READ ALL THE INFORMATION IN THIS GUIDE.

*NEW* this year:
1. You will not select which orchestra you are auditioning for.
2. You will upload 3 videos to a YouTube playlist and share the video link with HYS in your application. (Instructions below.)

Timeline and Steps to Audition for the 2023/24 HYS Season

1. February 15, 2023: Visit www.houstonyouthsymphony.org/auditions to download the Audition Guide by Instrument. This will include all information you need including the required excerpt for each instrument.
2. February – April: Practice the required audition components found in the Audition Guide. You can also start recording your audition video.
4. April 3-May 1, 2023: Submit your online application with your audition video link and $55 audition fee. The deadline for submissions is May 1, 2023, at 5:00 PM. For those who have financial hardship and would like to request an audition fee waiver, you must email HYS@HoustonYouthSymphony.org BEFORE April 26th at 9:00 am. If you do not request a fee waiver before this day, you will not be considered for a waiver.
5. Mid to late June 2023: Audition placement notifications sent by email. No phone calls, please.

NEW Audition Guide by Instrument

The Audition Guide by Instrument includes the following:
- Guidelines for the components of your audition videos
- Order of the audition video components
- Expected skills to be able to play in each of the orchestras
- Judging criteria
- How to upload a video to YouTube and share the unlisted link
- Video submission guidelines and recording tips
Sharing your Audition Video PLAYLIST Link

**How to share your audition video link in your application.**

1. Record your audition videos, following the audition video submission guidelines.
2. Go to [http://studio.youtube.com/](http://studio.youtube.com/)
3. If you already have a Gmail account, log in to your account. (Gmail and YouTube have the same login information.) You may use a parent/guardian account. Note: Gmail/YouTube does not allow children under 13 to have their own accounts.
4. If you do not have a Gmail account, create an account. You must be over 13 to create a Gmail account.
5. Once you are logged into YouTube Studio, go to the upper right corner, and click “Create.”
6. Upload your videos.
   a. Remember, each component must be a separate video.
7. Your title should be your **First Name, Last Name, Instrument, HYS 2023/24 Audition Video** (I.e. Jane Smith, Viola, HYS 2023/24 Audition Video)
8. Click Next to get to Step 4: Visibility. **Select Unlisted**. Then click Save. Note: Selecting “Private” does not create a shareable link. You must select “Unlisted.”
9. Create a playlist and put each video into that playlist.
   a. If you need help creating a playlist, please contact Stephen@houstonyouthsymphony.org
10. Test your video playlist link in a private browsing window to ensure the link works. Watch your video from beginning to end to make sure it is the correct video and has all of the required components. Incorrect/incomplete video links may jeopardize your application to HYS.
11. Copy and Paste your video playlist link into the HYS application.
Audition Video Submission Guidelines and Recording Tips

Video Submission Guidelines

Failure to follow the guidelines may result in your submission being disqualified.

- All components of each video must be performed in ONE continuous, unedited take. Do not stop and start the camera until you’re onto the next instrument.
- Each component must be a separate video. If you do not like a take, you may try again, as long as each video is in one continuous, unedited take.
- You may not edit, cut, splice, or otherwise alter your performance.
- The picture must remain stationary: no panning, zooming, multiple cameras, or fading in/out.
- Video framing: Place the video recording device so that you, your instrument, and your full range of motion are always in the frame, filling out the frame as much as you can. Make sure your music stand does not cover your face, instrument, arms/hands, and range of motion. (See sample videos on the HYS YouTube Channel.)
- Video must not exceed 8 minutes. The judge will stop watching at 8 minutes. Make sure all the components of your audition fit within 8 minutes. It is ok if your video is less than 8 minutes.
- Tune your instrument to A=440.

