

Boulder Symphony Orchestra Players Guidance Document

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Mission Statement

A member of the League of American Orchestras, [Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra \(NTS\)](#) is dedicated to the cultural enrichment of Boulder County through symphonic music. NTS seeks to provide the many benefits that can be achieved only through live musical performance. We are proud to offer an opportunity for musicians to play and for individuals and families to experience the magic of live classical music.

Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra (NTS)

Formerly Timberline Symphony Orchestra (TSO)

Players' Guidance

Effective May 30, 1997

Revised September 2010

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1. Document Purpose

This players' guidance document is the result of a need to provide guidance to the orchestra regarding orchestra matters such as auditions, seating, attendance, rehearsals, grievances, and concert dress. This document will be revised from time to time to reflect any changes the orchestra deems necessary.

2. NTSO Organization and Responsibilities

2.1. Definitions

Within the orchestra there is a hierarchy of instrumental groups or sections. There are four major groups (sections): Strings, Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion. Each major section of the orchestra is further divided according to instruments within that section as shown below:

Strings

- Violin 1
- Violin 2
- Viola
- Cello
- Bass

Woodwinds

- Flute (including piccolo)
- Oboe (including English Horn)
- Bassoon (all types)
- Clarinet (all types)

Brass

- Trumpet
- Horn
- Trombone (including bass)
- Low Brass (Tuba, Euphonium, etc.)

Percussion

2.2. Music Director

The Music Director's areas of responsibility include (with input from the Board regarding financial implications):

- Repertoire selection for each concert
- Number of concerts per season
- Number of personnel for each concert per section
- Organization and leadership of rehearsals
- Participation in formal and informal auditions (Section 3)
- Informal, private sessions with individual players to determine their abilities

2.3. Principal Players and Representatives

2.3.1. String Section

Each group of instruments within the String section has a leader who is referred to as the Principal player for that group of instruments. The leader of the first violins is the Concertmaster of the orchestra. All other groups of instruments within the string section has a leader who is referred to as the Principal Player for that group, i.e., the Principal Cellist, for example. Principal players are determined through the audition procedures in this handbook. Most string groups also have an assistant principal. In the first violin section, this player is the Assistant Concertmaster and must be prepared to perform orchestral solos if the Concertmaster is absent.

2.3.2. Woodwind Section

Traditionally the first oboe player is considered the leader of the woodwind section. However, the woodwinds have the option of designating another player as the leader of this section.

2.3.3. Brass Section

The first trombone player is considered the leader of the lower brass, and the first trumpet player is considered the leader of the entire brass section. However, the brass section has the option of designating another player as the leader of this section.

2.3.4. Responsibilities

If there is a permanent principal player for a given section, that player shall be the section leader. If a section does not have a permanent principal, the section shall select its own section representative.

The section leaders (Principal Players) are responsible for:

1. Musical leadership
2. Implementation of the procedures in this guidance document including
 - (Strings) informal auditions of new string players (Section 3.3.1)
 - Participation on the formal audition committee (Section 3.5)
 - (Strings) organization of section seating (Section 3.5.8)
 - Recording attendance (Section 4.5)
 - Rehearsal cancellation notification (Section 5)
3. Organization and leadership of sectionals in addition to regular rehearsals
4. (Concert master) providing bowings by the first rehearsal of a concert cycle
5. Working with the Music Director and section players to fairly determine a rotation schedule for reduced section sizes for particular pieces or concerts that do not require a full section.

2.3.5. Section Representation on Player's Committee

Each section, i.e, Strings, Woodwinds Brass, and Percussion, shall select representatives to serve on the Player's Committee (Appendix D).

3. Auditions

3.1. Eligibility

Anyone is welcome to audition for NTSO; however, if the person being auditioned is a member of a high school student orchestra or youth orchestra, that person must retain their active membership in that organization if accepted for a position by NTSO

3.2. Recommendations for Existing NTS Members

When a new conductor will be selected for a subsequent concert season, all NTS players who played at least 75% of the regular concerts during the current season do not need to re-audition with a new conductor.

