After which, you must place the metronome on the floor or away from you so that we are 100% certain you are not using it to help your performance.
- 5. Please keep the time between excerpts at a minimum, as we have to hear 200+ students' auditions!**
- 6. After recording your audition, and before submitting it, you must rename the file** with your Audition, Instrument, First Name, and Last Name. For instance:
 - Standard_Cello_Yo-Yo_Ma.mp4
 - SymphonyViolaPinchasZuckerman.m4a (file extensions are examples)
- 7. Since you'll have to rename the file, and it will be a somewhat large file I would recommend saving it to a computer first just to be safe.**
- 8. For the video shot, we have to be able to see every aspect of your technique.**
 - For violins and violas, we need to see from the top of your head to your waist, and the full extension of your bow from frog to tip. Your bow hold and left hand must be in the video. I would recommend playing at about a 45-degree angle to the camera so that your music stand does not block your technique.
 - For cellos and basses, we need to see the top of your scroll to just below your bridge, and the full extension of your bow from frog to tip. You'll want to angle more directly to the camera, making sure the music stand does not block you from the camera.
 - Take a few sample videos first to insure the proper angle.

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9. **The video submission deadline is Sunday, April 7, at 6:00 PM.** Late submissions may not be listened to at the discretion of the directors, and you will be placed at their discretion.
 - With this in mind, if you typically have spotty internet or WiFi problems at home, submit your video a few days early. “My WiFi was down,” or similar excuses will not be accepted.
 - If you are having problems uploading the video to the Google Form link, email it directly to Mr. Thompson at Joshua.Thompson@roundrockisd.org
10. Check your email every day. If there is a problem with your video file, we need to be able to get a hold of you very quickly to fix the problem.
11. By submitting your video, you grant permission for Mr. Thompson, Ms. Whatley and one non-RRISD anonymous judge to watch your video for audition placement purposes. The video will not be used for any other purpose, and will not be viewed by anyone with the exception of the audition judges.
12. There may still be a sight-reading component for the Symphony audition. If so, we will contact you to schedule a “live” sight-reading audition.
13. We hope to have auditions concluded and placement announced by May 1.
14. Any questions regarding the process email Joshua.Thompson@roundrockisd.org
Emails sent between 8 AM and 3 PM on weekdays will be answered on the day they are submitted. After 3 PM, emails will be returned the next day. Emails sent on weekends will be answered the following Monday.

CHECKLIST TO FOLLOW BEFORE UPLOADING YOUR FILE:

You can only upload once, so use this checklist!

- I started my video with my name, student ID number, instrument and which audition I am taking.
- My video audition music was performed in one continuous shot, with no splicing or editing between selections.
- I played all the music in order.
- I did not use a metronome except to check tempo before a selection.
- My video clearly shows my full bow arm and left hand, as laid out above.
- I have renamed the file using Audition, Instrument, First Name and Last Name.
- Go ahead and upload!
- The Google Form to fill out and submit your video is www.westwoodorchestra.com/auditions and you only need to submit once.