

# CHORAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

January 2023

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Edited by Cody Myre, Chief Editor



## OVERVIEW

The purpose of this packet is to provide a clear and concise point of reference for composers to review our requirements for all choral music submissions. Note that the guidelines given here are requirements for submission and publication, and strict adherence to them will serve to expedite the editing and publication process and to provide the best experience possible for you, the composer, and all of our amazing performing ensembles.

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- In order to be considered for publication, Choral submissions must contain the following materials:
  - A complete .pdf score
  - A recording or render in .wav or .mp3 format (Live recordings are preferred, if available)
  - Unaccompanied works for three or more voices MUST include a piano reduction
- Please do not submit notation files with your submission
- All material – both music and text – must be the intellectual property of the composer, in the public domain, or submitted with sufficient documentation of permission to use copyrighted material
  - For instance, if the work sets a poem which is under copyright, the composer must submit proof that they have been granted permission by the copyright holder to create and distribute a musical setting.
  - It is the composer's responsibility to secure permission to use a text, or to certify that the text used is in the public domain or the composer's own intellectual property.

## THANK YOU

We are honored that you are considering us to publish your choral music! Our staff is dedicated to providing excellent quality at an accessible price point so that any ensemble can enjoy exceptional music that keeps singers and audiences engaged, and we couldn't do that without composers just like you. We look forward to working with you and your music and can't wait to hear from you!

Happy composing,

Sarah Rimkus

*Choral & String Editor*

Cody Myre

*Chief Editor*



## PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

If selected, the composer must submit the following and abide by the guidelines set forth:

- Choral works may be submitted in any major music notation file format (.musx, .sib, .dorico, or .xml are preferred)
- All pieces must be accompanied by a complete .pdf score, an audio recording (live is preferred if available) or electronic rendering, and an information sheet.
  - The information sheet must include the following:
    - Title
    - Duration
    - Year
    - All movement names, if applicable
    - Original commissioning/dedication info
    - Any additional composition or text credits
    - A full instrumentation and voice part list
    - If necessary, any permission statements needed for copyrighted material
    - While not required, a program note or other background information is often helpful in illuminating the composer's intent and the narrative of the work

Strict adherence to each of these guidelines will ensure that your piece is delivered in a timely manner exactly as you intend. We strive to provide an excellent experience for composers and ensembles alike, and it is vital that all materials are available at the time of contract acceptance for editing expediency. Any pieces that do not adhere to these guidelines will not be considered for publication until these requirements are met.

## DIFFICULTY STANDARDS

The following list describes technical difficulty levels in choral music as set forth in *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir - Volume 1* (Abraham et al.).

We invite composers to consider how their work might be rated in terms of difficulty based on this guidance before submitting and, in particular, to consider whether the work is at an appropriate level for its intended performance setting or target audience. For instance, a choral piece which would be most appropriate for performance in a church service should not exceed medium difficulty, and easy or medium-easy may be most ideal, as church choirs often have limited rehearsal time and personnel.

While we are happy to review choral works of any difficulty level, and we recognize that there may be variability or "gray area" surrounding definitions of technical challenge, we are particularly interested in works which are easy to medium in difficulty.

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## EASY

### Level 1

- Short, simple vocal lines with limited ranges
- Conjunct vocal lines prevail
- Comfortable vocal range
- Manageable tessitura
- Major or minor tonality with little or no chromaticism
- No modulation to other keys or tonalities
- Straightforward rhythms within simple or compound meter

## MEDIUM EASY

### Level 2

- Phrases of moderately challenging length
- Slightly disjunctive vocal lines
- Brief, yet negotiable forays into extreme range
- Basic dynamic range
- Major or minor tonality with brief, obvious chromaticism
- Brief modulations are obvious and move to closely related keys
- Modal passages
- Dissonances are approached and resolved by step
- Short passages of challenging rhythm within simple or compound metric structure

## MEDIUM

### Level 3

- Short passages requiring advanced vocal technique
  - Some passages of challenging tessitura
  - Long phrases requiring good breath control
  - Vocal melismas of moderate length
  - Wide dynamic range
  - Extended crescendos and decrescendos
  - Wide range of languages encountered
  - Major or minor tonality
  - Concrete or implied modulations to different tonalities
  - Dissonance approached by leap
  - Added note harmonies
  - Imitative and non-imitative counterpoint
  - Difficult rhythms may occur, but are usually repetitive
  - Simply constructed mixed meter
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## **MEDIUM ADVANCED**

