

## **Getting an Accompaniment Track**

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Hi, my name is Adam Qutaishat and I have some tips for you if you are looking for help getting a track to sing along with if you're doing a musical selection for the diversity generals. So the first thing you want to do is obviously pick your song and make sure you know what song you're gonna do. Then you're going to want to determine whether a track exists for that song. There's a couple ways you can do this. There's an app called the Appcompanionist app (<https://www.appcompanionist.com/>). It can be a really great way to find accompaniments that you can tailor to your song. So you can search through the Appcompanionist database. Those songs do sometimes have costs associated with them. They're pretty small and if you do not think you can handle that within your budget, please feel free to contact us.

Another option is to have a track made for you. Now the Diversity Generals provide that for you if that is a way you need to have your track prepared. So you can also email us for that and we'll have some links for that on our main page.

Another option is to find a karaoke track. Karaoke tracks exist all over the internet and they can be a great source because they give you some consistent accompaniment. So you can search around the internet for a karaoke track and try to download that track. Some of them, again, will cost money. If that's the case and, again, it's outside your budget please feel free to contact us and we'll try to help you procure that same track with regards to your budget.

Now you don't necessarily need the whole track because when you're looking at musical theatre cuts you're not looking for the entire song you're looking for a cut of that song in most cases. So you're actually going to want to trim your song down. Another thing that you probably don't want to do is be playing that song using streaming. Because if you're using streaming while you're recording it could be your best take and your internet could crash or your phone network could get slow for whatever reason. We want to be able to have something that's going to be really consistent for us so that when we get that really really great take it sticks and we have it recorded.

So you'll want to find a way to download it and then you can use a program like Audacity (<https://www.audacityteam.org/>), which is a free program, or ProToolsFirst, which is another free program for Mac users, that allows you to trim your track. You're going to want to leave a little bit of front end if at all possible so that you have something that conveniently leads you into the tempo that you're singing at so you're not guessing where your first entrance is. You'll also want to give maybe a little bit of extra so you have something to transition your video on and so that you have something so you're not stopping and then going on to the next thing. You can trim your audio using those programs. They're really really great, they're not super intuitive but there are tutorials all over the internet that can potentially help you be able to do that.

If you are getting a track prepared for you, it's important to know exactly what you want and to be able to communicate that with your accompanist. If you can mark music do that. If you can

provide a PDF that's completely marked up so your accompanist knows where you're starting, where you're stopping, how fast you're going, any of that stuff, it's super helpful. If you don't have the ability to do that, that's okay too.

Sending your accompanist a recording of yourself singing exactly what you want, even if it's acapella, even if it's not even in the right key marking, whatever you want to do. Just to make sure they know "okay, we're going this speed. This is where we want to slow down, this is where we're loud, this is where we're soft" any of that information is helpful.

If you can get a tempo marking, and there are a lot of websites out there that can help you find out what tempo your song is by tapping on your computer, that can be super useful too. And just making sure even if you don't send an audio recording of yourself singing, just send a text version describing what you want to happen. "I want to start fast, I want to slow down on this word", anything is useful to the accompanist so they can make sure they're giving you exactly what you need.

Finally, once you have your track you're going to want to set it up in a situation where you can play it for yourself and figure out how to balance your voice with it. You don't want something that's too loud and you don't want something that's too soft. You want to be able to hear it, but you don't want it to be overpowering to you. Usually some sort of external speaker is ideal. Using an iPad or a phone just to play the volume directly can be a little bit tricky. If you have issues coming up with some sort of external speaker or something that's going to provide you with some better sound quality or some more volume, you can reach out to us. We are working on providing facilities that will allow you to have that readily available to you. Make sure you have any adapters you may need, especially with the new iPhones. Make sure you have a dongle to convert from Thunderbolt into usually an aux cord, which is gonna be what you'll need to get into speakers or something like that.

But - those are some tips to help you get set up with a track. Again, if you need an accompanist feel free to reach out to us and we can work on setting that up for you. And if you need help navigating any other barriers that might make it impossible for you to have a track to sing along to, please reach out to us and we are here to help. Otherwise, hope this was helpful and we hope to hear you soon. Thanks.