



Welcome to Crystal Chords

We are a dedicated group of singers, who enjoy the harmony & friendship of barbershop, with an aim to entertain & excel in our art form. If you are interested in joining our chorus, here's how it works ...

Step 1: ASSESSMENT

From day 1 you are welcome to join in with our warm-up sessions, this way you'll get a feel for the sorts of things we do and our approach to good singing! The first step is for our Musical Director or Assistant, to have the opportunity to chat and share any previous singing experience. Through a simple vocal evaluation, she assesses which voice part might suit you best. It's an easy step to take, and we don't bite..!

Step 2: PREPARATION

Once you have been assigned a voice part (LEAD, BASS, BARITONE or TENOR) you will be provided with a starter CD and given an audition piece to learn. You will also be introduced to your section leader, and a riser "buddy" to help with orientation and general familiarisation, and who can answer any questions which you may have. The audition song is often a regular feature in the warm-up session, so we will make sure you can hear how it goes. We challenge all our singers to learn their part as quickly as they can, since no music is held in performance.

Step 3: PRACTISE

Within the next couple of weeks, you should be well on the way, and hopefully have already learnt your audition song; your section leader and buddy will be happy to arrange a 'run through' to support you. If you feel ready for your audition, don't hold back – have go! Singing harmony is great fun, and the audition process is essential to demonstrate that you can learn quickly and confidently hold your part, with a pleasing vocal quality, whilst harmonising with other voices and remaining and in tune. Ask your section leader for advice if you have any concerns.

Step 4: AUDITION

Within a month, if you haven't already had a go, you should be ready to audition now. You will sing for evaluation in a quartet, made up of other members of the Music and Performance team, demonstrating that can hold your part and perform with confidence. The MD and section leader will listen and determine if you have been successful. Encouraging feedback will be offered in the event criteria have not been met, and you can try again with a little more practise. Whilst an audition process may seem a little daunting, it is the most important step to ensure we encourage confident and capable singers to join our group.

Step 5: INTEGRATION

Once you have passed the audition, you are eligible to be a full member of the chorus and will be required to pay chorus subs. Our monthly subscription is currently only £20, and this helps fund a host of necessary expenditure, including performance outfits, rehearsal venue hire, music, riser transport, coaching and much more. There aren't many hobbies you can do these days for less than £5/wk are there? Full membership gives you access to the teach tracks and a folder of music containing the current repertoire. Your section leader will advise which songs to learn first, and, depending on forthcoming events calendar, you will be given a performance to aim for, to help focus your learning. As a chorus we pride ourselves in maintaining high standards of performance, encouraging members to 'learn notes' away from rehearsal night, so rehearsals can be focussed on the ensemble. Section leaders also plan occasional practises especially to support learning new songs. Besides our regular Thursday evening practise, we also plan occasional coaching days, (usually a Sunday), which all members are expected to attend, especially if there is an important event in the performance calendar approaching.

Our style of singing means we also focus on the visual aspect of our performance too. Prior to your first chorus performance or "*singout*" it's important to know the repertoire sufficiently to a *performance* standard. We want you to be confident, so as you prepare for your first show, your readiness to perform will be verified by your section leader or director as the next important step. A member of the dress committee will issue chorus outfits as necessary. We perform either in our posh stage dress & sparkly shoes, or something black & sparkly outfit from your own wardrobe. (Advice will be given if you are unsure). We also have some casual attire which you would buy yourself, known as "*walkout*", these are: a purple chorus fleece (£15), teamed with plain black trousers, a white V-neck T-shirt and the chorus scarf.

What then?

We usually plan for 2 or 3 *significant* events each year, whether that's competing in our Association's National Convention in the autumn or perhaps a high profile Music Festival in spring or summer. We also plan a "*retreat*" weekend away, usually 6 weeks prior to the major autumn event, where we all enjoy a day & a half of focussed rehearsal, and just as important, have time to socialise and have fun! Aside from the 2 or 3 main events, we also take local bookings to perform at weddings or perhaps *after dinner* entertainment, or at functions in support of charitable events. You can be sure there's always something interesting coming up, and we publish a rolling annual events calendar to help everyone plan ahead. We love being a part of Crystal Chords, and we hope you will too!

Music & Presentation Team:

Musical Director: Monica Funnell	Section Leaders:	Asst. Section Lead	Presentation:	Other useful contacts:	
Directing Assistants:	Lead: Gill Irwin	Carole McGlone		Wardrobe Team:	Treasurer Team:
Sue Ward / Gill Irwin / Julie Robinson	Tenor: Sarah Hicks		Sarah Hicks	Bess Worsley	Pat Gregory
	Baritone: Julie Robinson	Audrey Fleming	Julie Berrie	Wendy Capper	Linda Musk
Music Librarian: Sue Livesey	Bass: Sue Ward	Yvonne King		Lorna Squires	