

# Skyline Chamber Orchestra Audition Requirements:

## Who needs to audition?

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Membership in the Skyline Chamber Orchestra is by audition or invitation only. All Issaquah School District students who wish to be considered for the orchestra must audition and all returning members are required to re-audition every year.

## When are they?

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Auditions are normally open once a year, as follows:

*Winter Audition.* This is the general audition for the next school year, for all returning members and for anyone wishing to be considered for the following year. The deadline is *normally* the second Friday of February.

Note that this deadline is subject to modification, so always check the student calendar for the appropriate date.

The next general audition deadline is Friday, February 14th, 2020 at 11:00 PM.

## Which class do I register for?

All students who wish to audition for the Skyline Chamber Orchestra (MUS201) or the Evergreen Philharmonic (MUS250) should first register for the Skyline String Orchestra (MUS200.) Please list the Skyline Chamber Orchestra (MUS201) and/or the Evergreen Philharmonic (MUS250) as your alternate class choices. Once audition decisions have been made, we will work directly with your counselors to ensure that each student who auditions is placed in the correct orchestra.

## What about other auditions?

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### All-State and All-Northwest auditions

In the spring of odd-numbered years, both the [All-State](#) and [All-Northwest](#) honor groups meet. For such years, the [Washington Music Educators Association \(WMEA\)](#) uses the audition information specified by the [Music Educators National Conference \(MENC\)](#). You can audition for both of these groups, the Evergreen Philharmonic, and Skyline Chamber Orchestra using the same materials, although you must send a separate submission for each audition. You can use the same video that you record for your Evergreen audition for your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition, just be sure to email your YouTube audition link to both the Evergreen and Skyline gmail addresses. **For your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition only**, if you find that the scale tempos are too fast or the excerpts too challenging, you may leave out the excerpts and record only the scales with the same bowing patterns at a more comfortable tempo for your audition video.

In the spring of even-numbered years, only the All-State honor groups meet, and WMEA itself specifies the audition information for these years. Again, you can use the same materials for your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition. **For**

***your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition only***, if you find that the scale tempos are too fast or the excerpts too challenging, you may leave out the excerpts and record only the scales with the same bowing patterns at a more comfortable tempo for your audition video. Note that, although you can record your own Evergreen Philharmonic and Skyline Chamber Orchestra auditions, ***your All-State and All-Northwest auditions must be recorded by your music teacher.***

## How do I audition?

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**Be sure to follow the instructions for recording and submitting. If you do not, your audition could be invalidated.**

Your audition must be submitted via email as a YouTube video link.

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## Audition Submission Instructions

### Well in advance of the audition deadline

Create a test video and upload it to YouTube

### Creating Your Video

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You can use your choice of video equipment and software as long as it produces a respectable result. Most cell phones, tablet devices and still cameras have sufficient video quality, however audio quality varies widely. Test your available options and choose the solution with best audio quality and minimal technical effort needed. For example, recording, editing and submitting your audition as a single video using an iPad with iMovie can produce a reasonably good quality audition and be comfortably completed in less than an hour.

*Tip: Before recording your entire audition, you may want to record and upload a test video.*

1. Practice and then record your selections. Do **not** include the metronome sound in the recording and there should be **no spoken remarks** before or during your selections, except to identify your selected excerpts if appropriate.
2. Choose the best take of each of your selections. **Important note:** the audio in *your recording may not be edited (e.g., use of studio effects or spliced)*. The ideal recording would replicate exactly what one would hear at a live concert.
3. If possible, compile these into a **SINGLE VIDEO in the order specified** in the audition materials. If you do not have the tools to do this, separate tracks are fine.
4. Encode your video to prepare it for submission. Refer to the user manual for your equipment or software.

# Submitting your audition: Video up-load to YouTube + Email

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1. Upload your video(s) to YouTube. if you do not want your video to be visible to the public, be sure to select the UNPUBLISHED option. For information on how to upload videos, [click here](#) or use your favorite web search for "How to upload videos to YouTube" (sorry, these won't work at school, you must do this from home). You are going to send an email with the YouTube link.
2. Save your original recordings until you have been notified of the results of your audition
3. Send the following information to [ssoauditions@gmail.com](mailto:ssoauditions@gmail.com).

In the *Subject* line: **last name, first name, instrument, and the month and year of the audition.**

Then, in the body of the email, include:

- The **URL (link) of your YouTube video(s)**
- Your **Name**
- Your **Instrument**
- Your school grade level (8, 9, 10, 11, 12) at the time of the audition
- The school you are attending at the time of the audition
- Your city and state of residence at the time of the audition
- Your Telephone number
- Your email address
  
- **Do not put anything else in the email.**

## Alternative Method: DVD (less preferred)

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Check the due date for auditions -- this is **not** a postmark deadline. Your audition must have **arrived** by this deadline.

