

New Brunswick
Youth Orchestra



Orchestre des jeunes
du Nouveau-Brunswick

NBYO PLAYERS' HANDBOOK 2022-23

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1. Introduction

This Handbook introduces the New Brunswick Youth Orchestra (NBYO) members to the Orchestra’s objectives, structure, and policies. Your participation in the NBYO demands considerable commitment. This handbook will guide you through a typical Orchestra season and will outline our rules of conduct and behavior.

2. Objectives

The NBYO provides educational opportunities and excellent musical training for young musicians through participation in rehearsals and performances of orchestral repertoire. The NBYO is a provincial organization and membership is drawn from all over New Brunswick and also some members from elsewhere who are attending university in New Brunswick. Our season schedule runs from early fall until early spring, plus occasional special events involving the entire orchestra or smaller ensembles. The NBYO is fortunate to be working closely with professional musicians (some of whom are NBYO alumni) in order to fulfill our goal of encouraging music appreciation and excellence in musicianship among our young people.

3. Organization and Corporate Structure

Founded in 1965, the NBYO is an incorporated, registered charitable organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Officers of the corporation include the Chair of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer, Secretary, and Treasurer. There are two classes of “members” of the organization, namely Governing Members and Associate Members, and such members are admitted into membership in accordance with the provisions of the by-laws. Associate membership in the Company is available to youth orchestra musicians who are nineteen (19) years of age or older and whose application for admission as an Associate Member has received the approval of the Board of Directors.

The President & Chief Executive Officer is charged with the general supervision of the affairs of the organization and is answerable to the Board of Directors. Various professional staff is appointed by the CEO to manage the day-to-day responsibilities of the orchestra including musical leadership, operations, finance and administration, fundraising, communications, and others.

Additional support for the orchestra’s operations comes from its regional committees, consisting mostly of parents, in various towns and cities in New Brunswick. Currently, there are active organizations in the Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, Bathurst, and Edmundston/Grand Falls areas.

4. The Orchestra

The NBYO is a large symphony orchestra. The sizes of our orchestra sections are currently as follows:

Violin: 20-24
Viola: 6-8
Cello: 8-10
Double Bass: 4-8
Oboe/English horn: 3-6
Flute/piccolo: 4-6
Clarinet/bass clarinet: 4-6
Bassoon: 4-6
French horn: 5-8
Trumpet: 4-6
Trombone: 4-6
Tuba: 1-2
Percussion: 3-5
Keyboard: (drawn from the orchestra)
Harp: 1-2

The numbers vary from one year to the next, depending on musician availability and repertoire. The regular and alternate members make up the orchestra membership, and

references to the “orchestra” or “members” in this document mean both regular and alternate members unless otherwise indicated.

An audition panel headed by the Music Director (Conductor) hears auditions every spring. All positions are open at the end of every season; those who wish to return must re-audition. Also, promotion within the section is not guaranteed, and members’ readmission to the orchestra is based on the results of the annual audition. Those who are unable to audition in person may send a recorded audition to the Orchestra Manager. Details of upcoming auditions are made available each spring.

5. Orchestra Placement & Section Principals

Your placement within the section is determined by your relative ability and aptitude. Generally speaking, the more able and experienced players are placed higher in the section. Seating within the section from one year to the next is not guaranteed. The musical director and faculty may make changes within the section as they see fit. Movement within a section may be influenced by musical ability, attitude, work habits and preparation for rehearsals.

Section principals are appointed as leaders of other musicians in their section. Some sections have co-principals or rotating principals for particular works or concerts. Additional duties of section principals include ensuring all members of the section have the correct music, bowings, and fingerings, as well as other music-related duties outlined under “Music: Preparation and Practice.”

The Concertmaster (who also leads the 1st violin section) has the privilege of acting as the Orchestra’s musical leader. In addition to regular duties as section leader, he/she is responsible for tuning the Orchestra, and may occasionally act as a spokesperson for NBYO.

6. Regional Chamber Ensembles

There are occasions when the NBYO is asked to provide chamber music for an event (for example, string quartet, brass trio, or woodwind quintet ... etc.). We encourage you to form small chamber ensembles with other NBYO musicians in your area. In some cases, such performances will represent community service to friends, donors, and partners of the NBYO, and a way of giving back to the community that so generously supports us. In other cases, a fee or honorarium will be offered by the organization requesting the service. It is the responsibility of the chamber ensemble to purchase/find and distribute music, organize rehearsals, transportation to and from the event, and importantly, to ensure that you have borrowed an official NBYO banner to display during your performance. If you have formed such a group please inform the Orchestra manager.

7. Alternates

NBYO alternates are members who are considered to be not quite at the level of

experience of their section, but for whom we believe participation will be beneficial to their musical development. Alternates are required to be at every regular rehearsal or concert but are not guaranteed a position in the orchestra during public performances. For this, they have the right to audition for any of the repertoires the weekend of the concert, and the Musical Director will determine if they will perform.

