



2023 -2024

Member Handbook

Contact Information:

Dr. Steven Ward, Conductor
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Susie Rockett, Director of Education and Outreach
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Purpose

The Abilene Youth Orchestra (AYO) is a full symphony youth orchestra that provides a unique opportunity for talented young musicians in the Big Country to perform advanced repertoire that will challenge and inspire.

The primary purpose of the AYO is to provide its members with exemplary symphonic training and performance opportunities and to inspire a culture of musical excellence. In doing so, the organization promotes advanced musical education and offers quality music to the community. The AYO recognizes the excellent musical education and private instruction that students in the Big Country receive and seeks to provide the opportunity for talented student musicians to perform together in a full symphonic setting.

The AYO exists for the benefit of young musicians, responds to their needs, and keeps their interest in music education paramount. The organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status.

Attendance

It is expected that members of the AYO attend ALL rehearsals and performances. Orchestral music is a group experience, yet each individual is very important. The absence of one person changes the sound and dynamic of the entire group. It is therefore understood that the commitment to the AYO rehearsal and performance itinerary should be highly prioritized.

Students should be tuned and in their assigned seat at least five minutes before rehearsal begins. Tardiness and absences will be considered in the determination of chair positions. Students should request an excused absence by filling out an Absence Excuse Form in the AYO Members section of www.ayo.abilenephilharmonic.org at least two weeks in advance. In case of unexpected illness or emergency, the student should contact Susie Rockett at 325-677-6710.

Please remember that AYO members are guests at Abilene Christian University and are expected to act accordingly. Please show respect for the private property of others and the University.

Tuition

Tuition for the Abilene Youth Orchestra is \$150 for the entire year. Tuition can be paid by semester (\$75 fall/spring) or in full either by check or with a credit card on our website.
<https://abileneyouthorchestra.org/ayo-members/>

Remind & Emails

Please join our REMIND group to stay up to date with the latest news about AYO:
<https://www.remind.com/join/43dhea> There will also be weekly emails sent with announcements, instructions, and listening examples of the music being prepared.

Expectations

1. Make sure and bring all of your music to every rehearsal. Strings - do not assume your stand partner will bring their music! Always have your parts.
2. Come to rehearsal as prepared as possible. Listen to the music while following your part, practice, and learn what any words mean on your music that you don't know.
3. Always be punctual. To be on time is LATE, to be early is ON TIME!
4. Have a pencil on your stand at all rehearsals.
5. Mark what the conductor says. Mark what the conductor shows. If you make a mistake, mark it right then! Mark cues in your parts. All of these will save a lot of time!
6. Treat sheet music and folders with care. (There will be a \$25 folder replacement fee if folders are not returned or returned in poor condition.)
7. Listen quietly when instructions are given.
8. Do not tap feet or cross legs/ankles.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parent/guardian interest and active involvement of the child's support system enhances complete development of a student's musical ability. The AYO asks parents/guardians to:

1. Encourage students to practice at home and listen to the music they are preparing.
2. Drop off and pick up students on time. (10-15 minutes early is a good idea so they have time to get to their seats and get their instruments ready.)
3. Attend all concerts and support our AYO musicians.

Concert Dress

There are three options for AYO Concert Dress:

1. Black dress shirt, black slacks, black socks, black dress shoes
2. Long black dress or long black skirt/pants with black blouse (elbow length or longer), black shoes
3. AYO t-shirt, jeans (no holes, rips, etc.), tennis shoes (when approved)

Fall Events

Rehearsals: Sundays beginning September 10th through November 12th - **2:30PM-4:30PM** at Williams Performing Arts Center on the ACU Campus - Fry Hall

Dress Rehearsal: Sunday, November 12th, **2:30pm-4:30pm** at Boone Family Theater - ACU Campus

Performance: Monday, November 13th, 7:00pm at Boone Family Theater - ACU Campus

Spring Events

Rehearsals: Sundays beginning January 21th through April 7th - **2:30PM-4:30PM** at Williams Performing Arts Center on the ACU Campus - Fry Hall

Dress Rehearsal: Sunday, April 7th, **2:30PM-4:30PM location TBD**

Performance: Monday, April 8th, **7:00PM Location TBD**

End of Year Party - TBD

We will end the year with a fun event to celebrate a great year of music making!!!

AYO 2023-2024 Season Schedule:

<u>Fall Rehearsals: Sundays - 2:30PM-4:30PM</u>	<u>Spring Rehearsals: Sundays - 2:30PM-4:30PM</u>
September 10	January 21
September 17	January 28
September 24	February 4
October 1	February 18
October 15	February 25
October 22	March 3
October 29	March 17
November 5	March 24
November 12 - Dress Rehearsal	April 7

Performance: Monday, November 12 - 7:00pm Boone Family Theater - ACU Campus
Performance: Monday, April 8th - 7:00pm - location TBD