3.3. Auditions for New String Players

3.3.1. Non-Principal Positions

The Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra encourages new membership, especially string players. Therefore, it is suggested that no formal "committee" audition policy be created for non-principal players. Instead, it is suggested that an informal audition be instituted by the principal string players. In order to provide the principal string players the ability to effectively position people within the section, it is recommended that new players sit with the section principals for part of a rehearsal. This should occur during the second week of initial attendance, as the first week will be for introduction and picking up the music. This "low key" audition should aid the principal section leader in determining whether or not the new player should be positioned on the inside or outside of the section. This recommendation will also provide the conductor a chance to listen and watch the performance of the new member. The Music Director may also schedule a one-on-one informal session with the potential new player for further evaluation of their abilities. If the new player is unable to play the material adequately, the principal player/conductor/personal manager should be responsible for the decline of the new player.

3.3.2. Principal Positions

If a principal string position becomes available due to resignation, poor performance, poor attendance, (or other circumstance deemed applicable by the Music Director and Board), formal auditions will be held as described in Section 3.5 (Formal Auditions for all NTS members).

Principal string positions may be re-auditioned every year at the discretion of the Music Director. This re-auditioning will open the position to any new or current member.

3.4. Auditions for New Brass, Woodwind, and Percussion Players

Brass, woodwind, and percussion players will retain their chairs as long as they are adequately playing their parts, attending rehearsals, and working in a cooperative manner with the musical director and other players.

If a chair is vacated due to resignation or poor performance, poor attendance, (or other circumstance deemed applicable by the Music Director and Board), an audition will be held following the procedures described in Section 3.5 (Formal Auditions for all NTS members). The other players in that section will be given the opportunity to audition for the open chair.

3.4.1. Re-Auditioning for Principal Woodwind and Brass Positions

Once per year, a principal woodwind or brass player may be challenged for that position by an existing member of the section in good standing (i.e. a member who has played in at least 75% of the concerts during the previous year). Once a challenge has been opened, any current member of that NTSO section may audition for the principal position.

3.5. Formal Audition Procedures

3.5.1. Circumstances

When an open position exists in any of the following areas, an audition must be held to select a musician for that position.

1. Principal String Player
2. Brass Player
3. Woodwind Player
4. Percussion Player

3.5.2. Audition Committee Composition

The Audition Committee shall consist of no fewer than five members of the Full Orchestra, including the Music Director who shall serve as chair, and no more than 7 members. There shall always be an odd number of Musicians on the Audition Committee. The Audition Committee shall be comprised of the appropriate section leaders and the Musical Director. If the audition involves the current section leader, the assistant principal player shall reside on the audition committee.

3.5.3. Selection of Audition Committee

At the beginning of each season, the NTS Player's Committee (PC [see Appendix D]), along with interested NTS orchestra members, shall propose an Audition Committee (which shall include all section leaders) to serve for all appropriate auditions for the entire season including the spring and fall auditions which may follow the season. When

auditions are held, the persons on this proposed Audition Committee shall serve as needed.

If objections are raised regarding the composition of the Audition Committee, the objector shall submit new names to the NTS PC until a suitable set of Audition Committee members is agreed upon by both parties. If a member of the Audition Committee is unable to attend a particular audition, the NTS PC along the current members of the Audition Committee can recommend a substitute for that audition.

3.5.4. Audition Notification

The NTS PC along with the Music Director and Personnel Manager shall make arrangements for auditions and shall oversee audition procedures. They shall also be responsible for openly advertising auditions, and shall supply necessary information and repertoire sheets to applicants, including music upon request, written notice of audition times and places, etc.

3.5.5. Audition Frequency

Auditions shall be held at least annually before the beginning of the season for all open positions for Principal String Player; Brass Player; Woodwind Player; and/or Percussion Player. However, auditions may be held anytime, with a month's notice, at the Music Director's discretion.

