



Flower Mound Philharmonic

Musician Handbook

August 2024 - May 2025

Mark Scott, conductor: philharmonic@fmco.org

Website: fmco.org

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Welcome

Welcome to Flower Mound Community Orchestras' 30th season! Please read this handbook at your first rehearsal, and refer to it throughout the season if you have questions. Its policies preserve the quality of your experience with FMCO, and maintain the standards for which we are known.

Attendance

Attendance at rehearsals and concerts is vital to our success. Arrive early enough to be seated with your music stand, instrument, and music when rehearsal begins. Assume you will encounter delays when traveling to Flower Mound. *To be early is to be on time.*

Members may miss two rehearsals per cycle before the conductor considers removing you from the next concert. You are considered tardy if you arrive after the tuning process has finished. Members may be tardy four times per cycle before the conductor considers removing you from the next concert.

To report an absence, email Mark at philharmonic@fmco.org. In an emergency, call someone in your section or text through the Remind group. Clear and prompt communication is the best way to handle absence notification, and my flexibility is directly related to the amount of notice I receive.

Auditions

Prospective members audition for one of FMCO's two orchestras in August and January of each year. Current Philharmonic members need only audition if attempting to advance to the symphony orchestra.

At auditions, prospective members will play for a panel of FMCO conductors, symphony musicians, and board members in a low-stress environment designed to make candidates comfortable. At auditions, you will play:

Two contrasting pieces of your choice, each two minutes or less, that demonstrate your best playing

Two major scales of the panel's choice

Eight measures of sight-reading, provided at the audition

You will be given thirty seconds to silently study the sight-reading music before you play. Your audition will last ten minutes. Auditions take place at Trietsch UMC each August and January, and at other times by appointment. Visit fmco.org to sign up.

Behavior

To ensure productive rehearsals with clear expectations, Philharmonic members abide by these guidelines:

1. Arrive early enough to be seated with your instrument and music when rehearsal begins.
2. Silence and put away phones during rehearsals and concerts.
3. Bring all your music, in a folder or binder, to rehearsals and concerts.
4. Bring a pencil (with an eraser) to rehearsal.
5. Practice parts at home to avoid learning them in front of the ensemble during rehearsal.
6. Do not eat, drink anything other than water, or chew gum during rehearsal.
7. Do not talk during ensemble tuning, or when the conductor addresses other sections or individuals.
8. Do not play after the orchestra has stopped in rehearsal.
9. Take your music with you after each concert. You may save or destroy it.
10. If you get a ride to Flower Mound, have transportation ready when rehearsals and concerts end.
11. Respect Trietsch's facilities and equipment, and that of other members, as if it belonged to you.
12. Bring a positive attitude. Respect, encourage, and support each other.

Calendar

You will receive a season calendar at the first rehearsal. Refer to the printed Philharmonic calendar for our season schedule, and to fmco.org for details about all FMCO events.

Communication

Outside of rehearsal, I will communicate with members through email and a Remind group text. FMCO social media and fmco.org may be updated with information about our activities, but emails from me and this document are your most reliable sources of information.

You will receive blind-copy messages at the email address you provide. Adjust your email's spam filter to allow them to reach you. They will contain rehearsal time changes, room changes, cancellations, sectional schedules, call times, and anything relevant to an efficient and enjoyable FMCO experience.

Concert Attire

To maintain a professional appearance that allows audiences to focus on our music, we have a dress code at concerts.

Ladies should wear black slacks, a black skirt, or a black dress that falls below the knees, and black dress shoes. Avoid low-cut blouses, sleeveless and strapless garments, excessive jewelry, and perfume. Gentlemen should wear a black dress shirt, black slacks, black socks, and black dress shoes.

White tops or shirts are acceptable for everyone, but consider purchasing a black top as we will wear it at every concert. Black dress pants are required. Concert attire should appear more formal than casual, so when in doubt, choose the more formal outfit or ask your conductor.

