

## Choir Resources: **Your Sound Setup**

This leaflet is to help you improve the sound you're able to hear when using the various rehearsal aids, which are discussed in a separate leaflet "**Rehearsal Aids**" ([HERE](#)).

### **Your own hearing**

Firstly, if you have any hearing impairment (and many people do, without knowing) it may be helpful to know that most commonly, it's the high frequencies that are lost. The result is that you may find it difficult to make out what people are saying even though they are not speaking quietly. You may be missing high frequency sounds like "th" "s" "p" "f/ph" etc, that normally make speech intelligible. If you're having any difficulty hearing your TV, try increasing the treble rather than the volume. You may then find that the sound is much clearer. You'll probably find that you don't need the volume so high! Obviously, if you develop hearing problems, you should contact your GP.

Similarly, if ever you're speaking to someone with hearing difficulty, try to ensure they can see your mouth and try to speak clearly, rather than loudly. If you're using a microphone, remember those high frequencies. Most of us recall being unable to hear lectures, speeches at weddings or announcements at train stations, despite adequate volume, because of missing high frequencies. Boomy bass sounds tend to go everywhere, whereas high frequency sounds are much more directional, only picked up properly when people use microphones correctly. Your position relative to the orientation of speakers will also affect what you can hear.

### **Listening to Music (CD)**

If you are using a CD in a HiFi system, the situation is simple, adjust the **volume** and/or the **tone** (ie the balance between treble and bass). If your speakers are good, that will do the trick. If your speakers aren't so good, or you don't have the option of increasing the volume, a pair of reasonable headphones should work very well. Take good care, though, to follow the manufacturer's instructions re keeping the headphone volume down and avoiding prolonged use, so that you avoid damaging your hearing.

### **Listening to Music (YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music, MP3 or similar files)**

For this, you'll be using a computer of some sort: desktop / laptop / ipad / smartphone (a smartphone is a computer). Some desktop computers have good built in sound systems, in which case, you won't need further amplification. Headphones, connected to the computer, using a jack of the correct size connected to the headphones port will suffice for most, but that involves being attached to your computer (unless both are Bluetooth enabled – see below).

The best option for many is a separate means of amplification. This enables you to listen to your music whilst wandering around the room or getting jobs done etc.

There are, broadly, 4 options for connect your computer (including smartphones) to separate amplification:-

1. **by a cable to your HiFi/sound system:** - using a headphone jack in the computer headphone output port at one end and whatever connections, if any, are required at the HiFi AUX IN end (that depends on your HiFi system).
2. **with Bluetooth to your HiFi/sound system:** assuming both your computer and Hi Fi / sound system have Bluetooth
3. **by a cable to an amplifier:** - this is the same as 1 at the computer end, but will need a jack or jacks that fit the amplifier input.
4. **Bluetooth to an amplifier** - this is the same as 2 or Bluetooth headphones

Some amplifiers are Bluetooth enabled (i.e. are wireless), others need a cable and some can use both. A relative or friend with a little experience of HiFi or computers or Bluetooth should be able to sort this out for you without any difficulty, but make sure they see this leaflet. However, if you are struggling, don't worry, just ask one of the committee members, who will direct you to someone within the choir who can help you.

**Tip:** if you're using a cable, make sure it's made for this purpose and is a good length, say a few metres. These are available from some electrical shops, HiFi centres, many music shops or via the internet and are inexpensive.

## Hearing your Part

Obviously, a soprano, trying to hear a soprano line, might prefer more treble/less bass than a bass singer. The optimal sound for us as individuals depends on what sound we're looking for, the nature of our hearing and the characteristics of the equipment we're using. So, do experiment, and find out what works best for you!

*This is one of a series of leaflets to help members. If you feel that this leaflet can be improved or that a leaflet on any other topic would be useful to some members, please let anyone in the committee know.*