

SPOTLIGHT CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL RULES

You may now apply to this category with two instruments – separate applications are required. If you advance to Semifinals, the judges will determine which instrument you advance with.

WHAT'S REQUIRED OF ME FOR MY CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL PRELIMINARY 1 VIDEO AUDITION

All students begin with a Preliminary 1 video audition. You will present one piece of music. Those scoring highest will advance to Preliminary 2 live auditions in December 2025. If you advance to Preliminary 2, you will be required to play two solo pieces. Those scoring highest after Preliminary 2 will advance to the Semifinals.

- For the Preliminary 1 video round, your solo piece must be from the Baroque/Classical period (1650-1820) (Example: Bach, Mozart, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Haydn, etc.)
- OR from the Romantic, Impressionistic, or Contemporary period (1820-present) (Example: Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Debussy, Stravinsky, Bartók, Hindemith, etc.)
- For the Preliminary 1 video round, your one piece can be any length. Should you advance to the Preliminary 2, (live audition round), your two pieces must fit within 10 minutes
- If you choose a contemporary piece, please email the name of the composer for approval at spotlight@musiccenter.org
- Original compositions are not allowed
- Piano: Concertos are not allowed; only solo piano pieces
- Pieces written with accompaniment must be performed with live or pre-recorded accompaniment
- If you advance to Preliminary 2, you may change your piece for the next round and will be required to perform one piece from the Baroque/Classical period and one from the Romantic, Impressionistic, or Contemporary period
- Franz Schubert may be considered as either a Classical or Romantic period composer. Both audition pieces cannot be composed by Schubert
- If you advance to Semifinals, only your Baroque/Classical piece must be memorized

GUIDELINES FOR RECORDING YOUR AUDITION

- Your recording device can be a cell phone, tablet, camera, etc. You do NOT have to rent fancy recording equipment. We will refer to the recording devices as "cameras"
- Begin your piece with an introduction: "My name is _____ and I'll be playing _____."
- Your introduction may be uploaded separately
- Make sure there is/are 1-3 seconds of silence before the beginning of the piece
- Before recording, film a test. Perform the first few notes of your selection, then watch and listen to it on playback.
- Use a fixed point of view for your camera with you being the main focus. Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location. Do not pan or move the camera. Camera should be no closer than waist up
- Ensure recording captures good quality image
- Hands and fingers must be visible
- Make sure your music stand is not blocking your hands or our view from seeing you
- Check for appropriate balance with the accompanist
- No sound enhancements are allowed
- If you are playing from memory, be sure there is no music on the stand
- Make sure the acoustics in the room are suitable for a recording. Practice your piece in the space. Make sure there is no noise coming from other rooms near you as you record
- When recording with a tablet or cellphone, use the landscape/horizontal mode for best results

- Do not edit within a piece; no effects or post performance alterations

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR AUDITION VIDEO

- After you have recorded your piece, watch the playback to make sure you can be seen and the music heard.
- Save and name your file with the title.
- When uploading, be sure to upload to your computer first and verify that image is upright (not sideways) and plays smoothly.

WHAT ARE JUDGES LOOKING FOR

Tone Production - the ability to achieve a quality of sound appropriate to the instrument and to the style of the music.

Technique - the degree to which the performer has acquired control of the instrument.

Rhythm - the ability to establish, maintain and project rhythms of a wide range of complexity.

Intonation - proper tuning of the instrument and in-tune playing.

Interpretation - the ability to project a convincing conception of the selection.

Phrasing - sensitivity to the need for phrasing and the ability to execute it.

Please be sure you follow all requirements related to your application. Failure to comply with any of the requirements may result in disqualification during the review process and/or make your application ineligible for an award.

For **guidelines or requirement** questions, email us at spotlight@musiccenter.org.

For **technical issues** please visit the **Acceptd Help Desk** at support@getacceptd.com.

To **start or complete your Spotlight application**, go to: <https://app.getacceptd.com/musiccenter>. If your application is already open, simply click on the Acceptd tab on your computer to return to it.