Notably, many of our best players started off as alternates, and through perseverance, practice, and hard work, they were eventually appointed to positions as regulars and in some cases, section leaders.

8. Repertoire

Our repertoire is symphonic music, chosen to complement the strengths and talents of the Orchestra. New repertoire will be introduced over the course of the season, but most of it will be handed out before the first rehearsal. Periodically, the NBYO collaborates with guest artists of various musical genres to perform at special events and/or annual fundraising concerts.

9. Rehearsal and Concert Schedule

Since NBYO members are from various areas of New Brunswick, the NBYO gathers in different locations throughout the season, such as Moncton, Saint John, Fredericton, Bathurst, Edmundston, Grand Falls... etc. The NBYO season consists of the following events:

NBYO Camp Week & Mini Camp: A week of rehearsals in late August or early September, followed by a 2-day weekend rehearsal in mid-September.

Rehearsal/Concert Weekends (“RCW”): Rehearsals are Friday evening, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning. Concerts are typically Sundays at 2:00 pm (except Moncton Rehearsal/Concert Weekend is typically Saturday at 7:00 pm – AND Sunday afternoon in a nearby community) RCWs are held once per month from September - March, except December. For some RCWs, it may be necessary for members to miss school/work on Friday, depending on the distance to be traveled and weather conditions. Please make these arrangements at the beginning of the season.

Day Rehearsals: Scheduled on 2-3 Saturdays between the regularly scheduled weekends.

The NBYO’s complete and up-to-date schedule can be found on our website, in the Google Drive folder, as well as in your acceptance email.

There might also be optional special events in which regular members are strongly encouraged to participate. We will do our best to notify you early on of these.

10. Transportation

You are responsible for your own transportation to and from NBYO events. A contact list of orchestra members in your region will be sent out at the beginning of the year. Please use your regional contact list to coordinate carpools whenever possible.

11. Attendance

Each musician plays a valuable and essential role in the orchestra and therefore, as a member of the NBYO, rehearsals are compulsory. It is your responsibility as an orchestra member to make NBYO events a priority in your schedule.

Please plan your year accordingly to avoid scheduling conflicts with other activities. We encourage you to advise your directors, teachers, and coaches of your NBYO schedule, at the beginning of the school year. Orchestra members will only be excused from rehearsal and/or concerts in the case of illness or family emergency. If you feel you are absolutely unable to attend an NBYO event, you must request permission from the

Orchestra Manager at least two weeks in advance. The NBYO reserves the right to accept or refuse your request to be absent from rehearsals and concerts. If you are unable to attend rehearsals on a particular weekend, you will not usually be permitted to play that weekend's concert. In any case, absences are taken very seriously and should be a rare exception. Requested absences may result in an audition and/or change in the seating within your section and unexcused absences may result in your dismissal from the orchestra.

We do our best to remind all music professionals in New Brunswick of our rehearsal/concert schedule and it is listed on our website. Our regular season ends in early spring, as we are sensitive to the fact that music festivals and university exams occur in April and May when your availability might be compromised.

12. Music: Preparation & Practice

You will have access to most of the season's music before the first rehearsal week, and the rest will be added to Google Drive in PDF format throughout the season as needed. Musicians are responsible for printing their own parts unless a special request has been made to the Orchestra Manager well in advance.

You owe it to yourself and to the others in the orchestra to come to events well prepared, meaning:

- Always bring your own **music stand** (clearly marked with your name) to every event; they are not always available at the venue.
- Always bring a **reusable water bottle** to rehearsal. It is important to stay hydrated, and plastic bottles will almost never be provided.
- **Be on time** for rehearsals – make sure your parents and your host family (where you are billeted) are aware of the start and pickup times,

and that you are aware of the time of the next rehearsal when on snack and meal breaks. Please allow adequate time to set up and warm up before rehearsal.

- Always make sure your instrument is in good condition before the weekend starts and **bring necessary accessories** (such as reeds, rosin, valve oil, slide grease, extra strings, and repair tools);
- You absolutely must **practice** your part between weekends and listen to recordings of the repertoire.
- Remember to bring your **music and folder** every weekend, even if you share a stand.
- Have at least one sharpened **pencil** with an eraser for marking up your music – keep it in your folder;
- During rehearsals, **listen carefully and attentively** to the Conductor, sectional coaches, and the Orchestra Manager.
- It is required that all NBYO musicians take **private lessons** throughout the season. Please ask your orchestra manager for instructors in your area.

Outside of the NBYO, we highly recommend that you participate in other learning opportunities, such as summer music camps, school, and community orchestras, or chamber ensembles. As NBYO members, you are required to continue your participation in your local ensembles (school band, regional orchestras, choir, etc.) In most cases, NBYO musicians are leaders in their local music ensembles, and you are expected to be strong contributors to those groups.