### Level 4

- Long phrases requiring excellent breath control
- Extreme Ranges
- Vocal lines requiring subtlety of shape, dynamics, and expressivity
- Long vocal melismas
- Alternative vocal techniques (i.e., non-Western techniques)
- Refined diction required as stylistic vehicle
- Extended modal passages
- Passages in non-diatonic harmony and/or with frequent chromaticism
- Challenging rhythmic passages may be extended and non-repetitive
- Full compositions in mixed meter

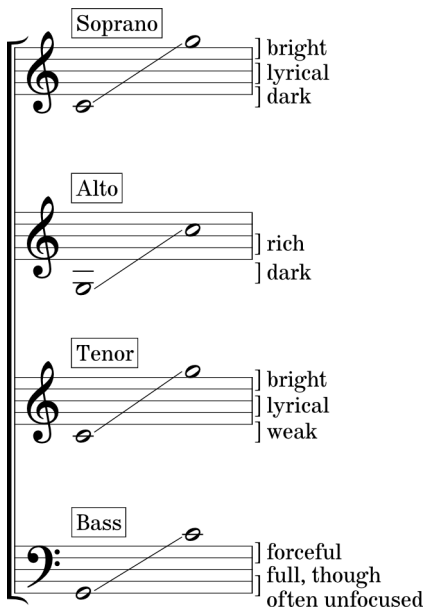
## **ADVANCED**

### Level 5

- Vocal maturity required
- Extreme ranges required
- Repertoire at this level will provide numerous challenges for the experienced choral ensemble
- Nontonal passages or passages of extreme dissonance
- Unprepared/unresolved dissonant harmonies
- Very complex rhythmic/metric structure
- Repertoire at this level will provide numerous challenges for the experienced ensemble

## RANGE GUIDE

Because every singer's voice is unique, it is difficult to provide hard and fast rules when it comes to vocal ranges. However, general guidelines can be used to craft choral parts which are idiomatic to different voice types. The four standard parts in a mixed high school, college, or adult choir are Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Their ranges, as defined in *Contemporary Choral Arranging* (Ostrander, Wilson), are as follows:

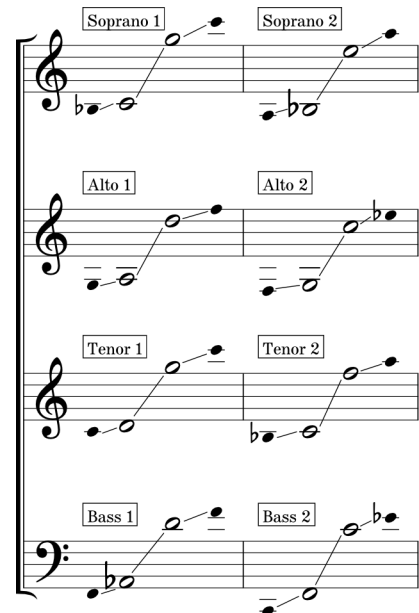


As you can see, different parts of the ranges tend to have different vocal qualities. While any given singer in each of these sections is likely to have all of the notes within these ranges at their disposal, writing extensively at either extreme end of these ranges will make a piece more challenging, and may have undesirable effects on the resulting vocal timbre. The tessitura, or predominant range of a given piece or passage of music, should not consistently sit at the extreme ends of these ranges for easy to medium level pieces. Additionally, consider range when considering dynamics as well – high ranges are difficult to sing quietly and often best reserved for dynamic high points of a piece, and low ranges are unlikely to produce a great deal of volume.

As stated previously, these ranges are not hard and fast rules. Within each section, there will be singers with higher or lower personal ranges than those above. For another example which goes into greater detail, see the accompanying range chart from *Choral Arranging* (Ades).

Ades notes that open noteheads show the normal ranges for most non-professional groups, while closed noteheads represent extensions of these ranges available to "exceptional and professional choruses."

The best way to learn more about the nuances of range and strengths of each choral voice part is experience. If you are interested in composing for choir, join a choir!



## Works Cited

- Abraham, Frank, et al. *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir - Volume 1*. GIA Publications, 2005.  
 Ades, Hawley. *Choral Arranging*. Shawnee Press, 1983.  
 Ostrander, Arthur, and Wilson, Dana. *Contemporary Choral Arranging*. Pearson, 1986.