

UTAH SYMPHONY
2026 SALUTE TO YOUTH
PRELIMINARY AND FINAL AUDITION INFORMATION

Entering its 66th year, Salute to Youth is a long-standing Utah Symphony tradition that celebrates Utah's outstanding young musicians in piano, strings, winds, brass, percussion, harp, voice, and small ensemble. Through auditions held each summer, selected students earn the opportunity to perform as soloists with the Utah Symphony. Salute to Youth is committed to supporting, fostering, and recognizing extraordinary young musicians in the state of Utah. Auditions are adjudicated by the Utah Symphony's distinguished panel who look for exceptional technique and musicality. Preliminary auditions take place in July, with final auditions held in September. **Up to two musicians** from each age division will perform with the Utah Symphony on **Wednesday, November 18, 2026**. Online applications will open May 1, 2026.

APPLICATION PROCESS & FEES

1. Submit your online application by **July 1, 2026**.
2. Pay the application fee
 - Standard fee: \$40 for soloists; \$20 for each ensemble member
 - Application fees are on a sliding scale and help USUO keep the program running and accessible to all
 - The suggested contribution is the standard fee; applicants may pay more, less, or \$0 – whatever works best for your family, no explanation is required.
 - Applications are not considered complete until payment is submitted
3. Submit your preliminary recording
 - Within five business days of submitting your application and payment, you will receive an email with your assigned applicant number and a link to upload your recording
 - Your recording must be labeled using only your instrument, division, and applicant number (e.g., *Bassoon, Senior, 417*)
 - Do not include your name or any identifying information in the file name or recording itself. All submissions are anonymized by Utah Symphony staff before being shared with adjudicators.
4. Multiple entries and participation
 - A separate application and fee must be submitted for each piece; Students may audition on only one solo piece per instrument
 - Students may audition on multiple instruments (separate application required for each)
 - Students may audition as both a soloist and in an ensemble, on the same or different instruments; Each member of an ensemble must submit an individual application and fee
5. Preliminary results
 - Results will be emailed by **August 12, 2026**
 - Finalists must submit a clean electronic score of their selected work
6. Final audition round
 - Final auditions will take place in person at Abravanel Hall on **September 22, 2026**
 - Auditions are performed behind a screen
 - Solo repertoire must be performed from memory
 - Results will be emailed within 24 hours
7. Finalists and performance
 - Selected winners will perform with the Utah Symphony on **November 18, 2026**

IMPORTANT DATES:

Attendance at all required dates listed below is mandatory. No exceptions or alternate dates can be accommodated.

Now-June 5, 2026	Repertoire requests sent to James Wesson at jwesson@usuo.org
July 1, 2026	Applications and fees are completed and paid, need-based scholarships available
July 12, 2026	Submit your preliminary audition recordings
August 12, 2026	Results of preliminary auditions emailed
September 22, 2026	Final audition round
September 25, 2026	Video Interview and Photoshoot, 2PM – 8:00PM
November 2, 2026	Score reading session, 4:30 PM – 8:30 PM
November 18, 2026	Salute to Youth Concert with Utah Symphony

Applicant Divisions:

(Age as of September 1, 2026) There are four divisions, e.g., three age divisions (Elementary, Junior, and Senior) in each instrumental group and an ensemble division. Up to two winners can be selected from each division.

DIVISION	PIANO	STRINGS	WINDS	BRASS	PERCUSSION	HARP	VOICE
Elementary	Age 8-12	Age 8-12	N/A	N/A	N/A	Age 8-12	N/A
Junior	Age 13-15	Age 13-15	Age 13-17	Age 13-17	Age 13-17	Age 13-15	Age 16-18
Senior	Age 16-19	Age 16-19	Age 18-21	Age 18-21	Age 18-21	Age 16-19	Age 19-23
ENSEMBLE: Groups are allowed to be mixed in age/division. Students do not need to be in the same division as each other when performing together as an ensemble.							