13. Instrument Preparation & Care

NBYO members are responsible for maintaining their own instruments and ensuring that they are in excellent working condition. Percussionists must supply their sticks and mallets, and perhaps, at times, the odd small piece of equipment, if requested and available. If an auxiliary instrument (such as piccolo, English horn, or bass clarinet) is needed, the NBYO will help the player to obtain the instrument.

The NBYO owns a few instruments, which may be available to a player without one. Maintenance, insurance, and necessary repairs of any borrowed or rented instrument are the responsibility of the member in whose custody the instrument has been entrusted, including consequential damage. An instrument release form must be signed and returned prior to borrowing an NBYO instrument.

Strings: Please ensure that you have extra strings, an extra bow, and a rosin. Ensure all mechanical parts (bridge, tuning pegs) are in good condition.

Woodwinds: Please ensure that you have 2 or 3 broken-in reeds several days before the weekend.

Brass: Please ensure that all tuning slides, valves, spit valves, and trombone slides

are always in working order. Bring necessary accessories: mutes, valve oil, slide oil, and cleaning equipment (snakes, brushes, polishing cloth... etc.) Clean your entire horn at least twice per year.

Percussionists: Please communicate with one another about parts and equipment. Percussionists are required to assist with set-up and tear down and therefore *must arrive at least 30 minutes earlier than scheduled and can expect to stay 30 minutes later at the end of the rehearsal or concert.*

14. Self-Preparation & Care

Music-making is a physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding practice, and therefore musicians should continually review basic techniques and take care of themselves. The NBYO helps to educate and actively prevent musician-related injuries such as repetitive strain injuries, tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, or lip muscle problems with the following procedures:

- Drink plenty of water: Bring a reusable water bottle to every rehearsal.
- Sleep: We recommend 7 – 9 hours of sleep per night.
- Eat clean: Avoid processed foods and refined sugars.
- Exercise: We recommend at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day
- Warm-up: Consult with your private teacher and sectional coach for an efficient warm-up routine. For all musicians, stretching is highly recommended before and after rehearsal.
- Time management: Keep an agenda, plan ahead, and be organized. Academic obligations (such as assignments, projects, papers, studying, etc.) should be completed in advance of NBYO rehearsals/concerts. Academic obligations are not an excuse for missing NBYO events. Our rehearsal/concert weekends are intense and sometimes do not have access to Wi-Fi.
- Continually review basic techniques: how to hold your instrument, your bow, deep breathing ... etc.
- Practice a tall, balanced posture.
- Consult with your teacher, sectional coach, musical director, or orchestra manager if you feel any sign of a strain or stress injury (pinching, numbness, etc.)

15. Concert Dress Code / Decorum

The concert dress guidelines outlined here are designed to ensure that everyone is dressed professionally. In NBYO, concert dress is 'concert black', and for our purposes is as follows (**note** - this dress code applies to concerts only, and therefore does not apply to rehearsals):

Options:

- Formal tux or black suit (no vests);
- White dress shirt;
- Black bow tie (does not have to be tied manually, should be pre-tied with a strap. Avoid clip-ons - they don't work very well);
- Black dress socks;
- Black dress shoes
- Full-length black dress (to the ankles) OR full-length black skirt (to the ankles) OR black dress pants;
- If the skirt has a slit—the slit should be on the side away from the audience;
- Black shirt with $\frac{3}{4}$ length or full sleeves. Avoid low-cut, tight, or revealing styles;
- Black stockings/socks;
- Black dress shoes (no sandal-style shoes)

Everyone:

- No jeans, sweatpants, or yoga pants;
- Long hair is to be tied back and off the face. Long bangs should be pinned back;
- Beards should be neatly trimmed;
- Religious headdresses should be black if possible;
- Avoid flashy jewelry or other items that might be distracting to the audience

If you have difficulty obtaining or choosing concert wear, please notify us; we can help!

Decorum during concerts:

- Maintain a tall, balanced posture at all times.
- Facial expression: Keep a straight face in the event of a mistake from you or another musician - pretend it never happened. Most audience members will not notice the mistake but will notice your reaction if there is one. And don't be afraid to smile! You should be proud of your accomplishments.
- Sit quietly and attentively during rests.
- You can expect to sit off stage if you are tacet (not playing a particular work) however, remain alert for when you have to go back on.
- No chewing gum, candies, or food of any kind during the concert. Please ensure that you hydrate and nourish yourself before the concert.

16. Billeting guidelines

****TBD for 2022-23 Season****

17. Lost and found

Since the NBYO rehearses and performs in many different venues, we do not maintain an official lost and found. You **must** keep your belongings organized and stored safely in a backpack or small suitcase at all times. To avoid the loss of valuable items, please double-check that you have everything before you leave.

