

## CHECKLIST FOR MUSIC SELECTION:

Rate the following from 1-5 with 1 being weak and 5 being strong.

Song Title: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_ Interesting melody line?
- \_\_\_ Each voice part performing in her optimal range most of the time?  
Lead? \_\_\_ Bass? \_\_\_ Baritone? \_\_\_ Tenor? \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Smooth, singable part lines for Lead? \_\_\_ Bass? \_\_\_ Baritone? \_\_\_ Tenor? \_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Strong musical climax? (Ballad lyrics create tension for emotional impact leading to a strong musical/lyrical climax?)
- \_\_\_ Strong intro. that sets up the story line?
- \_\_\_ Strong tag that reinforces the ending?
- \_\_\_ Good potential for dynamics?
- \_\_\_ Effective tempo possibilities?
- \_\_\_ Potential for effective choreography?
- \_\_\_ Few or simple key changes?
- \_\_\_ Clear message/tells an interesting story?
- \_\_\_ Message appropriate to the performing group?
- \_\_\_ Physical/energy demands match the chorus'/quartet's abilities?
- \_\_\_ Rhythmic and dynamic patterns match those of the words?
- \_\_\_ Rise and fall of the melody fits the story told in the lyrics?
- \_\_\_ Embellishments add interest but do not hinder the performance?
- \_\_\_ Challenges in the voice parts match strengths of the chorus/quartet?
- \_\_\_ Chord voicings strong?
- \_\_\_ Strong barbershop flavor? (Chord progressions create interesting and varied harmony appropriate to the barbershop style?)

### Use in Repertoire:

- \_\_\_ Contest ballad?
- \_\_\_ Contest uptune?
- \_\_\_ Show opener?
- \_\_\_ Show theme related?
- \_\_\_ Show finale?
- \_\_\_ Swing ballad?
- \_\_\_ Comedy/variety?
- \_\_\_ Heavy ballad?
- \_\_\_ Driving uptune?
- \_\_\_ Choreography/staging showcase?
- \_\_\_ Solo?
- \_\_\_ Signature song?

### Special Considerations:

Projected length of learning time? \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching/extra staging time needs? \_\_\_\_\_

## CONTEST SONGS for C and C+ Choruses

Note: These songs are also appropriate for higher scoring choruses and for quartets. The list is not intended to recommend these song choices over others; it only lists several contest appropriate selections that have been performed successfully by choruses at this level.

### UPTUNES:

Back In Those Days Gone By  
Bring Back Those Horse and Buggy Days  
By the Beautiful Sea  
Ev'ry Street's a Boulevard in Old New York  
Everybody's Crazy Over Dixie  
Floatin' Down to Cotton Town  
Give 'Em a Show They'll Never Forget  
He's a Devil in His Own Home Town  
Tomorrow (I'll Be In My Dixie Home)  
I'm Sitting On Top of the World  
Oh, How We Roared in the Twenties  
The Showboat Came to Town  
Take Me Back to the 1920's

### BALLADS

All By Myself  
April Showers  
Chase the Rain Away  
Grandmother's Love Letters  
I Tried to Forget You in Vain  
Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight  
Memories in Vain  
That Wonderful Mother of Mine  
When I Leave the World Behind  
You Can Have Every Light on Broadway

(Compiled by Marge Bailey with the disclaimer that this is only one music judge's opinion. The songs still must be performed well to score well—regardless of how well the arrangement is written!)

## GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING COMPETITION MUSIC

1. Song should have an easy, singable melody within one or two notes of an octave range. Implied harmony is strong barbershop: major triad, barbershop (dominant) seventh, and dominant ninth chords. A sprinkling of secondary chords in passing spots adds interest. Phrase endings, points of resolution, and emphasis words should have strong chords.
2. Arrangement should be within CONTROLLABLE singing range. Under stress, both the dynamic and note ranges of the performer tend to shrink.
3. Check chords. Do they enhance the lyrics? Are they within the controllable singing range of the chorus or quartet?
4. Are there interesting lyrics, particularly if the song is a ballad? Lyrics in an uptune should be fairly easy to articulate while sung at a fast pace.
5. Is the arrangement creative? Are there interesting swipes with the right chord voicings to aid you in your interpretation? Look for other interesting embellishments, keeping in mind your group's capabilities.
6. Check for logical spots to breathe without breaking up thoughts or interrupting the forward flow of the song. Would eliminating one chord of a pick-up or changing it to an eighth note instead of a quarter note leave more space for a breath?
7. Does the introduction set up the story line? Is it creative enough to set the mood and musical scene? Is the tag strong enough to finish the song in a dramatic and exciting way?
8. Is there a musical and lyrical high point? Do they occur simultaneously? If not, does the tag finish the story and leave the audience emotionally satisfied?
9. If a key change is utilized, are the chord progressions logical and easy to hear? Common tones sung in the same voice part during chord progressions are the easiest to hear and tune.
10. Check the time signature. If the song is a ballad, make sure your ad lib (rubato) style of presentation still maintains the basic framework of rhythm. If the song is an up-tempo, be sure it stays in strict tempo for most of the song. Change tempo only for a logical musical reason, NOT to accommodate poor breath habits!
11. If the song is a medley, does it have a basic theme? Is it logical and musically satisfying, with a feeling of continuity and unity?

