

Vail Youth Symphony Orchestra Student Handbook

Vail Youth Symphony is dedicated to providing its participants with the best possible musical education, we ask participants and their families to read the Student Handbook carefully.

Rehearsals

- **Attendance**

Consistent attendance is extremely important to ensure all participants enjoy a rewarding and musically expanding experience. If, as a result of injury, you are unable to play your instrument, you will not be counted absent if you attend the rehearsal, sit with your section, and take notes. All students are expected to participate for the entirety of every rehearsal. Any exceptions to this must be arranged in advance, and is up to the sole discretion of your musical director.

- **Absences**

- The VYS schedule is carefully considered and the rehearsal and performance schedule is published well in advance. Please be sure to plan your individual and family calendars carefully, so as to avoid absences.
- Each student will be permitted three unexcused absences per season. For extenuating circumstances, speak with the director. School concerts will not count towards unexcused absences.
- Absences may be excused at the sole discretion of the musical director. Except in the event of an emergency, absences must be reported to the director as far in advance as possible.
- Though every rehearsal is important, some rehearsals are critical for managing the expectations of the students and directors. In the event that a student misses a sectional, chair test, or dress rehearsal without prior approval, the director may initiate a variety of consequences at his/her sole discretion, including but not limited to, reassigning chair placement, reassigning solo parts, etc.

- **Reporting Absences**

- All absences, early departures, and late arrivals, except in the case of emergency, must be reported to the conductor/director before the beginning of rehearsal. Failure to communicate an absence to the musical director before the beginning of a rehearsal will result in an unexcused absence.

- **Tardiness**

- It is the expectation that students arrive at rehearsal 10-15 minutes early. Upon arrival, it is expected that students be seated, tuned, and warmed up (possessing all required materials for your instrument, your music, and a pencil) when the director starts rehearsal at 6:00pm.

- **Student Safety**

- For the safety of our participants, we must insist that they are picked up promptly at the end of rehearsal at 8:00pm. Students must not arrive at rehearsal more than 20 minutes early.

- **The Vail Youth Symphony cannot be responsible for the safety of participants before or after rehearsal.**
- **Sectionals and Chair Tests**
 - Sectionals are held during rehearsals, where a coach gives direct instruction to a section of the orchestra. Essential information is learned at these rehearsals, and it is very difficult to keep up with other students, if a sectional is missed. The students must make every effort to learn from another student any material that was missed, so they may be ready for chair tests.
 - Chair placements for concerts and other leadership opportunities are determined in large part by the student's performance at chair tests.

Concerts

All concerts are **MANDATORY**. If you are unable to attend the concert, you may still rehearse with the group but you will be unable to serve in a leadership position or audition for solos that will be played at that concert.

- **Dress rehearsals**
 - Dress rehearsals are integral to the success of the concert. Contact the director if there are any extenuating circumstances that would prohibit you from attending the dress rehearsal.
- **Concert Dress**
 - Concert dress for all students is **ALL BLACK**. This consists of **dress pants and dress shirt** or a **mid-calf/floor length dress** or **mid-calf/floor length skirt and dress shirt**. Tops must **cover the shoulder**. Please wear **black closed-toe shoes and black hose or socks**. Black coat or black tie is optional. In general, we are looking to cover the entirety of the body from shoulders to toes with black. If you are uncertain about your choice, please contact the director.

Tuition and fees

- **Tuition**

String and Chamber Orchestras: \$325 for the school year
Symphony Orchestra: \$375 for the school year

 - Tuition includes weekly rehearsals, performance opportunities, coaching and sectionals, and the purchase and use of music. Occasionally, additional opportunities such as trips and festival participation may be available. Since these are not annual events, they are not factored into the price of tuition. These opportunities will be clearly communicated to students and their families well in advance, to accommodate any price associated with them.
 - Tuition is due by the first rehearsal of the season.
- **Sibling Discount**
 - Families with more than one child participating in Vail Youth Symphony will receive a \$25 discount for each sibling *after the first sibling pays full price*. The discount will be taken off during the registration process.
- **School Program/Private Lesson Discount**
 - Vail Youth Symphony offers a tuition discount of \$75 to students who participate in their schools' ensemble programs for the entire school year.
 - Students who attend a school with an ensemble that you can participate in playing your instrument will qualify for this discount. The discount will be taken off during the registration process.

- For homeschooled students **or** students whose schools do not offer an ensemble program, the same discount may be available if that student participates in private lessons. In the event that a scheduling conflict prevents the student from participating in their school group (AP courses, graduation requirements, etc.—not strictly elective courses) please contact the director. Contact info@vailyouthsymphony.org to receive the form to apply for the private lesson discount.
- **Music and folders**
 - If you lose your music, please contact the director for an additional copy. Due to copyright laws, all music must be turned in at the end of each concert.
 - If you damage or lose your folder you will be charged a fee. Folders must be turned in at the end of the season. Replacement music folders will be charged (approximately \$30). Normal wear and tear is expected. If you have questions or concerns, please contact info@vailyouthsymphony.org.
- **Withdrawing from VYS**
 - We understand that individual circumstances sometimes require that a participant leaves the program. The Vail Youth Symphony incurs some costs per each student even before the first rehearsal starts. For this reason, after the first rehearsal, only half of your tuition is non-refundable. You have the first two weeks of rehearsals to consider withdrawing from the program; if you withdraw before the third rehearsal, you may be entitled to a refund of up to half of your tuition. If you elect to withdraw from the program after the beginning of the third rehearsal, you will not be eligible to receive any refund.

Student Expectations

- Practice Vail Youth Symphony music in between rehearsals.
- Bring all of your music in the provided folder to all rehearsals and performances.
 - Bring a pencil and an eraser to all rehearsals.
- Respect the music and equipment of the Vail Youth Symphony or those groups who allow us to use their equipment.
 - Inappropriate use or treatment of equipment or facilities will not be tolerated.
- Be professional and respectful to all individuals.
 - Foul language and bullying will not be tolerated.
 - Do not talk with your neighbor during rehearsal.
- Do not chew gum or eat food during rehearsal.
 - You may bring a water bottle with a sealable top.
- Do not bring distractions such as toys or books to rehearsal.
- Turn off or place in silent mode and stow away all electronics during rehearsal.
 - Students may use tuners, metronomes, and other tools available to them on their phones before rehearsal. After you have tuning (prior to the beginning of rehearsal) phones should be put away.
- Turn your music into the Vail Youth Symphony directly after the concerts.

Disciplinary Action

All disciplinary action will be decided on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the director and the Vail Youth Symphony Board. It may include, but is not limited to: a verbal warning, sitting out a rehearsal with an unexcused absence, and contacting the student's parent.

If a student has been asked to leave a rehearsal, the director has the right to refuse the student's re-entry into the orchestra for the rest of that rehearsal.

If a student is persistent in violating the student expectations, it is possible that they may be asked to formally leave, formally, the Vail Youth Symphony. Likewise, some actions may result in the immediate dismissal of the participant from the Vail Youth Orchestra, without prior warning. In such cases any refund of tuition will not be made available.

Some examples of behavior that would warrant immediate dismissal include (but are not limited to):

- Possessing a weapon or dangerous object.
- Possession of illegal drugs, or illegal possession of prescription drugs.
- Any threat to persons or property.
- Any actions which would be considered illegal.