

National Student Audition Categories in NSA, Regions, Districts, and Chapters

The National Student Auditions begin at the region-level and progress to the national preliminary, semifinal, and final rounds. Region auditions should offer all of the categories contained in the “Category, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements” section of this document on pp 9 & 15. Singers may only advance to the National Student Audition from a regional audition. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the NSA Coordinator, VP of Auditions, and NATS Executive Office staff. Winners of Chapter or District auditions may not be automatically advanced to the National Student Auditions.



Audition Category Terminology

CATEGORY	<p>Categories are defined by voice type. Treble: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor Voices 1, 3, 5 ,7, 9, 1 TBB: Tenor, Baritone, Bass Voices 2, 4 ,6 ,8, 10, 12</p>
CATEGORY NUMBERS	<p>Categories numbers also reflect the student’s level of study. Children–Middle School 1 & 2, High School (HS) 3 & 4, Lower: one–two years post-HS 5 & 6, Upper: three–five years post-HS 7 & 8, Advanced: post-undergraduate 9 & 10, Other Adults 11 & 12</p>
LENGTH OF STUDY	<p>Length of Study in Selection of Appropriate Category of Entry Total voice study with a voice teacher (NATS Member or Non NATS Member) either in an independent studio or collegiate/conservatory program or in any combination of them is a determining factor in post-high school categories only.</p> <p>Post-High School Study: Lower: any one or two years of post-high school study, all as an undergraduate. Upper: any three to five years of post-high school study, all as an undergraduate.</p> <p>Counting years of study begins with the first day of post-high school study—meaning the first year of study is in progress. For example, a student in in an undergraduate program in their fifth semester of voice study is in their third year of study. Any reasonable portion of a year will be counted as one year—even if the singer stops taking weekly lessons during a portion of that year, excepting if the singer is ill and unable or forbidden to sing during that time for medical reasons.</p>
AGE LIMIT	<p>Age limits are determined at the time of registration for singers in NATS auditions. Singers above the age limit of a category may not compete in that category. If an appropriate category is not available for a singer above the age limit, the singer may sing in that category for comments only. The age and years of study for NSA categories are determined at the regional audition and remain the same during that audition season.</p>
REPERTOIRE	<p>High school aged categories and younger in Chapter and District auditions may require two or three selections as best serves the needs and tradition of the Chapter or District. Regional and National Auditions will require three selections in all High School Categories.</p>
AUDITIONING TEACHER-MEMBERS	<p>NATS teacher-members who meet the requirements of a student audition category in terms of their age and years of study—may enter student auditions through the NATS member with whom they are currently studying, but they may not enter themselves in the audition. If they enter their students in the audition, they must be available to adjudicate a category in addition to auditioning.</p>

NSA Annual Audition Categories

Classical Audition Terminology

Aria	An aria is a solo from an opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled "concert aria." Oxford Online definitions will be used for the purposes of NATS student auditions. For example, Purcell's selections from the semi-operas and masques are considered songs.
24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias	The repertoire found in the 24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias collections may be counted as an aria or an art song in the high school and lower classical categories. For the singers in the upper and advanced categories, these pieces may ONLY count as an art song, regardless of origin. Any repertoire found outside of these collections will be considered only as the composer intended as an art song OR aria.
Memorization	All repertoire must be performed from memory with the exception of Oratorio, Mass, Requiem, and Cantata Arias. Singers may hold music scores for these types of arias as is traditional performance practice.
Original Languages	All selections should be sung in original language or in translation, if warranted by common performance practice.
Transposition	Published transpositions are permitted. Singers are expected to retain the composer's intended style of music and to convey the essence of the character portrayed in the larger work. Performances not fulfilling these requirements may result in lower scores from adjudicators.
Art Song in English	English must be the original language of the art song.
Repertoire/Categories	The word "classical" in this context refers to art songs and arias from the classical genre, not limited to the Classical period of Mozart and Haydn. No musical theatre, pop, soul, jazz, rhythm and blues, <i>etc.</i> may be entered in the Classical Category. Published arrangements of folk songs, spirituals, and traditional hymn tunes in English are widely accepted as a part of the classical genre. Students in classical categories may present one selection of this type to fulfill the English art song requirement.
Judicious Cuts	Piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and internal cuts of opera arias are allowed as is common performance practice. Cuts of verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.
Comments Only	Any registered student may elect to sing for comments only and participate exclusively in a preliminary audition. Adjudicators will not score auditions entered for comments only.
Double-Dipping	Singers entering more than one category (Classical, Musical Theatre, Spiritual) in NATS auditions are allowed to sing the same selection in two categories provided that the repertoire requirements of both categories are met. If singers advance in NATS Auditions (chapter, regional, national rounds) in more than one category, they may not sing the same selection in multiple final auditions. See specific examples in the MT Terminology.

