

# Birmingham Bach Choir Auditions

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January 2016

## Introduction

Don't worry! For potential members, the auditions are simply a way for the Conductor to see how you'd fit vocally with the choir, and for current members it's a chance for a regular stock-take.

Breathe and relax. The Conductor is looking forward to hearing you sing, and is willing you on to do your best. He will be listening for your voice range and tone, intonation and general musicianship.

Your 5-minute audition, accompanied by a pianist, will consist of four parts:

1. Scales and arpeggios to test your range
2. A few simple aural tests – e.g. sing a note back, sing a note out of a chord
3. Singing a piece of your own choice (more below)
4. A short piece of sight reading (more below).

Please arrive warmed up, ready to sing, and try to relax so you can give of your best. The Conductor knows you will be nervous, so take deep breaths before you start. We'll do our best to make you feel comfortable. You might like to bring a bottle of water.

## Choosing an audition piece

- Keep it short – no longer than 1-2 mins max
- Choose a piece you're comfortable with, which you enjoy singing and suits your voice
- Convey your enjoyment, and pay attention to diction, phrasing and dynamics
- It should be classical, but could be a hymn, an aria or other song for single voice
- An unaccompanied piece is perfectly acceptable, otherwise please bring a copy of the accompaniment with you for the pianist
- Avoid choosing a piece with a fiendish piano part – the accompanist will be sight-reading!
- You can sing from a score, or from memory – the choice is yours, whatever's comfortable
- The Conductor may not need to hear all of your audition piece – so don't be offended or surprised if he stops you before you've finished.

## Sight reading

This is a short piece or extract, with some occasional challenging rhythms and intervals. It's important to have a go (or several goes) at this. It will be an accompanied piece and the Conductor is interested in how you read the notes more than anything else. Remember that he is on your side and rooting for you to do well!

## Notification of outcome

- For individual auditions during term-time, you will be notified immediately after your audition.
- For whole-choir auditions, members are notified once all auditions are complete.

## Choir members' past audition pieces

You may have a piece in mind already, but if not, the following list of pieces sung by members in their own auditions in recent years might help to inspire you:

### Soprano

Arne, arr Diack	Where the Bee Sucks, There Suck I
Arne	When Daisies Pied
Bach JS	Bist du bei Mir
Bach JS	Ich folge dir gleichfalls (St John Passion)
Bach JS	Quia respexit (Magnificat)
Bach JS	Schlummert ein (Cantata BWV 82)
Barber	Sure on this Shining Night
Barber	Knoxville Summer of 1915
Barber	The Crucifixion
Bishop	Should he upbraid
Bohm	Still wie die nacht
Caccini	Amarilli mia bella
Caldara	Alma del core
Darke	In the Bleak Midwinter
Faure	Adieu
Faure	Claire de Lune
Faure	Au bord de l'eau
Finzi	Fair House of Joy
Franck	Panis Angelicus
Grieg	Solveig's Song (Peer Gynt)
Handel	Art Thou Troubl'd? (Rodelinda)
Handel	He Shall Feed His Flock (Messiah)
Handel	How Beautiful are the Feet (Messiah)
Handel	Lascia ch'io pianga (Rinaldo)
Handel/Somervell	Silent worship (Non lo diro – Tolomeo)
Handel	Where ere you walk (Semele)
Haydn	My mother bids me bind my hair
Head	A Green Cornfield
Head	Sweet Chance
Howells	All my hope on God is Founded
Moor	The Last Rose of Summer
Mozart	Ridente la calma
Mozart	The violet
Niles	The Lass from the Low Countree
Pergolesi	Se tu m'ami se sospiri
Purcell	Fairest Isle (King Arthur)

Purcell	I attempt from love's sickness (The Indian Queen)
Purcell	If music be the food of love (ver 1)
Purcell	When I am laid in earth (Dido and Aeneas)
Quilter	Weep you no more
Quilter	Fair house of joy
Quilter	Love's philosophy
Quilter	Damask roses
Quilter	To daisies
Quilter	Come away death
Quilter	O mistress mine
Quilter	Blow, blow thou winter wind
Reger	Cradle Song
Rutter	Clare Benediction
Schubert	Du bist die Ruhe
Trad (arr Britten)	The Salley Gardens
Vaccai	Metodo Practico, lesson 10

### Alto

Armstrong Gibbs	Annie's Cradle Song
Arne	Blow, blow thou winter wind
Arne	Softly flow, thou silver stream
Bach CPE	Esurientes implevit bonis (Magnificat)
Bach CPE	Suscepit Israel (Magnificat)
Bach JS	Prepare thyself Zion (Christmas Oratorio)
Buxtehude	Jubilate domino
Campion	Never weather beaten sail
Dowland	Come, heavy sleep
Dowland	Time stands still
Gibbons	This is the Record of John
Gibbons	The Silver Swan
Handel	He Shall Feed His Flock (Messiah)
Handel	Ombra mai fu (Serse)
Handel	Return, O Lord of hosts (Samson)
Howells	Oh my Deere Heart
Lully	Bois epais (Amadis)
Mendelssohn	O Rest in the Lord (Elijah)
Mozart/Swann	Ill Wind (I once had a horn...)
Pergolesi	Fac ut Partem (Stabat Mater)
Purcell	Evening Hymn
Purcell	Rejoice in the Lord Alway(The Bell Anthem)
Schubert	An die Musik
Trad (arr Oxenford)	The Ash Grove
Trad	Abide with me
Trad	The Constant Lovers
Trad (arr Britten)	The Salley Gardens
Vivaldi	Gloria (from)

## Tenor

Bach JS	Quia Fecit Mihi Magna (Magnificat)
Berlioz	Villanelle (Les Nuits d'Ete)
Butterworth	Loveliest of Trees (A Shropshire Lad)
Faure	Les Matelots
Finzi	Childhood in the Ferns (Before and After Summer)
Handel	But Thou did's't not leave (Messiah)
Handel	Where'ere you walk (Semele)
Poston	Jesus Christ the Apple Tree
Quilter	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
Vaughan Williams	Bright is the ring of words (Songs of Travel)
Vaughan Williams	The Water Mill

## Bass

Bach JS	Quia Fecit Mihi Magna(Magnificat)
Bach JS	Schlummert ein (Cantata BWV 82)
Carissimi	Vittoria mio Core
Faure	Libera Me (Requiem)
Finzi	Childhood in the Ferns (Before and After Summer)
Finzi	Fear no more the heat of the sun
Giordani	Caro mio ben
Gluck	O del mio dolce ardor (Paride ed Elena)
Handel	The people that walked in darkness (Messiah)
Ireland	Sea Fever
Mozart	Isis und Osiris (Der Zauberflote)
Purcell	Come, ye sons of art
Purcell	If music be the food of love (ver 1)
Quilter	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
Schubert	Der Lindenbaum (Winterreise)
Trad (arr Britten)	The Trees They Grow So High
Trad	Quel est cet odeur agreable?
Vaughan Williams	The Vagabond (Songs of Travel)
Vaughan Williams	Bright is the Ring of Words (Songs of Travel)
Vaughan Williams	Come my Way (The Call – Five Mystical Songs)
Wilson	Ah, willow