Multiple Auditions:

Preliminary and final auditions may be held if a position is not filled following an initial round of auditions. If final auditions are held, selected applicants from the preliminary audition may be asked to return for the final auditions at the request of the Audition Committee.

3.5.6. Repertoire

An audition repertoire list for each instrument shall be established by the Music Director and the Principal Player of each section. This list shall be filed with the NTS PC for approval. The list may be revised at the discretion of the Music Director and the NTS PC.

3.5.7. Notification

Four weeks of public advertising will be given immediately before the annual auditions.

3.5.8. Seating in the String Sections

The principal string positions are determined through the audition process described in Section 3.3.2 and Section 3.5 for open principal string positions.

Other than the principal positions, seating in the string sections is based on a rotational seating schedule determined by the principal string players for each respective concert. This provides the principal string players the ability to effectively position string players within the section. By alternating, the rotational seating schedule also provides players

the opportunity to sit inside or outside within the sections and at different proximities to the front of the sections over the course of the concert season.

3.5.9. Substitutes and Extra Musicians

The Personnel Director shall compile a list of Musicians who have been accepted by audition to serve as substitutes and extras. Substitute Musicians and Extra Musicians, however, may be asked to play when necessary without having auditioned formally for the orchestra. The current list of extra musicians for each season shall be provided to the NTS Board at the beginning of the season and attached to this guidance document as Appendix C. The list shall be revised and kept current by the Personnel Director as needed.

4. Attendance

4.1. Missing More than One Rehearsal

The Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra is a community group. However, a level of commitment is required from each of its members, and in striving for a better orchestra, attendance at all rehearsals is important. With this goal in mind, the following attendance guidelines have been developed.

Each member shall not miss more than one rehearsal per concert cycle. If more than one of the rehearsals are missed, or the dress rehearsal is missed, then the member may not be eligible to participate in the upcoming concert, at the discretion of the Music Director. Attendance at the dress rehearsals is mandatory, with the exception of job related conflicts, bad weather and other extenuating circumstances. The Director may choose to waive these requirements based on advanced notice of extenuating circumstances and the orchestra member's past attendance history and skill level.

A commitment to play a concert must be made before the date of the first rehearsal. Each member who commits to a concert is expected to keep that commitment.

4.2. Contacting the Appropriate People before Missing a Rehearsal

Making a conscious effort to contact someone about missing a rehearsal is important for assuring parts are covered by substitutes if applicable, especially in the brass and woodwind sections. Attendance at all rehearsals is highly encouraged; therefore, it is recommended that all NTS players notify the appropriate person when they are unable to attend a rehearsal. This notification will also help to provide section leaders a chance to reposition players before rehearsal begins and to obtain substitute players as needed before the rehearsal starts.

- String players shall contact the section leaders/string personnel manager
- Brass, woodwind, and percussion players shall contact the NTS personnel manager and arrange for a substitute player as necessary

4.3. Substitutes for Brass, Woodwinds & Percussion

The musical director prefers for exposed parts to be covered during rehearsals. If a brass, woodwind, or percussion player is unable to attend a rehearsal, they shall be responsible for notifying the NTS personnel manager and for finding a substitute player. Asking potential new players to play at rehearsals gives the orchestra a chance to add the new player to the list of utility players.

The Personnel Manager is responsible for keeping and supplying an updated list of musicians who can serve as substitutes and extras. However, substitute musicians and extra musicians may be asked to play when necessary without having auditioned formally for the orchestra.

4.3.1. Who is Responsible for Music if a Rehearsal is to be Missed

If a NTS orchestra member must miss a rehearsal and a substitute player has been arranged, it is the responsibility of the NTS orchestra member missing the rehearsal to ensure that the substitute player receives the music. This can be effectively achieved by the orchestra member by planning the absence in advance and returning the music back to the librarian for use by the substitute player at the next rehearsal. The librarian is then responsible for retrieving the music from the substitute player at the end of the rehearsal.

