

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I need to audition to join a group?

Auditions are not required for most of our ensembles. Enrollment for some of the advanced ensembles is with the permission of the conductor.

2. How well do I have to play to join an ensemble?

We have ensembles for all skill levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Many of our beginning members have never played an instrument or want to learn to play a new instrument. Some have not played an instrument since their school days while others have been playing for many years.

3. Do I need to provide my own instrument and music stand?

Yes. Members must provide their own instruments and stands with some exceptions (notably percussion instruments). We have a few instruments that are available for loan while someone is just beginning to play and wants to try it out before purchasing an instrument. Also, instruments can be rented at several of the local music stores.

4. What does it cost to join?

There is tuition for each ensemble you join and there are various options for payment. The tuition ranges from \$106 - \$200 per semester. There is also financial assistance available if needed. See the "Ensembles" link on our website for specific tuition information.

5. Where do you rehearse?

Most of our ensembles rehearse at the First Unitarian Church, 220 South Winton Road, Rochester.

6. Do I have to buy my own music?

No. All music is provided for each ensemble.

7. How long are rehearsals? How frequent are rehearsals?

The length of rehearsals varies depending upon the ensemble. Generally rehearsals last from one to two hours and are scheduled during the morning. Ensembles rehearse once or twice a week.

8. Are the rehearsals fun?

Yes! Although we practice seriously, our rehearsals are enjoyable and educational. Many friendships develop among New Horizon members.

9. Who are the members of New Horizons?

We come from all sorts of interesting backgrounds and experiences. Although we welcome all ages, many of us are seniors since all of our rehearsals occur during the day, usually in the morning. Begin to meet us by clicking on the “Musicians” link on our website to see our photographs and biographies.

10. Who are the conductors and mentors?

We have several conductors for the various ensembles. Their photographs and biographies are on the website. See the “Directors” link. Several of our ensembles also have Eastman School of Music students who serve as mentors and conduct sectional rehearsals. See the “Mentors” link on our website.

11. Can I play for part of the year?

Yes. Our schedule includes a Fall and a Spring semester. There is also a “snowbird” policy for those who go away during the winter months that allows them to pay for only one semester and participate in an ensemble in the early fall and late spring.

12. Do you rehearse and perform all year long?

No. Our schedule starts after Labor Day and ends in May. The New Horizon band, however, perform 3-4 concerts in June. We follow the Rochester City School District calendar and have the same vacation breaks throughout the year.

13. Where and how often do you give performances?

The concert and symphonic bands perform a fall, holiday and spring concert. Many ensembles have performances in May either in Kodak Hall or Kilbourn Hall at Eastman Theatre, as well as concerts at other times during the year. Several of the ensembles play at venues such as public schools, retirement communities, senior centers, and churches throughout the year. All concerts are free.

14. What if I’ve never played an instrument before?

Great! We welcome you as you begin this new adventure. The best place will be to start in the Green Band or if you want to learn to play a string instrument, start in the Green Strings ensemble.

15. How can I get more information?

There is a wealth of information on our website. In addition, by clicking on the “Contact Us’ link, you can send us an email and you will be contacted either by one of our conductors or the Eastman Community Music School staff. Or, telephone the Eastman Community Music School at 585-274-1400. Also, consider arranging to stop by and sit in on one of rehearsals, meet the conductor and some of the mentors.