**CHOOSING THE BEST SONGS FOR AUDITIONS**

**Show type**

For auditions, rather than considering the setting, focus on the show you are auditioning for.

* What is the time period of the show? Ideally you’ll want to choose something close to the same time period.
* What is the show style? Rock (such as *RENT*), classical (such as *Sunday in the Park with George*), pop (such as *Hairspray*), or other? Try to choose something that is similar in style.
* What character(s) are you hoping to be cast as? If you are a auditioning for a comic role, selecting a humorous audition song will help the casting team more easily picture you as that character.

**Compliment your vocal strengths**

After you’ve narrowed down selections based on the criteria above, you’ll want to consider your unique strengths and how you can show them off.

* Range: if you have a well developed upper range, choose a song that includes that part of your voice. If you are a classic Broadway belter, choose a song with some great belting notes in it.
* Unique skills: everyone has vocal skills that they are particularly good at. Maybe yours is the ability to sustain long notes over time, or you have a really well developed vibrato, or your voice is agile and can make large interval jumps with great accuracy. Whatever those qualities are, try to find a song that will show them off. If you’re unsure what your strengths are, ask your instructor for advice or [book a coaching session](http://erinrebeccaroberts.com/lessons) to get a professional opinion.  
    
  **Realistic expectations**

Performers tend to have grandiose ideas of what they’d like to perform: it must be the BEST song and show off the MOST COMPLICATED vocal techniques! This is rarely a good idea. Most audiences or directors would rather hear a simple song done really well over an impressively complex song done poorly. How much time do you have to prepare? Is there a song you are already somewhat familiar with, or have worked on previously, that could fit for this performance?

**Sources, age and gender**

If you are preparing for a musical theatre audition, your piece should be from a real musical theatre production or film. Normally, pop, rock or originally written songs are not acceptable for auditions. The piece you choose should be consistent with the age and gender of the role(s) you are hoping to be cast in.

**Making cuts**

When preparing for a musical theatre audition, normally the casting team will ask for a short excerpt from a song, often 32 bars or about 1 minute of singing. Whatever it is they ask for, show that you can follow simple instructions and bring exactly that. Practice timing the excerpt and make sure it’s the right length.

As for selecting which 32 bars to sing, refer back to the paragraph on complimenting your vocal strengths, and try to find a section that highlights the best qualities of your voice. Also pay attention to lyrics by choosing a part that tells an important piece of the song’s story. Directors are usually familiar with the music from most productions, but still, you want to keep them focused on your great voice rather than distracted by trying to figure out what exactly you are singing about.