

YPCO Handbook 2025-26

Young People's Chamber Orchestra

Rem Djemilev, Music Director

Ben Spilman, Assistant Conductor

Emma Eyestone, Orchestra Manager



YPCO's mission is to provide an inspiring, positive musical learning experience for young musicians in the community. As a teaching orchestra, YPCO promotes a non-competitive and cooperative philosophy, welcoming the skills and talents of all our members with equal warmth.

The following outlines the Orchestra's policies and expectations for its musicians and their parents.

Registration

Registration for YPCO is accessed through the top buttons on our website YPCO.org. Emergency forms are also required as a part of the registration process, including health insurance and COVID-related release forms. Please fill these out online in Active or hand them to the orchestra manager at a rehearsal

Rehearsal Attendance

Playing in an orchestra or chamber ensemble is a group experience, so absences impact not only individual progress but the ability of the group to rehearse effectively. YPCO's rehearsal attendance policy is designed to support the success of the orchestra and ensembles and to ensure performance quality.

At the start of each concert set, please let the orchestra manager know of any anticipated absences. If conflicts arise after that, please contact the orchestra manager as soon as possible. This will help us in choosing repertoire and planning rehearsals. The orchestra manager takes attendance at every rehearsal.

Illnesses or unexpected emergencies should be communicated via manager@ypco.org as soon as possible.

Timeliness

In order to make effective use of time, musicians are expected to arrive and be picked up on time. This is in consideration of the efforts and personal obligations of the orchestra staff, other musicians and parent volunteers.

Musicians are expected to be seated and ready to play at the designated start times, so please plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early to set up and tune your instruments.

Students must be picked up promptly at the end of each rehearsal so as not to inconvenience orchestra staff and parent volunteers.

Parents are responsible for communicating pick up instructions to their children, i.e. where to wait, whether they may leave on their own, etc. As a courtesy, the parent or staff member on duty will wait a reasonable amount of time with musicians (but no longer than fifteen minutes) for late pick-ups. YPCO cannot be responsible for students after that time.

Preparation for Rehearsals

The students will perform better and enjoy their orchestral experience more if they are prepared for rehearsal. An appropriate practice routine shows respect for fellow musicians, the conductor and coaches.

Musicians should practice YPCO pieces at home and in lessons during the week, especially when new music is passed out. They should arrive at each rehearsal well-rested and on-time, with their instrument, music and a pencil.

Behavior

An important part of YPCO's mission is to teach teamwork, musical discipline and proper professional behavior. The expectations set out below are intended to help students succeed with their musical "team", and to ensure that the performances will be of high quality and enjoyable by all.

Musicians are expected to behave respectfully toward, and cooperate with instructions from the Music Director, Assistant Conductor, Orchestra Manager, coaches and parent volunteers at all times. This means no talking during rehearsal while music is being played, or while the conductors are talking.

Musicians are not to leave the church grounds during rehearsals or concerts. For safety reasons, they are not to play or gather in the parking lot or near the driveways before or after rehearsals or concerts or during breaks. Please do not bring skates, skateboards, roller blades, electronic games, etc. to rehearsals and concerts. Bicycles are allowed, if used as transportation to and from rehearsals.

Additionally, students are not to wander through the church. Other groups use the facility at the same time, and we do not want to disturb them.

Musicians are expected to wear concert dress to each performance, and behave appropriately before, during and after concerts.

Parents are responsible for communicating to, and enforcing these behavior expectations and safety regulations with their children.

Concert Dress

YPCO wears white collared dress shirts with black pants or skirts and black shoes (NO SNEAKERS). A black dress is also acceptable. Skirts should be knee length and comfortably worn while seated.

Tuition and Tuition Assistance

All students must be registered through the YPCO online registration system. Tuition may be paid in full. Registration is a commitment to pay the full tuition amount. Families are responsible for the entire tuition even if the musician decides not to finish the season.

There is a limited scholarship fund for assistance to families with an annual income below \$50,000. To be eligible, families must submit a letter of request and recent tax forms, W2's and/or 1099's. If your family qualifies for assistance, the orchestra manager will give you a coupon code to use when you are registering online. If you are divorced, separated, or have never been married, the other legal parent/guardian of your child must also provide the above documents. Our policy is to encourage all legal parents'/guardians' involvement in funding their child's education. If the other legal parent/guardian is unavailable or unwilling to participate in providing all necessary information, we will not be able to reduce their half of the tuition amount.

In no case will tuition be refunded. We realize that there are many serious circumstances, such as family illness or transfers out of state that may prevent a child from completing the year. However, as a small non-profit organization, we are unable to continue to operate without a stable financial base.

Contact Information and Communication

YPCO orchestra manager communicates information regarding rehearsals, concerts, etc. with families through email updates. These are generally not more than once a week and not less than once a month.

YPCO

P.O. Box 5113, Berkeley, CA 94705

(510) 898-6437

manager@ypco.org

YPCO Winter/Spring 2023 (12 rehearsals – 2 concerts)

Saturday, January 7, 2023

Saturday, January 14, 2023 – no rehearsal (MLK weekend)

Saturday, January 21, 2023

Saturday, January 28, 2023

Saturday, February 4, 2023

Saturday, February 11, 2023

Saturday, February 18, 2023 – no rehearsal (President's weekend)

Saturday, February 25, 2023

Saturday, March 4, 2023 concert

Saturday, March 11, 2023

Saturday, March 18, 2023

Saturday, March 25, 2023

Saturday, April 1, 2023

Saturday, April 8, 2023 – no rehearsal (Passover/Easter weekend)

Saturday, April 15, 2023

Saturday, April 22, 2023

Saturday, April 29, 2023 concert