

1 MINUTE CHECKLIST FOR SIGHTREADING

Sometimes, especially for paid gigs and auditions, we don't have much time to review the music before we have to play – or get a second chance to get it right. Sightreading is an important skill (which means that you have to practice it to get better at it) for every musician.

Things to look for in the minute you have to read over the music **BEFORE YOU PLAY**:

1. KEY

- What's the key signature? Are there accidentals? Is it Major or minor? Sometimes the first and last note can be an indicator, but don't rely on them. Always be aware of the relative minor key. Including scales in your daily routine is essential to playing in difficult keys.

2. RANGE

- What's the Highest Note & the Lowest Note? You don't want severe high notes sneaking up on you. See also # 8 for looking ahead.

3. ARTICULATION

- Is there a pattern? Good Audition Sightreading will usually incorporate patterns that vary slightly - stay alert.

4. FASTEST RHYTHM

- Start only as fast as you can successfully play this rhythm. Don't sacrifice accuracy for a few clicks on the metronome.

5. TEMPO

- What is the tempo marking at the beginning? Remember #4.
- Know the difference between *a tempo* and *tempo primo*.
- Look for *accel.*, *meno.*, *rit.* and *rall.*

6. ROAD MAP

- Repeats, 1st and 2nd endings, Da Capo (D.C.), Del Signo (D.S.),
 - Where's the Sign? Is there a cut? When do I jump to the Coda?
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Other considerations to think about **WHILE PLAYING**:

7. TEMPO

- Start Smart. Start with a tempo slow enough that you can play the fastest rhythms. When in doubt, play slower. We are usually our own worst enemies (speeding up, rushing sixteenth notes).

8. LOOK AHEAD

- At least 1 measure ahead of what you're playing, especially while playing the last measure of each line or before a page turn. 2 or 3 measures is ideal.

9. BE CONFIDENT

- Play it like you know it!