4.4. Missing Concerts

During the concert season, a member may miss up to two concerts per year. **This number does not include concerts missed due to a reduced orchestra size for that concert, or if a part does not exist for the member for that concert.** If a member misses more than two concerts, they will obtain the status of a new player and may have to re-audition to remain in the orchestra, at the discretion of the Music Director.

4.5. Attendance Recording

Attendance will be noted by the section leaders at each rehearsal and it is the responsibility of the section leaders to be aware of the attendance record of the members of their section. It is the responsibility of each section leader to report attendance concerns to the Conductor/personnel manager.

5. Canceling Rehearsals

5.1. Who Is Responsible for Canceling Rehearsals?

It is the responsibility of the conductor/personnel manager to cancel a rehearsal due to bad weather, illness, etc. The decision to cancel a rehearsal must be made at least one to one and a half (1 to 1 & 1/2) hours prior to the scheduled start time of rehearsal. This should allow sufficient enough time for orchestra members to be contacted by phone prior to the rehearsal.

5.2. Informing Orchestra Members of Cancellations

Because it is the responsibility of the section leaders to maintain a current roster of their section, it shall also be the responsibility of the section leaders to ensure that all

members of their section are contacted when a rehearsal is canceled. The section leaders may delegate or solicit help as needed if they are unable to contact the member in their section by themselves. The chain of command for making the correct sequence of phone calls is described in the following figure.

6. Grievances

NTS recognizes that in an organization as large as a symphony orchestra disagreements, personality clashes or grievances may occur. To address these issues, any member of the NTS may file a grievance for any reason. A request for a grievance hearing should be made in writing to the NTS Board of Directors outlining the grievance. Upon receipt of the grievance, the Board will notify the Player's Committee (see Appendix D) and report the resolution to originator of the grievance. If the grievance concerns one or more members of the Player's Committee, an alternate from the section represented by that member will serve in the member's place. The committee shall meet at a time convenient to all its members as soon as possible after receipt of the written request, but within 30 days of the request. The meeting will follow normal parliamentary guidelines. The complainant shall attend the meeting and present the grievance in detail. After hearing the grievance, the committee will adjourn to discuss a possible resolution and/or recommendation to the Board. The complainant shall be notified of the decision of the Board within 30 days of the grievance finding.

If the grievance is concerning a NTS Board member, the Player's Committee shall exclude that board member from all meetings regarding that grievance and the grievance shall be submitted to a principal player or the Musical Director rather than to the NTS Board.

7. Concert Dress

Men: Black suits, black socks, black dress shoes, white shirt, black jacket

Women: Long black dresses or dress pants with black dress blouse, black dress shoes, black nylons or black sheer stockings

8. Background and Historical Context of Guidance Document

Originally, this player's guidance document was the result of a need to provide guidance to the orchestra regarding orchestra matters. The orchestra was surveyed in the Fall season of 1996 on the majority of the subject matters contained in this document. A player's committee was formed in December of 1996 to discuss the survey results and to produce a baseline document providing guidance on these subject matters. The members forming the player's committee consist of a representation of the principal players in the orchestra along with the Musical Director and members of the NTS board.

Kim Ambach	Principal 2nd Violin
Tina Herod	Principal Horn
Chelle Limon	Principal Clarinet
Angela Rayne	TSO Board President
Brian St. John	TSO Musical Director
Bridget Steele	Concertmaster

In January, 2008, a NTS Players' Committee was formed to review and update this guidance document as applicable. The Player's Committee and Board finalized this revised document in March, 2008. This document is intended to grow and change as needed when the NTS Director, Board, and orchestra members identify circumstances that need to be addressed in the guidance document.

