

MUSIC THEORY PLACEMENT EXAM INFORMATION

As part of Audition Day, students are required to take a 25-minute theory placement exam. **This exam has no bearing on the student's acceptance to the Oakland University music program; rather, its purpose is to ensure that the student is placed in the appropriate level of music theory.** All students, including transfer students, are required to take this exam; a form will be distributed along with the exam where you will be asked to describe your background in music theory. If your score is very high, you will be asked to meet with the coordinator of music theory for further determination of your placement.

Results of the exam will be mailed to the student along with audition results. **Please bring your own pencil for this exam.**

PREPARATION FOR PLACEMENT EXAM

Students wishing to prepare for the theory entrance exam should do so by brushing up on music fundamentals. Aim for fluency; it is extremely important that all of these skills become second nature to the serious music student.

The following skills are tested on the music theory placement exam:

Most important (focus on these first):

1. Note reading and writing in bass and treble clefs
2. Major and minor key signature identification and construction, in bass and treble clefs
3. Major and minor scale identification and construction, in bass and treble clefs
4. Recognition and interpretation of basic meter signatures and rhythmic notation

Slightly more advanced, but still important:

1. Recognition and writing of simple intervals
2. Basic aural skills (dictation of a simple melody or rhythm; recognition of basic intervals and triad qualities)
3. Recognition and writing of triad qualities (major, minor, diminished and augmented)

There are several resources available for brushing up on these fundamentals:

WEBSITES (These are free and open to anyone)

Aural skills

<http://www.musictheory.net/>

<http://www.good-ear.com/>

<http://www.ossmann.com/bigears/>

<http://www.emusictheory.com/>

Written theory

<http://www.teoria.com/>

<http://www.tonalityguide.com/>

<http://www.musictheory.halifax.ns.ca/lessons.html>

TEXTBOOKS If you have little or no music theory background, it is recommended that you consult an introductory music text, such as the ones listed below, before taking the test. These books are available for free at many libraries; you may also find them used online for lower cost through various online retailers.

Stefan Kostka and Dorothy Payne, *Tonal Harmony*

Jane Clendinning and Elizabeth Marvin, *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*

Robert Ottman, *Elementary Harmony*

If this webpage does not answer all of your questions, please contact the MTD office at Oakland University (stapleto@oakland.edu, or [248] 370-2030).