



All-Region Audition Recording Tips with Dr. Bruce Faske
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With a little preparation and planning before you audition, you can go from a GOOD sounding audition recording to a GREAT sounding audition recording! Here are some preparation tips to help you get the best quality recording possible.

Please note: some band directors are directly overseeing the audition recording process to ensure that you get the best possible recording with the least amount of headaches. Thank these teachers for their help! If you are on your own for this one, I hope these tips can help.

PREPARATION TIPS – the more preparation you can do, the less stressed you will be!

1. Find a quiet space, free of distractions. Let everyone at home know that for the next few minutes, you will be recording, and need things like the TV to be turned down. Be nice when you ask them to be quiet! If you have a loud little brother or sister, maybe let them play with something that's yours (Nintendo Switch is perfect for this) to keep them distracted.
2. Have a reliable internet connection! If you can plug your device into the internet with an Ethernet cable, that is best, but strong Wi-Fi is OK.
3. Make sure that your computer or Chromebook is running the full version of Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. iPhone and iPad versions of these browsers won't work, but you CAN use Google Chrome on Android. If you're unsure, use an actual computer or Chromebook to complete this task.
4. Assemble and set up your instrument, and be sure to warm up!
5. Sort out your music according to the cuts that are requested, and arrange them on a music stand.
6. Make sure your device is set up on a table or other stable surface.

Remember, that once you are logged into the website and click PERFORM on any given item, you only have one shot to get it right. Don't use that attempt to test your equipment – click TEST instead!

RECORDING TIPS – now that everything is prepared, enjoy performing!

When you TEST your recording, it is really important to orient yourself correctly to the device camera and microphone. If you play a brass instrument with a bell that points forward (trumpet or trombone) it is REALLY important to not only set up at the correct distance away from the equipment, but to also avoid pointing your bell directly at the screen of the computer! Set up at a 45-degree or 90-degree angle to the screen. This will result in a better sound with less of a chance of the audio getting too loud for the mic to handle. (This is known as peaking, clipping, spiking, or maxing out.) The recording level is also known as the GAIN and if you can adjust it in the software, you can control how loud the microphone records you. It is another way to keep the audio from peaking. Make sure it is set high enough to record your sound easily, but not so high that the mic is extra sensitive.

Now, check the video. Can you see yourself in the frame of the shot, or are you recording the ceiling fan? You don't need an artsy video shot, but the audition coordinators need to see that it is you performing the whole time. If the room is too dark, bring in a lamp from another room. You can use overhead room lighting, but sometimes even that isn't enough to be easily seen, and may only illuminate your sheet music on the music stand.

Once you have everything in place, know exactly what etude excerpts and scales you need to record, and have tested to see that your video looks good and your audio quality sounds good without peaking, go ahead and record everything in the order requested. Look for the GREEN CHECKMARK showing that your recording has uploaded to the system. Don't click anything while the file is uploading!

After everything is uploaded, look for the GREEN CHECKMARKS by every item. A big red X means that nothing has been submitted for that particular item. There is no final submit button.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Don't wait until the last minute to record! Start early if possible, and if something happens with your technology, ASK FOR HELP immediately.

Know your audition window for submissions! Make sure you don't miss the deadline.

If you don't feel comfortable doing this at home, your band director might be willing to help you record at school.

Try to enjoy the process as much as you can. Yes, it is stressful, but it will feel good when you have everything uploaded to the website!