

You're one of our guests' first impressions of BASC – make it a great one! Help her feel welcome and introduce her to our style and chorus, but don't overwhelm her with too much information at once. As a voicer, your job is to determine where her comfort zone is, her range and vocal characteristics, and to recommend a voice part in which to start. Then bring her back to the membership desk. Try to accomplish all of this in about 10-15 minutes, but take it slow if your guest is extremely nervous or insecure. With young singers, you may only need to do steps 1-7.

Step by step for guests:

1. **Bring a pitch pipe** and a smile. Take a minute to get to know your guest. How did she find out about us? What kind of singing has she done in the past? This is great info to share with membership and the director.
2. **Explain what you're doing** and why. We want to make sure everyone is singing a part that is well suited to her voice and that she'll enjoy.
3. **Describe the 4 voice parts briefly**, but don't get hung up on too much barbershop discussion. Avoid stereotyping the voice parts.
4. **Sing up and down a scale with her at first**, to help her get comfortable singing in front of you. Then let her sing up and down by herself. Determine her upper and lower limits. *Check against the pitch pipe and the voice ranges for each part.*
5. **Continually reassure** and give positive feedback. Avoid making it feel like a test.
6. **Have her sing something in her "comfort zone"** (let her choose). Check her range against the pitch pipe and the part ranges. ("Happy Birthday" is a good song because it's well known and encompasses an octave.) Ask if this really felt comfortable, and give her a chance to change keys if she wants to. Try to figure out her comfort zone.
7. **Listen to her speaking voice and other clues** about musical background, etc. Most singers will be Leads or Baritones, and sometimes a "Lead personality" or "Baritone personality" jumps right out. But don't be too quick to stereotype – sometimes people just need time to blossom. If she can hit the lower Bass notes with any comfort at all, encourage her to try Bass. If she insists she wants to sing the high part, be sure she understands that Tenor is not the same as soprano and does not usually have the melody.
8. **Harmonize with her.** If you have time and she seems open to the idea, have her sing a simple song like "You are My Sunshine" or any nursery rhyme or folk song. "Happy birthday" also works. Tell her to keep singing the melody, and you make up a simple harmony to go with it. (Practice this ahead of time, if you've never done it before.) It doesn't have to be perfect, just something to check whether she can hold onto a melody while you sing a harmony around her.

When finished, suggest that she try the voice part you think she's best suited for, but let her know she can change voice parts during the night, or next week, if she wants to. Then bring her back to the membership desk and show her which notes to follow on the printed page.

TYPICAL VOICE RANGES AND QUALITIES

Adult Tenor

- range from **F above middle C up to high G**
- lighter quality, minimal vibrato, or ability to control it; usually higher speaking voice
- may have sung *soprano* but needs a harmonizing quality, not soloist

Adult Lead

- range from **A below middle C up to D above high C**
- clarity and projection
- may have sung *alto* or *soprano*

Adult Baritone

- range from **G below middle C up to high C**
- blending quality and ability to harmonize
- may have sung *alto* or *soprano*

Adult Bass

- range from **D below middle C to G above middle C**
- clarity and projection; usually low speaking voice
- may have sung *alto* or *men's tenor*

Young Woman Tenor

- range from **G above middle C up to A above high C**
- lighter quality, minimal vibrato (or ability to control it)
- may have sung *soprano* but needs a harmonizing quality, not soloist

Young Woman Lead

- range from **middle C to E above high C**
- clarity and projection, confidence in carrying the melody
- may have sung *alto* or *soprano*

Young Woman Baritone

- range from **B below middle C to D above high C**
- blending quality and ability to harmonize
- may have sung *alto* or *second soprano*

Young Woman Bass

- range from **G below middle C up to high C**
- clarity and projection; often lower speaking voice
- may have sung *alto* or *men's tenor*

