

SOME SELF-HELP FOR THE CHOIR AND HOW YOU CAN HELP THE CHOIR

1. Do not be afraid of making mistakes. A well-defined mistake can be rectified more easily than a timid one
2. Do not be afraid of/asking to rehearse a special point or a difficult section. Something that bothers you usually has difficulties for others - sometimes even the conductor!
3. Think for yourself- yes, it is possible! Look at the dynamics, notes, tempi and text. When singing look ahead - do not keep your 'eyes glued' to what you are singing at that moment
4. If you think that the conductor is missing some point, bring it to his/her attention.
5. Look at the other parts of the score while singing. Most singers only look at their own part and never see or hear themselves in relation to other sections. It can be fascinating and educating. Really, each singer should know every other part as well as their own. . Unlike an instrumentalist who just has the one part, you have everything, so enjoy it and » make the most of*it.
6. Start on cue – on the beat, Do not be a laggard and a straggler. Such singers cause weak and false starts and waste rehearsal time. Be committed and do not wait for others!
7. When another section (or sections) are rehearsing, follow that part and see it in relation to your own. It is not an invitation to talk, chatter, mentally switch off and/or go to sleep - which is rude and disturbing to others.
8. When you have made a mistake or have got lost, or perhaps are wondering what you are doing in the choir, do not talk to your neighbours about it. Hopefully the conductor will sort it out.
9. When a 'stop singing' is indicated, do just that - STOP. Continuing to sing indicates inattention to the conductor and to the music. It also means that you are not really listening!
10. If you do not understand what the conductor has said, or what is being asked for, ask for the point to be repeated.
11. Hold your music up and do not put it in your lap. If the music is down in the lap it is difficult for the singer to keep an eye on the conductor. Also the head on average weighs 141bs, so that will put a strain and cause tension on the neck and throat as you keep lifting and lowering the head. Such constant movements will also cause poor breathing. Music in the lap also will also cause poor posture. So....
12. Sit up, with both feet on the ground. Do not slouch. Crossing the legs causes many of the problems as listed in No. 11. If you feel you are sitting for too long, tell the conductor. Remember, it's your body!
13. Do not tap your feet in time to the music. Extra sounds can be off-putting and frequently feet-tappers get out of time and misjudge change of tempo. Also it is bad for posture.
 14. Always bring a pencil with you and mark in points during the rehearsal. Put in breath marks, where your note is given hi another part or in the accompaniment, where everyone is singing in unison, underline dynamics, tempo changes etc. Write in points concerning diction, vowel sounds, where a note ends etc. Do not rely on your memory. In a good rehearsal there could be well over 50 points that need noting. If the conductor keeps repeating a point from rehearsal to rehearsal are you one of the culprits because you have not marked that point down?
15. If you have a number of pieces of music, keep them in alphabetical order so that you can turn to the required music quickly and easily.
16. If you have missed a rehearsal arrange with a choir member to get to a rehearsal early so that you can mark hi points that you have missed from your colleague's score.
17. If your score is marked as indicated in No. 14, this will remind you when you look at your music between rehearsals. Even if you cannot read music, you will find that even just reading the text will often bring the music to mind. **AND YOU DO LOOK AT YOUR MUSIC BETWEEN REHEARSALS, DON'T YOU? IT IS ALWAYS THE OTHER SINGER WHO FAILS TO DO THIS. OR IS IT?** You don't have to wait until January 1st to turn over a new leaf.
18. Be ready to start right on time, right at the very beginning of the scheduled rehearsal.

19. Do not wear perfume (or after-shave), as this can be devastating to asthmatics.
20. During rehearsals keep the throat well lubricated with water.
21. Do not miss a rehearsal because you think you know the music. There may be changes.
Without you, it makes it difficult to balance the choir and to achieve a blend. Your presence may also give confidence to others - even the conductor. Be a Team Player.
22. If you enjoy the choir, and indeed, are proud of it, talk to others and try to get them to join or at least to attend a rehearsal to either sing or listen.
23. When a concert is approaching make a special effort to sell tickets. Do you display a poster?
24. If you cannot read music, how about a few lessons with a teacher or a friend? Such a lot is missed through people not coming to terms with the 'dots.' Understanding the language will open doors - the doors of your ears and your hearts - will increase understanding and enjoyment - and it is really worth it.