Joining

All prospective members must audition to join an FMCO ensemble. I encourage you to bring friends or relatives who wish to play, but they must audition and join before the third rehearsal of each cycle. This helps me schedule auditions, gives time to prepare parts, and maintains instrumental balance. Because FMCO limits member absences to two per cycle, prospective members arriving after the third rehearsal may not join until the beginning of the next cycle.

Locations

All rehearsals and most concerts will take place at Trietsch Memorial United Methodist Church:

6101 Morriss Road
Flower Mound, TX 75028

We rehearse in Trietsch's Ministry Center and perform in its Sanctuary. These rooms are in the main church building, with entrances and parking facing Morriss Road.

One concert will take place at the Flower Mound Public Library:

3030 Broadmoor Lane
Flower Mound, TX 75022

Rehearsals

Rehearsals will follow this schedule:

6:45 Conductor and stage crew arrive
 7:00 Rehearsal begins
 8:15 Rehearsal ends

Adjustments to this schedule, including sectionals and breaks, are possible.

Seating

The Philharmonic uses rotational seating. I assign parts, rotating assignments so that everyone gets a chance to play 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. Doing this prevents everyone from playing the same part all season, allows us to learn the role each part plays in our section and instrument family, and lets us hear the orchestra from a different perspective. We will physically change chairs for each piece assigned in this way. I assign parts with skill level, experience, personal requests, and other factors in mind. Every member will have a chance to play both principal (first) and section (2nd, 3rd, etc.) parts.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available for members who demonstrate financial need. In exchange for lower tuition, members on scholarship will join the stage crew. Using a seating chart sent by the conductor, the **stage crew** places and removes chairs and stands needed for the orchestra to rehearse and perform. Stage crew members must be able to lift up to 20 pounds.

Members holding these positions trade reduced tuition for increased responsibility. You must come to rehearsal early and will likely leave late. You may miss only one rehearsal per cycle. Excessive absences or failure to perform duties will result in loss of scholarship, and forfeiture of tuition discount. Scholarships last for one orchestra season (2024-25), and prior awards do not automatically renew. To apply, ask Mark for a scholarship form.

Structure

Flower Mound Community Orchestras was founded in 1994 to teach musicians the art of orchestral performance, promote music education, and grow community awareness for orchestral music.

Our two ensembles accept musicians with a wide range of abilities. The Symphony Orchestra, FMCO's premier ensemble, contains professional and amateur adult musicians with 8 or more years' experience. The Philharmonic, FMCO's intermediate group, supplements public, private, and home-school music programs, and provide a place for adults of all ages to refresh playing skills.

Tuition

Flower Mound Philharmonic members pay tuition of \$350 per person, which covers our season from the first rehearsal to the last concert. Members may pay with cash, personal checks made to Flower Mound Community Orchestras, or by credit card (PayPal) on our website. FMCO prefers one payment for the entire season (September-May), but can accept two equal payments made in September and January.

FMCO does not refund tuition. These funds are vital to FMCO's success and demonstrate your commitment to the orchestra. Please read our rehearsal and performance schedule and ensemble policies before investing your time and money.

Failure to pay tuition, or to arrange for payment by October 1 (Fall semester) or February 1 (Spring semester), may result in dismissal. If tuition prohibits your participation, or circumstances prevent on-time payment, contact Mark. Clear and prompt communication is the best way to handle tuition issues, and my flexibility is directly related to the amount of notice I receive.

Support

FMCO appreciates all kinds of support. Choose FMCO when you shop at Tom Thumb or Kroger, and we will receive a percentage of your purchase as a donation. Consider giving to the organization on North Texas Giving Day. To learn more about this and other ways to support FMCO, visit the Support section of our website.

Weather

FMCO ensembles will not rehearse when Lewisville ISD cancels school, or dismisses classes early due to inclement weather. I will email and Remind text notice of any rehearsal cancellation.