## SONG TROUBLE-SPOTS

1. **Lead Line is much more than an octave in range.** When this occurs, vocal production problems become much more likely, as well as balance problems in the harmony parts. Harmony inaccuracies are probable.
2. **Jumpy, hard-to-sing melody.** If the lead part is difficult to sing and sing in tune, the other parts will have trouble also.
3. **Melody line transfers.** When this occurs, leads are called upon to sing a harmony part as well as balance differently. The whole balance structure is changed, and inaccuracies can result.
4. **Implied harmony is non-barbershop.** A song ideal for barbershop harmony must call for strong chords with strong voicings. Some songs were not designed for a barbershop setting and have to be manipulated to fit our style. The integrity of the song is lost.
5. **Weak bass line.** Barbershop style chords allow the bass part to sing strong components of the chords, mostly roots and fifths. Any other note of the chord is considered weak and should only be sung for smooth horizontal moving of the part or in passing chords that are leading to stronger voicings.
6. **Monotonous melody line calling for the same chord progressions.** Songs with this problem call for much interpretive skill from the performer. Much time has to be spent to analyze dynamic contrast to add variety.
7. **Any part out of range.** (Particularly lead or bass) This causes many vocal production, balance and harmony accuracy problems.
8. **Chromatic runs, bell chords, key changes and patter.** These arranging tools lend interest and excitement to songs but cause problems for the unwary performer in synchronization, vowel matching and harmony accuracy.
9. **Many lead-ins or pick-up notes for lead or bass.** Can cause synchronization and rhythm problems.
10. **Consistent illogical intervals in any part.** Causes tuning problems.
11. **Unnecessary chord changes.** Elaborate chord progressions without thought for the lyrics or smooth horizontal movement of parts will be difficult to sing.
12. **Over-arranged.** Too many or too complicated swipes which trip up the performer or leave no place to breathe will make the performance sound frantic, messy or breathless. (What seems over-arranged for one person may be handled quite well by another.)

**The best arrangements are fairly EASY TO SING.** A "trouble spot" that shows up during the first three rehearsals will probably continue to be a trouble spot if the fault lies in the song and/or arrangement.

## **Performance Repertoire Construction Worksheet for 20-25” GIG**

1. Hi, Neighbor—Bailey
2. If There's Anybody Here from Out of Town—Briner
3. All Dressed Up With a Broken Heart—Coffman
5. I'm Sorry I Hurt You Last Night—Diamond
6. You Better Stop Calling Me Baby—Diamond
7. I Had Someone Else Before I Had You—Fellows
8. Where Does the Time Go? —Bergman
9. You Better Stop Babyin' Baby
10. You're Just a Flower from an Old Bouquet
11. Johnny Medley
12. Red Hot
13. The Very Thought of You—Briner
14. Barbershop Hello—Lund
15. Send Me the Pillow That You Dream On—Betty Steele
16. Seems Like Old Times
17. May You Always
18. Say It With Music—Edmundson
19. It Had To Be You—Schmidt
20. They Say It's Wonderful—Yazurlo
21. I Believe in Music
22. Hernando's Hideaway—Bailey

**Opener--**

**Up tune--**

**Modern/Recognizable Ballad/Swing--**

**Novelty/Specialty--**

**Barbershop Ballad--**

**Up tune/Medley--**

**Inspirational/Patriotic--**

**Closer--**

## PERSONAL SONG LIST

### *Easier ballads:*

Just a Bundle of Old Love Letters  
Every Day of My Life  
Georgia on My Mind  
Chase the Rain Away  
Even I Need Love  
Back in the Old Routine  
All By Myself

### *Swing:*

When My Baby Smiles at Me  
I Know a Little Bit about a Lot of Things

### *Challenging Ballads;*

OHIMYT  
Thinking of You  
I'm Alone Because I Love You  
That Old Quartet of Mine  
Roses of Yesterday  
Bandstand in Central Park  
If You Had All the World and Its Gold  
We'll Gather Lilacs in the Spring  
What'll I Do?  
If You Love Me  
Once Upon a Time  
When You Come Home To Me  
If I Had My Way  
Who'll Take My Place?  
Old Songs, Old Friends  
I Never Meant to Fall in Love  
My Mother's Eyes  
I've Lost All My Love for You  
If You Should Ever See Johnny  
Crying Myself to Sleep  
Dancing This Dance in the Wrong Romance  
When I Lost You  
Sing Me That Song Again  
Singing Love Songs/Somebody Else  
Sweet Adeline  
Call Me Back, Pal of Mine  
My Mother's Rocking Chair  
My Mother's Eyes  
Here Am I Broken-Hearted  
If We Can't Be the Same Old Sweethearts  
You Are My Sunshine  
Sonny boy  
My Mommy's Still Singing Her Song  
From the First Hello

### *Easier Uptunes:*

Give My Regards to Broadway  
Who's Sorry Now?  
Side by Side  
Smile  
Back in Those Days Gone By  
Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone  
Ten Feet Off the Ground

### *Challenging Up tunes:*

Whatever Happened to the Old Songs  
It's So Hard To Say Goodbye to Yesterday  
Alexander's Band Is Back in Dixie Land  
Are You from Dixie?  
All Bound Round  
Ya Gotta Know How to Love 'em/ I Can't Give  
You Anything But Love  
Changes Medley  
Jeepers Creepers  
How's Ev'ry Little Thing in Dixie  
Flirty Eyes  
(Any Jazz Song)  
How Many Hearts Have You Broken?  
Rhythm Medley  
Two Tickets to Georgia  
South Rampart Street Parade  
Dixie One-Step  
Honey's Lovin' Arms  
Dixieland Band  
Smile Medley  
Moment I Saw Your Eyes  
Cry Baby  
Honey's Lovin' Arms  
Ya Better Stop Babyin' Baby  
After You've Gone Medley  
Undecided  
Ring Out the Bells  
Liar Medley  
My Baby Just Cares for Me  
It's a Sin To Tell a Lie  
Beer Barrel Polka  
Piano Roll Blues  
Goody, Goody