Salute to Youth Audition Rules**Courtesy and Professionalism:**

Salute to Youth is designed to be a rewarding educational experience for students whose hard work and dedication have already been demonstrated. Participants are expected to engage with respect, integrity, and professionalism throughout the audition process, including in moments of challenge or disappointment. Applicants, parents, and teachers share responsibility for upholding these standards.

Behavior that interferes with auditions or program procedures, includes abusive or offensive language, or shows disrespect toward participants, judges, staff, or volunteers is strictly prohibited. Utah Symphony reserves the right to disqualify any individual whose behavior does not align with these expectations, both for the current and future seasons of Salute to Youth.

Eligibility:

1. Must be a current Utah resident and have a valid Utah mailing address (defined as 12 months of continuous residency or being claimed as a dependent by a Utah resident). Participants must also be living full-time in Utah for all required in-person dates.
2. Must meet the age and instrument requirements for the selected division (see Applicant Divisions).
3. Winners may only win once per age division. Previous winners are not eligible to compete again in the same division but may reapply in a higher division as they age. For ensemble winners, placement counts toward each participant's respective age division.

Repertoire

1. **Selection:** Perform one complete movement or work for audition. The approved repertoire list is provided as a guide. For any selection not listed, approval must be requested by **June 5, 2026**.
2. **Consistency:** Your selected repertoire must remain the same for the preliminary audition, final audition, and performance.
3. **Accompaniment:** All preliminary recordings must include piano accompaniment. Recorded or non-piano accompaniment is not permitted. Accompanists are not provided.
4. **Modifications:** Any changes to the solo part must be approved in advance.
5. **Memorization:** Soloists must perform from memory in the final audition and concert. Small ensembles may use music.

Recording Guidelines

1. **Format:** Recordings must be audio only (no video) and include no speaking of any kind.
2. **Submission:** Recordings must be submitted using the provided Google Form, which will be emailed within five business days of completing the application and payment.
3. **File Naming:** Label your recording using only your instrument, division, and applicant number (e.g., *Cello, Senior, 608*). Do not include your name or any identifying information.
4. **Editing:** No editing, splicing, or digital manipulation is permitted. Recordings should reflect live performance ability. The solo part must be performed in full, including all cadenzas; cuts in the accompaniment are permitted.

5. **Sound Quality:** Recordings are evaluated on performance, not recording quality. Professional recording is not required, but balance between soloist and accompanist should be clear.
6. **Date:** Recordings must be made on or after March 1, 2026.
7. **Accompaniment:** Piano accompaniment is required.

Final Audition Round Rules

1. **Location and Format:** Final auditions will take place at Abravanel Hall on **September 22, 2026**. All auditions are performed behind a screen.
2. **Accompaniment:** All participants must provide their own piano accompaniment.
3. **Scheduling and Arrival:** Audition times are assigned by Utah Symphony and cannot be changed. Participants must arrive at least 30 minutes before their scheduled time. A warm-up room will be assigned at check-in.
4. **Audition Process:** The length of auditions is at the discretion of the judges and may be adjusted based on the number of participants. Judges may stop an audition at any time or request specific sections.
5. **Anonymity:** Auditions are anonymous. Judges receive no identifying information, and participants may not disclose any personal or identifying details at any point during the audition process.
6. **Score Submission:** Finalists must submit a clean digital copy of their score by September 4, 2026. Cuts and cadenzas must be clearly marked. The score must match the edition being performed and contain no additional markings.
7. **Policies:** Auditions are closed to the public. All participants and guests must remain in designated waiting areas. Video or audio recording of the final audition is not permitted.
8. **Results and Decisions:** Judges determine the number of winners and the order of performance. All decisions are final. Selected winners must perform the auditioned work; no repertoire changes are permitted.
9. **Participant Responsibility:** All expenses related to the audition and performance are the responsibility of the participant. Submission of false information at any stage may result in disqualification.

Failure to follow any of the above rules will lead to automatic disqualification from the audition or performance.

Utah Symphony reserves the right to make binding decisions in unusual or questionable circumstances in regards to audition requirements and regulations, or to their intent, or to any situation not specifically covered by the above.

Please contact James Wesson with questions or concerns, jwesson@usuo.org