

Birmingham Bach Choir Auditions

September 2017

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	When Daisies Pied
Arne	When daisies pied
Arne, arr Diack	Where the Bee Sucks, There Suck I
Bach	Ich folge mir gleichfals
Bach	Quia respexit (Magnificat)
Bach	Schlummert ein (cantata no 82)
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	Knoxville Summer of 1915
Barber	Sure on this Shining Night
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
Durante	Vergin tutto amor
Elgar	Angel's Farewell (Gerontius)
Faure	Adieu
Faure	Apres un Reve
Faure	Au bord de l'eau
Faure	Aurore
Faure	Claire de Lune
Finzi	Fair House of Joy
Ford	Since first I saw her face
Franck	Panis Angelicus
Gounod	Serenade
Green	Praised be the Lord
Grieg	Ein Schwann
Grieg	Solveig's Song (Peer Gynt)
Gurney	The fields are full
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	Silent Worship
Handel	Where 'ere you walk (Semele)
Handel/Somervell	Silent Worship
Hawes	Ash Grove
Haydn	My mother bids me bind my hair
Haydn	With verdure clad (Creation)
Head	A Green Cornfield
Head	Sweet Chance
Howells	All my hope on God is Founded
Moor	The Last Rose of Summer
Mozart	Agnus Dei (Coronation Mass)
Mozart	An Chloe
Mozart	Art thou troubled?
Mozart	Ridente la calma
Mozart	The violet
Mozart	Un moto di gioia
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	Blow, blow thou winter wind
Quilter	Come away death
Quilter	Damask roses
Quilter	Fair house of joy
Quilter	Love's philosophy
Quilter	O mistress mine
Quilter	To daisies
Quilter	Weep you no more
Reger	Cradle Song
Rutter	Clare Benediction
Schubert	Du bist die Ruhe
Trad (arr Britten)	Early one morning
Trad (arr Britten)	The Salley Gardens
Vaccai	Metodo Practico, lesson 10
Vivaldi	Vieni, vieni o mio diletto
Wolf	Das verlassen Madchen

Alto

Armstrong Gibbs	Annie's Cradle Song
Arne	Blow, blow thou winter wind
Arne	Softly flow, thou silver stream
Bach	Qui sedes (B minor mass)
Bach	Vergugne ruhe BWV 170
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	The Silver Swan
Gibbons	This is the Record of John
Handel	Art thou troubled?
Handel	Brave Jonathan (Saul)
Handel	He Shall Feed His Flock (Messiah)
Handel	He was despised (Messiah)
Handel	Ombra mai fu
Handel	Return, O Lord of hosts (Samson)
Handel	Silent Worship
Howells	Oh my Deere Heart
Lully	Bois epais
Lully	Bois epais (Amadis)
Maschwitz	Room 504
Mendelsohn	O Rest in the Lord (Elijah)
Mendelssohn	But the Lord is (Elijah)
Mozart/Swann	Ill Wind (I once had a horn...)
Pergolesi	Fac ut Partem (Stabat Mater)
Purcell	Evening Hymn
Purcell	Rejoice in the Lord Always (The Bell Anthem)
Scarlatti	Sento nel cuore
Schubert	An die Musik
Schubert	Der Leierman
Schubert	Halt (Schone Mullerin)
Somervell	Loveliest of trees (A Shropshire Lad)
Trad	Abide with me
Trad	Oak and Ash
Trad	The Ash Grove (Llwyn Onn)
Trad	The Constant Lovers
Trad	White Rose of Summer
Trad (arr Britten)	The Salley Gardens
Trad (arr Oxenford)	The Ash Grove
Vaughan Williams	Linden Lea
Vaughan Williams	Roadside Fire (Songs of Travel)
Vivaldi	Gloria (from)
Wolf	Das verlassen Madchen

Tenor

Bach JS	Quia Fecit Mihi Magna (Magnificat)
Berlioz	Villanelle (Les Nuits d'Ete)
Britten	Second lute song (Gloriana)
Butterworth	Loveliest of Trees (A Shropshire Lad)
Faure	Chanson d'Amour
Faure	Les Matelots
Faure	Spleen

Finzi	Childhood in the Ferns (Before and After Summer)
Handel	But Thou didn't not leave (Messiah)
Handel	Dankst sei der Herr
Handel	Where'ere you walk (Semele)
Poston	Jesus Christ the Apple Tree
Quilter	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
Schubert	Das Fischermadschen (Schwanengesang)
Schubert	Wohin
Trad (arr Britten)	Ash Grove
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)
Brahms	Den blaues auge
Brahms	Feldensamkeit
Brahms	Sonntag
Britten	The trees they grow so high
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	As great Jehovah lives (Saul)
Handel	For behold, darkness (Messiah)
Handel	He trusted in God (Messiah)
Handel	The people that walked in darkness (Messiah)
Ireland	Sea Fever
Mozart	Isis und Osiris (Der Zauberflote)
Orff	Omnia sol tempera (Carmina Burana)
Purcell	Come, ye sons of art
Purcell	If music be the food of love (ver 1)
Quilter	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal
Rossini	Quoniam (Petite Messe Solonnelle)
Schubert	Der Lindenbaum (Winterreise)
Trad	Quel est cet odeur agreable?
Trad (arr Britten)	The Trees They Grow So High
Vaughan Williams	Bright is the Ring of Words (Songs of Travel)
Vaughan Williams	Come my Way (The Call – Five Mystical Songs)
Vaughan Williams	The Call
Vaughan Williams	The Vagabond (Songs of Travel)
Wilson	Ah, willow