Video Recording Tips

- Recording on a phone or tablet device is fine. A special camera is not necessary.
- You may want to have someone else press the record and stop button for you.
- Record in a neutral acoustic in your home. Not in your closet (not enough echo) and not in your bathroom (too much echo). A living room or other open space should be ok.
- Record when you can have quiet and no interruptions.
- Film in a well-lit space. Make sure there is more light in front of you rather than behind you so that you are not backlit.
- For string instruments, make sure your f-holes are directed toward the video recording device.
- Place the video recording device on a flat surface with the microphone area unobstructed.
- Check sound levels to make sure sound is not distorted in loud passages and inaudible in soft passages.
- It is best to use the rear camera rather than the front-facing (selfie) camera as the rear camera is typically a higher resolution. Front selfie cameras can also result in the video being flipped.
- Time your solo pieces ahead of time so you know where to start and stop. You do not have to start at the beginning of your solo piece(s). You can go over/under the required number of minutes in order to finish a phrase.
Audition Component Guidelines
Each Component should be a separate video.

- **Orchestral Roll**
  - On Snare drum
  - Perform an “orchestral roll” (not marching roll).
  - Soft to loud to soft over 20-30 seconds
- **Scales (Select one major, one minor)**
  - Performed on Xylophone or Marimba
  - Must be memorized and played in 16th notes at a tempo of quarter = 80.
  - Difficulty level of each scale will be taken into consideration.
- **Solos (Snare, Marimba/Xylophone, and Timpani)**
  - All solos should be well-played, polished and in the appropriate tempo and style.
  - Solos should demonstrate current technical ability and musical maturity.
  - Solos should demonstrate contrasting styles and tempi.
  - All-State and Region etudes may not be used.
  - Do not play multiple movements of the same piece.
  - You do not have to start at the beginning of the piece.
  - Difficulty level of each solo will be taken into consideration.

**What order should the audition component videos be on the playlist?**

**Audition Video Components for all applicants:**

1. **Snare Drum Element**
   a) Orchestral roll (soft to loud to soft over 20-30 seconds)
   b) Solo or Etude on Snare Drum (approximately 2 minutes)
2. **Keyboard Instrument Element**
   a) Two scales of your choice (major and/or minor, demonstrating your current technical ability)
   b) Solo or Etude on Marimba or Xylophone (approximately 2 minutes)
3. **Timpani Element**
   a) Solo or Etude on Timpani (approximately 2 minutes)

*We prefer that everyone perform on all the instruments above, but we understand that access to instruments may be difficult. If you do not have access to any of these instruments a letter of recommendation from a private teacher or band director describing your ability on that instrument in PDF form can be submitted. Please email Stephen@HoustonYouthSymphony.org for details.*

**What are the judging criteria for the audition?**

Each video component (Snare elements, Keyboard elements, timpani element) will be judged on:

1. Rhythm
2. Intonation
3. Tone
4. Musicality and Style (Solos and Excerpt Only)
5. Technique
6. Difficulty Level
What skills are expected for each of the orchestras?

To gain a better understanding of our varying orchestra levels, we recommend you watch past HYS concert performances on our [https://vimeo.com/houstonyouthsymphony/vod_pages](https://vimeo.com/houstonyouthsymphony/vod_pages). Videos are free to stream and will give you an idea of the type of music our orchestras perform.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPHONY</th>
<th>PHILHARMONIA</th>
<th>SINFONIA</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Well-developed understanding of rhythm and time.</td>
<td>• Well-developed understanding of rhythm and time.</td>
<td>• A foundational understanding of rhythm and time.</td>
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<td>• Expanded understanding of pitch in order to read more complex music and tune timpani.</td>
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<td>• Ability to match pitch and tune basic intervals on the timpani (e.g., tonic and dominant relationships)</td>
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<td>• Advanced ability to play two- and four-mallet techniques.</td>
<td>• Foundational ability to play two- and four-mallet techniques.</td>
<td>• Foundational ability to play two-mallet techniques.</td>
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<td>• Expanded knowledge of auxiliary percussion instruments.</td>
<td>• Foundational knowledge of auxiliary percussion instruments.</td>
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