NSA Classical (CL) Categories

TREBLE: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, Countertenor Voices

TBB: Tenor, Baritone, Bass Voices

CATEGORY	LENGTH OF STUDY	AGE LIMIT	MINIMUM TIME LIMIT	REPERTOIRE: all repertoire is performed from memory	
CL 3	High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit	14–19	8 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 4	High School Classical TBB Voice	No limit	14–19	8 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 5	Lower Classical Treble Voice	0–2 years post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 6	Lower Classical TBB Voice	0–2 years post-high school	22	10 minutes	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 7	Upper Classical Treble Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 8	Upper Classical TBB Voice	3–5 years post-high school all as an undergraduate	25	12 minutes	FOUR contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 9	Advanced Classical Treble Voice	4+ years post-high school	22–30	15 minutes	FIVE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English.* One art song in a language other than English. One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria.† One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 10	Advanced Classical TBB Voice	4+ years post-high school	22–30	15 minutes	FIVE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in a language other than English. One art song in English.* One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria.† One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.

* English must be the original language of the required one art song in English.

† Singers may hold the music score for oratorio/cantata aria, in exception to the memorization requirement.

NATS NSA Classical Subcategories

Repertoire requirements are the same as the corresponding numbered category above.

Number	Category	Length of Study	Age Range or Limit	Minimum Time Limit
CL 3A	Lower High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
CL 4A	Lower High School Classical TBB	No limit—all HS	14–16 9th or 10th Grade	8 minutes
CL 3B	Upper High School Classical Treble Voice	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
CL 4B	Upper High School Classical TBB	No limit—all HS	16–19 11th or 12th Grade	8 minutes
CL 5A	First Year Classical Treble Voice	1 year post-HS	20	10 minutes
CL 6A	First Year Classical TBB	1 year post-HS	20	10 minutes
CL 5B	Second Year Classical Treble Voice	2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
CL 6B	Second Year Classical TBB	2 years post-HS	22	10 minutes
CL 7A	Third Year Classical Treble Voice	3 years post-HS	23	12 minutes
CL 8A	Third Year Classical TBB	3 years post-HS	23	12 minutes
CL 7B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical Treble Voice	4-5 years post-HS (all as an undergraduate)	25	12 minutes
CL 8B	Fourth/Fifth Year Classical TBB	4-5 years post-HS (all as an undergraduate)	25	12 minutes
CL 9A	Lower Advanced Classical Treble Voice	4-7 years post-HS	22–26	15 minutes
CL 10A	Lower Advanced Classical TBB	4-7 years post-HS	22–26	15 minutes
CL 9B	Upper Advanced Classical Treble Voice	7+ years post-HS	25–30	15 minutes
CL 10B	Upper Advanced Classical TBB	7+ post-HS	25–30	15 minutes

Chapters, Districts, and Regions may subdivide the categories to accommodate a larger number of entries.

Subdivided categories may be designated as CL 4A–1, CL 5A–2, for example.

Repertoire requirements and time limits must remain the same among subdivisions of any category of auditions.