

Preparing for Oboe Auditions

1) Check your equipment.

- ✓ Soak your reed enough. Make sure your reed is capable of the complexities of each excerpt – high/low notes, soft/loud, legato/staccato tonguing and every combination.
- ✓ If you have any trouble, check your instrument to make sure it is not leaking.

2) Start with long-tones and scales.

- ✓ Play long tones for 6 beats at quarter = 60 on your metronome. Breathe in 2 breathe out 2 before/after each note. Play throughout the range of the instrument.
- ✓ Practicing scales, especially chromatic scales helps you limber your fingers before you start. Practicing the scales in the keys of the excerpts is also wise.

3) Sight-read the excerpt and write in any missed accidentals.

4) Use a metronome!

- ✓ Practice with the metronome at the fastest speed that you play everything accurately. You will be very slow at first. Sometimes you will have to put the metronome on the next smaller sub-division – if in quarter-notes, the metronome can be on an eight-note pulse. Stay slow until you know all the rhythms and notes, and gradually increase the speed of the metronome.
- ✓ Mark in your r breathing so you stay consistent each time and that you do not slow down or add time to breathe.

5) Record yourself. Listen to yourself. Make changes.

- ✓ Record your excerpts with the metronome running and volume on. Listen for where you rush, or are late against the metronome.
- ✓ Don't dwell on the negatives, and work on correcting errors.
- ✓ Listen for:
 - rhythmic accuracy
 - dynamics
 - intonation

6) Play along with recordings.

- ✓ Perfect the excerpts by themselves alone first.
- ✓ If you haven't played the excerpts in their original context, (that is: with an orchestra or band) playing along to a recording can be extremely beneficial. You can find the complete parts on the website **IMSLP** or from your instructor.
- ✓ Often when you start practicing by yourself again, you'll be able to hear the other instruments playing in your head.
- ✓ **WARNING:** Pay attention to the pitch of the recording; you may have to play a bit out of tune with it.

7) Simulate the audition conditions.

- ✓ Wear the clothes you are going to wear on the audition day.
- ✓ Play for other people, pretend they are the jury panel, and have them call out the excerpts in any order.
- ✓ Simulate being nervous by running in place, up a flight of stairs, or cause yourself to hyperventilate by breathing in and out very quickly for a minute. This will get your heart beating a little faster than normal.
- ✓ Play through all of the excerpts without stopping.

Good luck!