2026 Maryland All State Community Band

Audition Recording Tips

Want to participate in the MASCB weekend, but unsure about the recorded audition process? No worries! The audition is simply a way for us to ensure that we have 1) a balanced band and 2) musicians who can play the challenging repertoire that Dr. Parker is famous for. Please also remember you will get something out of the audition, even if you don't get into the band: helpful tips on playing, directly from your audition judge.

In general, the quality of the recording should not influence the judges on the quality of the playing. However, the higher quality the recording, the less distracting the recording is and the easier it is for the judge to hear the playing. Here are some suggestions to help make your recording process easier and still get a high-quality result. Choose what works best for you.

Please feel free to contact us at mascbinfo@columbiabands.org with any questions.

Technical recording ideas:

1) Some computers and web cameras have built-in microphones that can be used on a computer with a recording program that is free and easy to download. For Macs and PCs, you can use Audacity (download at http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/), which has a lot of online help. Macs come with Garage Band, which can also be used to record.
2) Utilize your smart phone to record your audition.
3) Have one person with high quality equipment record everyone in your group (maybe the director of your band is willing to help? Or some audiophile in your group?)
4) Contact a local high school and see if they have the ability to record and have a student record your audition for a class project.
5) If your audio file is in a format other than .mp3, please utilize online software to convert it to .mp3. There are a number of free software products that you can use. Please be careful about downloading free software if you do not have good security scanning.
6) If you are ready to purchase your own digital recorder, you might consider the "Zoom" line of products. They are of excellent quality and are not difficult to use. The least expensive is the H1 Handy Recorder. Check it out at: Zoom H1 Amazon

Ways to reduce stress:

1) One community band got together for a one day recording session and everyone played their audition that day. This keeps you from obsessing – once it is recorded, it is finished!
2) One section of one community band got together and recorded at one time, simply playing down the line for the recorder.
3) If you prefer recording multiple times, then do that and pick your best take. If you are more comfortable with giving it one shot, do that.
4) Remember that NO ONE but you, one member of the committee, and the judge will listen to your audition (the judge will not know who is playing).
5) Ask your fellow band members about their audition techniques and ideas.

Thank you for being willing to work so hard to audition for the group. Playing in the MASCB is an amazing experience and you will not regret participating!