

Audition Tips

The most successful auditions come from proper preparation. The more familiar you are with your material, the more confident you will feel while performing your audition.

MONOLOGUE AUDITION

WHAT IS A MONOLOGUE?

A monologue is a speech that one actor makes in a play. It is usually 1 minute in length and may or may not be spoken to another person.

Selecting a monologue:

- Find a monologue you enjoy. Monologue books may be found at your local library or bookstore.
- For a first time auditioner, choose a character that is someone similar to yourself.
- If you are auditioning for a specific role, find a monologue that exposes traits of that character.
- Make sure that you select material that has an age range you can play convincingly. A good audition monologue can show off a few different sides of yourself for the director.

PREPARING A MONOLOGUE:

When deciding how to present your monologue, think of these questions:

- *Who* are you and what is your personality like?
- *Where* are you?
- *When* is it? What century, year? What time of year? What time of day?
- *Who* are you talking to?
- *What* do you want from them – or want them to understand – or want to prevent them from doing?

How are you going to achieve your “what”. There should be several different tactics that you use. There are often natural pauses in monologues where the subject, mood or intensity changes. We call these beats. Try to break up your monologues into beats and make choices for each section about how the character is trying to get the “what”.

SPOTTING

When we know that an invisible acting partner (technically known as “spot”) is needed to make a song or monologue come to life, we can *mentally* choose the appropriate partner for that song. Make a partner someone you are comfortable with. Place that spot (invisible acting partner) on the back wall about five or six inches above the heads of the people you are auditioning for. Choose the person in the center of the auditioners and spot over his/her head so that all of them can see your face, especially your eyes. Turning that spot on the wall into a believable, live person takes time and practice. Do remember to blink, but under no circumstances should you close your eyes while you are singing at an audition.

STAGE FRIGHT!

No matter how prepared you are for your audition, you will probably experience at least a little stage fright. Even the most experienced performers get nervous before they perform. No one wants to make mistakes, but we all experience them at sometime or another. Don't focus on your failures (do learn from them) but remember your successes.

Think of auditions as learning processes, then the fear of failure won't have as much power.

STAGE FRIGHT! (continued)

“Break in” material in other venues (i.e. in front of your family or friends) before using it at an audition. This will help strip the audition of its importance and makes it easier to go through the audition process.

It is important to realize that auditioning takes a lot of courage and just completing it is a major accomplishment. Even if you feel you could have done better, you should come out of your audition feeling proud to have done something so courageous.

SINGING AUDITION

Points the Auditionee should be aware of:

- Know your music/song:
 - Know the lyrics well.
 - Know your tempo (how fast or slow you perform the song).
 - Know exactly where you will begin singing and where you will end.
 - Know the accompaniment: how it sounds in relation to the musical line you are singing.
 - Know how to tell the accompanist your tempo, starting and stopping points, etc.For e.T.c., it is preferable NOT to sing a song from the show that you are auditioning for.

- Know your entire piece of music well, however, be prepared to sing only a portion if that’s all the auditioner requests (this is commonly due to time constraints).
- Good posture promotes good breathing and singing technique, so stand up straight and tall.
- Concentrate and focus on what you are singing about, not where you are and who is watching you. If you make a mistake, *don’t* giggle and acknowledge your mistake. Instead, keep going and cover your mistake as if the song were written that way.
- Find a focus point. Don’t let your eyes roll around in your head. Pick a spot and visualize the person you are singing to. *Do not* look down at your feet.
- Practice introducing yourself and the song to the auditioners beforehand:
 - First, give sheet music to the accompanist and let him/her know how you perform it (tempo, where to begin and end, and interpretive liberties you may take)
 - Walk to the center of the room and face the auditioners.
 - State your full name, the name of the song you are performing, its composer and what show it is from.
 - Take a moment to compose yourself and when you feel ready to sing, nod to the accompanist.
 - Stand with feet slightly apart and your body firmly centered. (Ears over shoulders, over hips, over balls of feet, etc., chest up and ribs out/expanded, but never rigid).
 - Use body movement to help express the meaning of the song (arm gestures, and simple movement, not a complicated dance)

IMPORTANT TIPS:

- Never yell or scream before singing (or ever!)
- Do not consume chocolate, milk, or soda before singing. These cause excess secretion of mucous which is not good for singing.
- Keep vocal chords, nose and throat moist. Drink plenty of water!

MORE SINGING TIPS

- Sing for awhile on the day of your audition, before your audition. If you take voice lessons and know some warm-up exercises, do them. Otherwise, sing your audition song, sing another song, sing anything. Make sure the voice is ready to go.
- Get a good night sleep before the audition. Drink lots of water and make sure you aren't trying to sing on an empty stomach.
- If you want to audition for a certain character, try to pick an audition song that that character might sing (not from the show). For instance, if the character is mean or funny, find a song that is mean or funny to sing. If they are in love, sing a love song.
- Choose a song that shows off the best parts of your voice. This doesn't mean something really hard, but something you will sing the best. A simple song sung well is much more impressive than a hard song sung poorly.
- Make sure you have it memorized well in advance or at least know it very well. Making a mistake is not the end of the world. We've all made them.
- Make sure you have real sheet music for the pianist. If all you have is the words, this is not sheet music. A complete piano part written out is always the best. Some pianists can fake-it otherwise, but not all can.
- Make sure the sheet music you have is in the range you want to sing. Don't expect the pianist to transpose (play it higher or lower) than the music says because you can't sing it as written. If you can't sing what is on the page, you should find another song.
If you know anything about playing the piano or know someone who does check to see that the piano part is not too difficult. You don't want to give the pianist something they are going to have to struggle with and throw you off as a result. Remember - pop songs are always hard for most pianists to sight-read (play without practicing). Try to avoid them if you can.
- Sing out! Try to fill the room with you voice - even if you make a mistake. If you know the song well enough try to show some emotion with it too. This makes it much more believable to the listener.
- Act like you are having fun and enjoying the process even if you are scared to death. We all want you to do well and again, it's okay if you make a mistake.

WHAT THE AUDITIONER WILL BE WATCHING FOR

- How the auditionee enters the room and carries/handles himself/herself.
- How confident is the auditionee with his/her material. If a mistake is made, how well is it handled.
- Intonation: Manner of producing tones with regard to accuracy of pitch.
- Pitch: The location of a musical sound in the tonal scale. Does the auditionee's pitch match that of the music, or is it sharp or flat?
- Timbre or Tone Quality ("Color"): The quality of the sound that distinguishes it from others of the same pitch and volume.
- Volume: The loudness of the sound.
- Projection: Directing one's voice so as to be heard clearly at a distance.
- Musicianship: The skill level with which you perform your song, musically speaking.
- Rhythm: In its basic sense, the whole feeling of movement in music. The organization of time in regards to music relative to duration and intensity of sound.
- Expression and Interpretation: What kind of emotion you put into your song/monologue performance and how well you relay the meaning of the song/monologue to the audience (in this case the auditioners).