Your DVD must be in a generic format. It can either be rendered as a standard video DVD, playable in a generic DVD player, or can be a universally readable (mac or PC compatible, finalized) containing generic video files. It should not be in the form of a project for your video software. **Label both the DVD case and the disc with the same information as an email submission. Do not put anything else on the label.** Leave it in Mr. Cook's mailbox in the Skyline High School office or mail it to:

Darrin Cook  
1122 228th Ave. SE  
Sammamish, WA 98075

***Please follow these instructions carefully.  
Your audition may not be considered  
if you do not pay attention to details  
or if your video is un-viewable.***

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## Audition Tips and Suggestions

### Qualities: The major considerations for acceptance are:

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**Intonation.** Every note should be at the correct pitch. While this might seem obvious, it is the most common cause for auditions to be rejected.

**Accuracy.** Get the metronome beat firmly in your ear before you turn it off, and follow the beat without variation. Play every rhythm exactly as written, and don't leave any notes out. Pay close attention to the articulation, and make sure you take the indicated repeats.

**Tone.** Strive for a tone quality that is centered, round, warm, and supported. Avoid shrill, blaring, piercing, unfocused, and nasal sounds. Think of blending in with an orchestra.

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**Anonymity.** In many cases, the Skyline Chamber Orchestra director doesn't know you and has never seen or heard you play. Your audition will be the only input available for deciding whether you can be accepted. You owe it to yourself to make your submission a showcase of your very best playing.

**Legibility and Completeness.** If the information you provide is incomplete or cannot be clearly read, there is no way to identify you, or to contact you with the results of your audition. This produces the same outcome as if you had never submitted an audition. Take the time to be sure all your information is complete and accurate.

**Retakes.** Listen carefully to each selection after you have recorded it, and make sure it is up to your highest standards. Don't hesitate to re-record one or more selections if you think you can improve them. Of course, submit only the best take of each selection.

**Equipment.** Sometimes a qualified student is rejected because the poor quality of their recording renders the audition inaudible. While you don't need to engage a recording studio, or meet professional standards, you should choose the highest quality equipment available, and the recording should be clean enough that it doesn't obscure the good aspects of your playing. If you are using a computer, you may wish to do some research on **how to improve the sound quality of recordings**. If you're not confident in your equipment or your ability to operate it to your advantage, by all means get someone to help you record.

**Mechanics.** Before recording your selections in earnest, do some short test takes to determine the best physical setup for recording. In general, a larger room (such as a living room) is preferable to a smaller one, and some sound-deadening surfaces (carpet, curtains, cushions) are helpful in reducing echo. Position the microphone five feet or so from your instrument, and set the bass and treble controls to normal (medium) levels. If available, use manual settings (volume, treble, bass) in preference to automatic settings. Stereo recording is recommended but not required. When you listen to the test takes, make sure the recording volume level is reasonable and there is no distortion of your sound.

**Instructions.** Sometimes there are a large number of auditions for a section with few open positions. Such auditions can be quite competitive, and there might be "close calls" requiring a choice between submissions of essentially equal caliber. In such cases, preference must be given to submissions that most carefully follow the instructions. Your attention to detail is a valuable indicator of your future success.

## Audition Music List

In order to save you time and effort, we use the same audition materials as those required for the annual All-State Orchestra (Washington), the biennial All-Northwest Orchestra, and the Evergreen Philharmonic. You can use the same video that you record for your Evergreen audition for your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition, just be sure to email your YouTube audition link to both the Evergreen and Skyline gmail addresses. The Skyline Chamber Orchestra will use the same audition material each year as Evergreen Philharmonic, All-State, and All-Northwest audition materials. As a result, the material may change slightly from year to year. Please check my Chamber Orchestra webpage in the folder entitled 'Allstate, All Northwest, Evergreen, & Chamber Audition Materials' for the most current edition of audition materials.

### [Mr. Cook's Webpage](#)

***For your Skyline Chamber Orchestra audition only***, if you find that the scale tempos are too fast or the excerpts too challenging, you may leave out the excerpts and record only the scales with the same bowing patterns at a more comfortable tempo for your audition video.

### [For Audition Materials, You May Also Click Here](#)

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***Seasonally, materials can also be found at:*** The [Washington Music Educators Association \(WMEA\)](#) audition information for the annual All-State Orchestra and the biennial All-Northwest Orchestra.

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