



What your conductor wishes you knew...

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- Punctuality! The first commitment at the time of a choir rehearsal is the choir rehearsal – if this is a problem, make sure you let the conductor know.
- Own warm-ups – on the way to rehearsal. Humming, etc.
- Attentiveness! Aim to be the smartest, quickest, most enthusiastic and positive chorister in the choir!

- Maintain your instrument – singing lessons. Decent vocal technique. Make a raised palate a habit! Good food, vocal health, etc.
- 2B pencil! Mark your score! Lots! Conductors don't actually enjoy going over the same mistakes several times.
- Raise your hand when you make a mistake – then they know that you know that you did it – and can fix it.
- Hold music up! Don't move your head! Avoid a vertical tennis match!

- Sing what's on the page first (pitch, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, lyrics, etc).
- Let the conductor shape the phrase by watching the gestures in front of you – particularly when you know the piece well enough to get your head out of the score.
- Work hard and play hard.
- Sing the textual meaning! It is often amazing poetry. The text is the starting point for phrasing and musical sense.

- Research! YouTube, Wikipedia, iTunes, borrowed/bought CDs, public library...
- Own sectionals – own volition! Use your initiative!
- Learn to read music! Then learn to sight-read music! You will be a much more useful member of the choir, and the choir will be able to do much more.
- Listen to other choirs. Develop informed opinions about the sound you would like to create.

- Make suggestions... at appropriate times!
- Listen when you sing – tuning, blend, balance. What are the other parts doing? How does your line fit the whole?
- Keep the conductor musical, not administrative.
- Support the vision! Positive attitude, open mind!
- Don't save the work just for rehearsals – spend some time during the week too, if necessary.

- Don't chatter! It wastes so much time! Your conductor thinks "They don't care."
- Count rests correctly! Use your brain as well as your eyes – cues should only reinforce entries.
- 'Piano' doesn't mean 'timid' – support the sound!
- Be prepared to step out of your comfort zone and learn something new!

- Make every musical moment unique! 'Messiah' for the 100th time should be as magical for the performers and audience as the 1st time!
- Your conductor is not infallible – and they know it. Don't take to heart the heat of a rash moment.
- Don't decide that you dislike a piece after one awful sight-reading session.
- Engage your audience! Rapport!
- Enjoy yourself on stage! (Or at least look like you are!)

- A piece is NEVER 'finished' – there's always another step to take to improve it, or another perspective to enhance it.
- Develop some understanding of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and apply it when singing in different languages.
- Look over your music on the day of a concert in order to look at it less during the concert.
- Take some time to be quiet and focus your mind immediately before the concert.

OVERALL: You are in a team where everyone has responsibility for the sound – not just the conductor!