

Each singer will need:

1. The guide track provided by Darius for you to sing along to. This will be a piano accompaniment with your voice part played louder (also good for practising before recording). You can also listen to the guide tracks (one for each voice part) on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Concert Arrangements](#)
2. A device to play the guide track you have been provided with. The device may be a laptop, a tablet or a PC.
3. A second device for recording. This can be a handheld voice recorder, a smartphone with a recording app* or a computer with recording software**. **It's important to remove any magnetic case from the device as this can create interference. Make sure the microphone is uncovered and facing singing position.**
4. Over-ear headphones (preferable to earphones/open backed) with the relevant cable (more reliable than wireless which may cause interference) which needs to be plugged into the first device

Setup

1. Choose a quiet space (carpeted rooms preferable for sound absorption) and set up away from any windows. Avoid recording in bathrooms and rooms with slanted walls. Listen out for and remove any clocks or buzzing electronic devices. *You may not hear these, but they will probably be audible in your recording and may even cause interference.* If recording in a room with a piano, do put the damper pedal on.
2. Get yourself a secure music stand or table with a stack of books at the height of your mouth. Place both devices on top, ensuring that the microphone on the second device is pointed directly, and centrally, towards your mouth about 1.5 metres away.
3. Plug headphones into the first device and have the guide track ready to play and practice with at the right volume for you. Place one headphone over your ear and have the other behind your free ear (so not to leak any sound into the room). One ear will hear your guide track while the other can hear your tuning and projection into the room.

Ready to Record

1. **Make a test recording of your loudest singing** and make sure to listen back to it via your headphones; to do this you will need to change headphones over from the first device to the second. If it sounds distorted you are recording too close OR you have the gain up too high. Try moving further back from the recording device if there is no option to lower your microphone's input level. Try again until you don't distort - this will ensure that we will need less retakes :-)

2. If you are using your smartphone to record, put it on airplane mode to avoid incoming calls whilst recording. If your device screen times out after a few minutes, you should be able to change this in 'settings' – eg in 'display', or similar.

Good practice when recording

Recording our individual voices at home is very different from live singing in a group. We no longer need to project into a large concert hall or over an orchestra / organ. For this reason it's important to make some adjustments to our approach to singing remotely to ensure we get the best results for the production team putting us back together:

- Our devices will pick up our consonants and sibilants very clearly, often resulting in these sounding louder than our sustained vowels. Please try to keep your consonants subtle and brief (avoid rolling rrrrrs). There is no doubt they will be heard when lined up with everyone else.
- Less dynamic extremes will make for a more reliable balance across the choir. Be careful not to force the sound or to sing so quietly the sound becomes unsupported.

Recording

Recording is a brilliant way to become a better singer!

You may find that you have to make retakes of your voice part if you make silly errors, and this can be frustrating. However, don't be disheartened, this is all part of the process and it will get easier the more you do it - and it is also a great way to practise! I have no doubt that you will hear huge progress in your voice in a matter of weeks, and that your confidence will grow.

Enjoy!

**NB. Darius has advised that you don't need to download the software listed below, though they are good for the technically minded. You can use the voice recorder that's already on your mobile phone, or download any simple voice recording app.*

*Recommended **Free** Apps for smartphones:

Motiv Audio: https://www.shure.com/en-GB/products/software/shure_plus_motiv made by the microphone company Shure.

Make sure 'mic setup' is selected and then click next. Select the line icon (for recording singing without a limiter or compressor) and then scroll right to select '**mono cardioid**'. Lower the mic gain and sing your loudest note – you want your maximum volume to be no higher than -6db in the grey box. You can click the padlock symbol to lock these settings so that you don't need to adjust every time.

Recommended **Free Software for laptops & computers

Audacity: <https://www.audacityteam.org/>