Members of the 2008 Players' Committee:

Carolyn Ford	horn
Charlene Bandurian	cello, Principal
Danielle Johnson	violin, Concertmaster
Ginger Hedrick	flute
Julia Young	cello
Kristin Stordahl	flute, Principal
Lori Kunde	oboe
Mike Fal	trombone
Mike Roper	trombone
Nola Melcher	violin
Sarah Wise	bassoon
Sheila Grady-McBride	violin
Vicki Bryan	cello

From April to August, 2009, and following a 2009 orchestra-wide survey, the NTS Players' Committee reviewed and updated this guidance document. Revisions include the following: Section 2 was added to describe the various instrumental sections of the orchestra and the responsibilities of leaders or Principal players for each section; Section 3.3.2 was revised to allow principal string auditions every 2 years; Section 4.1 was revised to allow a player to miss only one regular rehearsal and dress rehearsal is mandatory; Section 6 was revised to declare that the Players Committee serve as the Grievance Committee rather than assigning this responsibility to a "grievance committee;" A new Appendix D was added to describe the Players Committee in terms of membership, meeting schedule, and responsibilities. Many previous Board activities were removed from this handbook and the PC assumed some of these responsibilities with respect to facilitating auditions as outlined in Section 3.

Members of the 2009 Players' Committee:

Carolyn Ford	brass
Mike Roper	brass
Ginger Hedrick	woodwinds
Kristin Stordahl-Kanda	woodwinds
Monica Sales	strings
Victoria Bryan	strings
Nola Melcher	strings
Marilyn De Queiroz	strings

In December 2009, sections were added to clarify existing responsibilities of principal players, and to include new responsibilities with respect to holding sectional rehearsals and providing bowings to section string players by the first rehearsal of the cycle. New sections were added to provide procedures and mechanisms for challenging Principal players within sections.

In February 2010, a survey was taken of the orchestra to clarify the responsibilities of the Music Director and section leaders. Section 2.2 was added, and Section 2.3 expanded.

In September 2010, the title of the Handbook was changed to reflect the name change of the organization to Boulder Symphony Orchestra.

Music Director
Devin Patrick Hughes

Members of the 2010-2011 Season Players' Committee:

Carolyn Ford	brass
Mike Roper	brass
Scott Hamiton	woodwinds
Kristin Stordahl-Kanda	woodwinds
Nola Melcher	strings
Marilyn De Queiroz	strings

Appendix A

NTS Membership

(Updated at the beginning of each season)

Appendix B

NTS Board of Directors

(Updated at the beginning of each season)

Appendix C

NTS List of Substitute and Extra Players

(Updated at the beginning of each season)

Appendix D

NTS Player's Committee

A.1 Membership

The membership of the Player's Committee (PC) shall consist of four orchestra members from the string section, two orchestra members from the woodwind section, and two orchestra members from the brasswind section. Each member of the PC will have one vote in matters that require a vote, with any tie being broken by the Music Director.

The representatives from each section (strings, woodwinds, brasswinds) will be selected by that section at the beginning of each season. Substitute representatives may cast votes, if arrangements are made clear before the applicable meeting. There is no maximum number of seasons for which an active orchestra member may be a member of the PC.

The chair of the PC will be elected from within its membership by a majority vote of the membership at each fall meeting.

A.2 Meetings

Meetings will be held once in the fall, and once in the spring, and any other time deemed necessary by the PC Chair or the Orchestra Board. All orchestra members are welcome to attend the meetings, but voting will be restricted as outlined above.

A.3 Areas of Responsibility

The Players' Committee shall make decisions with regards to the following policies that affect orchestra personnel directly:

- Changes to the content of this Players' Handbook
- Enforcement of the policies contained in this Players' Handbook, including the handling of grievances by orchestra personnel, as outlined in Section 5

All matters will be decided by a simple majority, with any tie being broken by the Music Director.

A.4 The Player's Committee Membership, April 2009

Chair: Monica Sales

Strings: Victoria Bryan, Nola Melcher, Marilyn de Queiroz, Monica Sales

Woodwinds: Ginger Hedrick, Kristin Stordahl-Kanda

Brass: Carolyn Ford, Mike Roper