18. Communication

During the course of the season, you can expect to receive a number of messages from the Orchestra Manager. Email remains our primary means of communication; **You are responsible for ensuring that your email account is reliable and in good working order and for monitoring your email on a regular basis during the season.**

Ultimately, the NBYO is not responsible for missed messages, and you are responsible for maintaining your computer and email system and acting on messages from us.

19. Inclement Weather

The NBYO maintains a policy of “safety first” when dealing with the possibility of bad weather during the winter months, which unfortunately is a fact of life in New Brunswick. Depending on the weather, the following scenarios are possible:

- Delay in the start of the event (e.g., starting a weekend on the Saturday morning instead of the preceding Friday evening)
- Cancellation or alteration of the remainder of an event, due to bad weather which may not have been predicted but which occurs during the course of the event
- Outright cancellation of the entire event, in severe cases.

The above examples are not an exhaustive list but serve to illustrate various scenarios. In the event of such a situation, the Orchestra Manager will notify all members by e-mail.

In the case of weather which may be considered borderline, we may decide to proceed with caution: we would, for example, schedule a normal start, but encourage individual drivers to decide whether to proceed or to wait until the weather clears.

20. Fundraising

Each year, there will be fundraising event(s) to help support the work of NBYO, to keep fees down, and provide needed funds for annual operations and bursaries. All members are expected to participate in fundraising activities.

21. Rules of conduct

The information in this Handbook outlines our expectations of NBYO members. The most important of these rules are summarized as rules below, and apply to all regular and alternate members of the Orchestra, without exception, and for the benefit of everyone:

Attendance: Very simply, attendance is compulsory for all members. Emergencies such as illness or death in the family are valid exceptions, but in any case please let us know as soon as possible of your anticipated absence to allow us as much time as

possible for a substitute to be prepared to play the concert for that weekend.

Preparation/organization: If we find you are chronically unprepared, and disorganized, your continued membership in the orchestra may be compromised.

Drugs and alcohol: needless to say, illegal possession and/or consumption of drugs and alcohol are forbidden during NBYO weekends. This rule applies to both licensed facilities and private homes. Anyone in breach of this rule will probably be dismissed from the orchestra.

Billeting, after-hours socializing, and general behavior: Improper behavior, towards your billeting family or with other members, will not be tolerated. Members are to act reasonably and responsibly throughout NBYO events; we expect you to conduct yourself in a professional manner according to the Acceptance and Agreement you signed.

If you are in breach of any of the rules in this handbook, you will be subject to a verbal or written reprimand and in severe or persistent cases, possible dismissal from the Orchestra. All rules and guidelines in this Handbook have been established to allow our organizers and volunteers to conduct our events effectively and for the safety and comfort of Orchestra members.

22. Orchestra Fees

The Provincial youth orchestra's annual operating budget is approximately \$200,000. The budget includes costs for Artistic & Education (e.g. faculty coaching, production, facility rentals, travel, guest artist, and more), Marketing & Fund Raising, and Administration.

The NBYO actively solicits support from generous donors and sponsors, and charges admission to the concerts, accounting for 80% of our annual budget. This allows us to keep orchestra fees low, (i.e. only 20% of the budget). Each orchestra musician receives a bursary of approximately \$1,600. The orchestra requires a financial contribution from each member. The fees are as follows:

Regular member fee: \$600

Alternate member fee: \$300

If you are not in a position to pay the audition or membership fees, there is a further bursary available through the New Brunswick Youth Orchestra Foundation (NBYOF). You may request an NBYOF application from the orchestra manager, which must be submitted **at least one week prior to August's first rehearsal.**

***Refunds:** Musicians may withdraw from the NBYO and receive a refund, according to the following schedule:*

- Before Camp Week: full membership fee, less a \$25 administration charge

- After Camp Week: 60% of total membership fee
- After Mini Camp: 40% of total membership fee
- After first Rehearsal/Concert Weekend: no refund

23. Conclusion

To summarize, you are now a member of an elite orchestra and you represent the organization and the province in the same way that any provincial sports team or other cultural organization would. The impression you make on those who attend your performances will be lasting. The NBYO is an excellent youth orchestra, and you, as a member, are one of its ambassadors. The Lieutenant-Governor, our Honorary Chair, will be attending at least some of our concerts, as will political and industry leaders, NBYO alumni, your teachers, friends and relatives, and many other music appreciators.

We are sure that you'll find your experience musically rewarding, personally fulfilling, and, most of all, a lot of fun! You and your parents should always feel free to address any ideas, suggestions, or concerns you may have to the Orchestra manager, musical director, regional volunteer, or board member. The NBYO aims to establish an atmosphere where you will feel safe and comfortable in expressing yourself musically and otherwise. We recognize that your well-being will result in the collective success of NBYO.