

Every new endeavor requires a solid foundation upon which to build a strong structure. As a result, Show Choir Canada has created the following standards to serve as a foundation for a comprehensive choral program. It is hoped that everyone involved in show choir performance – from choral directors to choreographers to costumers – will find these standards useful, whether associated with a beginning choir, developing choir, or experience choir.

We at Show Choir Canada understand that show choirs are not the be all and end all of the choral experience. Rather, show choirs are part of complete choral programs, but offering enhanced elements of performance, creative ways to explore repertoire, and opportunities to reach out to a non-traditional audience. Fundamental principles of traditional choral programs still apply in the pursuit of excellence.

Vocals

Performing solo or within an ensemble, show choir members should demonstrate healthy vocal technique, musicianship, technical accuracy, and the ability to perform a variety of musical styles.

Movement

Performing solo or within an ensemble, show choir members should demonstrate appropriate technique, accuracy and expression. Varied dance styles should compliment and enhance the chosen repertoire.

Accompaniment

Working with live or recorded accompaniment, show choir members should demonstrate an ensemble-based performance that not only entertains but also educates audience members and performers. Show choir directors are encouraged to use live accompaniment in at least one musical number.

Multi-disciplinary Performers

By exhibiting skills in movement, vocal, and theatricality/acting, show choir participants should demonstrate an aptitude for becoming well-rounded performers.

Musicianship

Show choir participants should demonstrate basic music theory through being able to sightread varying parts in a vocal score, understand dynamics, and demonstrate an awareness of style through appropriate vocabulary, tone, articulation and phrasing.

Practices and Assessment: Ensemble

Utilizing the accepted standards of excellence in the disciplines of music, dance, and theatre, performers should demonstrate the ability to objectively evaluate not only their performances but also the performances of others with an eye to the ensemble approach and overall effect of the combination of the three disciplines.

Practices and Assessment: Individual

Show choir participants are equally encouraged to excel on an individual level as much as members of an ensemble, not only in terms of interpretative skills as solo and ensemble performers, but also as creators, ex., composers, arrangers, choreographers, designers, asst./assoc. producers.

Music Context

Show choir members should exhibit a clear understanding of performed music, in terms of genre, culture, style, and historical context.

Professionalism

Show choir members should demonstrate a professional approach to their art as assessed through performance elements, rehearsal etiquette, attention to detail, and respect for the work of all involved.

Show Content

Choirs are free to present any type of performance they wish. However, it is useful for you to be aware of a “Standard Show Choir Show Design.” We pride ourselves in the diversity of our judging panel and just as there is likely to be a very progressive, forward thinking judge, there is just as likely liable to be a traditionalist. That being said, a ‘TRADITIONAL show design is:

OPENER (feature length arrangement) – **SHOWSTOPPING** positive message with a driving tempo, big vocals to set the bar high. Great Arrangements of Music Theatre Showstoppers, written originally to have a choral sound are best. Goal: **ENERGY** and **CONFIDENCE**

TAG 1 is the transition music that gets you to the beginning of Song 2. It can be an extended / related intro to Song 2 but works better if it is a “play-off / tag” of the opening number. **COVER THIS TRANSITION WITH MUSIC PLEASE.**

SONG 2: Style / Gear Shift Song (Medium length arrangement) Should be an obvious rhythm / attitude shift here – made easiest with a “dance”- centric song like a Charleston, a Waltz, Tap, a Swing Number, a Jive. *Latin... something NOT done elsewhere in your show. OR a dance/ folksong / cultural tune functions the same way: An Irish Step Dance, an African Rhythm, a Hawaiian Luau dance: Goal: **STYLE** and **VERSATILITY**

TAG 2 is the transition music that gets you into your ballad position. It can be a reprise of song 2 but works better as an extended / related intro to the Ballad. **COVER THIS TRANSITION WITH MUSIC PLEASE.**

BALLAD – (NOT TOO LONG) park and sing! But in addition to incredible arrangement, every single person must in some way connect with the intention of the lyric or we may as well just play a recording. Goal: **EMOTIONAL DEPTH**

NO TAG HERE The end of your ballad should have an applause stop, then break the mood immediately with a ‘turn on a dime’ delivery by whatever is next.

JUST GIRLS / JUST GUYS TUNES – (SHORT arrangements) – in a common theme, with a direct musical segue is nice, sometimes a comedy / Novelty or “prop” number. Like Girls: Second Hand Rose and Boys: Sam, You Made the Pants too Long. Girls: I Enjoy Being a Girl with Boys: Cool from West Side Story (“boy, boy, crazy boy...”) OR Girls: Goin’ to the Chapel with Boys: Get me to The Church On Time OR Girls: Fever with Boys: Night Fever. (remember this facilitates the costume change if you’re doing one- meaning guys should go second as to not give away the girls finale costume before the finale.) Goal: **COMEDY** and to show **EQUAL STRENGTH**

TAG 3 can be a **BAND FEATURE**. Can have a mini-overture of the finale songs or songs that fit but didn’t make it into the medley. This minute or so covers changing set elements and/ or introducing new costumes and /or informing the audience what road you are headed down to bring it all home.

CLOSER – BIG FINISH! A very contemporary / pop / rock **MEDLEY** is great with a theme that comes from either the lyric, the time period or the artist / band. Elton John, The Eagles, The Eighties, Automobiles, Flying... Goal: **VERSATILITY** and **STAMINA** (you should be exhausted yet look as though you could do that show four more times consecutively with no problem.

Soloists may be highlighted at any time during the performance, however, this is a “choir” event and as such, the focus should be on the choir.

Remember this is only a guideline that ensures a somewhat possible template to get the spectrum of styles and variety a great show choir can deliver.