

GETTING STARTED WITH A NEW PIECE OF MUSIC

Tips to make you a Handbell champion!

BE PREPARED!

- Concentration – clear your mind of all else and focus solely on the music
- Make sure you understand how to read the basics of music – rhythmic values, time signatures, key signatures, dynamic and tempo markings, etc.
- Know and be able to recognize all Handbell terminology and symbols
- Have a pencil, eraser, and handbell technique chart available to use

TAKE 10-15 MINUTES TO ANALYZE A NEW PIECE BEFORE RINGING IT!

Your pencil is your best friend!!

Handbell Specific Ideas to look for:

- Bell chart – circle your notes and move all other bells out of the way
- If you have more than two notes listed (e.g. A, B, Bb) figure out why. Is one an accidental? Is there a key change?
- On first page write what bells you start with, if you need mallets, if you use chimes - what position (L or R) – draw the set up
- Read the bracket rules on the first page and cross out any of your notes you shouldn't play
- Turning pages – for each page decide who should turn and write it down
- Turning pages – what comes next? Page turn tricks
- Identify Handbell techniques – plucks, marts, etc.
- Be aware of techniques written far from your note but stems joined – write them closer
- Read any footnotes in the music (*)
- Identify Bell changes – figure out when to put down a bell to pick up the accidental and vice versa

Musical Ideas to Look for:

- Key Signature and changes
- Time Signature and changes
- Tempo markings and changes (Bass Clef Ringers – tempo markings are only at the top – look for them)
- Accidentals
- Form – ABA, ABACADA...
- Repeat signs, first and second endings, codas, D.C., D.C. al coda
- Repeated rhythmic or melodic patterns
- Identify tricky rhythms and analyze them for the major beats
- Circle dynamic markings and changes
- Watch out for rests – where are the major beats and pulses