



2023 -2024 AYS Member Handbook

Contact Information:

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Purpose

The Abilene Youth Strings (AYS) is a youth string orchestra that provides a unique opportunity for talented young musicians in the Big Country to perform intermediate string repertoire that will challenge and inspire.

The primary purpose of the AYS is to provide its members with exemplary string music training and performance opportunities and to inspire a culture of musical excellence. In doing so, the organization promotes musical education and offers quality music to the community. The AYS 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 collaborative string orchestra setting.

The AYS 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 AYS 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 AYS 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 Members section of www.abileneyouthorchestra.org at least two weeks in advance. In case of unexpected illness or emergency, the student should contact Susie Rockett at 817-372-1830.

Please remember that AYS 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 AYS:

<https://www.remind.com/join/h2ddaa>. 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. 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 AYS 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 AYS musicians.

Concert Dress

There are three options for AYS 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. AYS 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 - Choir Room

Dress Rehearsal: Monday, November 13th, **5:30PM-6:00PM** at Boone Family Theater ACU

Performance: Monday, November 13th, 7:00PM at Boone Family Theater ACU

Spring Events

Rehearsals: Sundays beginning January 21st through April 2nd - **2:30PM-4:30PM** at Williams Performing Arts Center on the ACU Campus - Choir Room

Dress Rehearsal: Monday, April 8th, **5:30PM-6:00PM** 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!!!

AYS 2023-2024 Season Schedule:

Fall Rehearsals:

Sundays - 2:30PM-4:30PM

September 10
September 17
September 24
October 1
October 8 - NO CLASS
October 15
October 22
October 29 - Costume Day!
November 5
November 12

Spring Rehearsals:

Sundays - 2:30PM-4:30PM

January 21
January 28
February 4
February 11
February 18 - NO CLASS
February 25
March 3
March 10 - NO CLASS
March 17
March 24
March 31 - NO CLASS
April 7