

musicroom

CHORAL PACK

SETTING UP A VIRTUAL CHOIR



DISTRIBUTED BY

HAL • LEONARD®
EUROPE

SETTING UP A VIRTUAL CHOIR

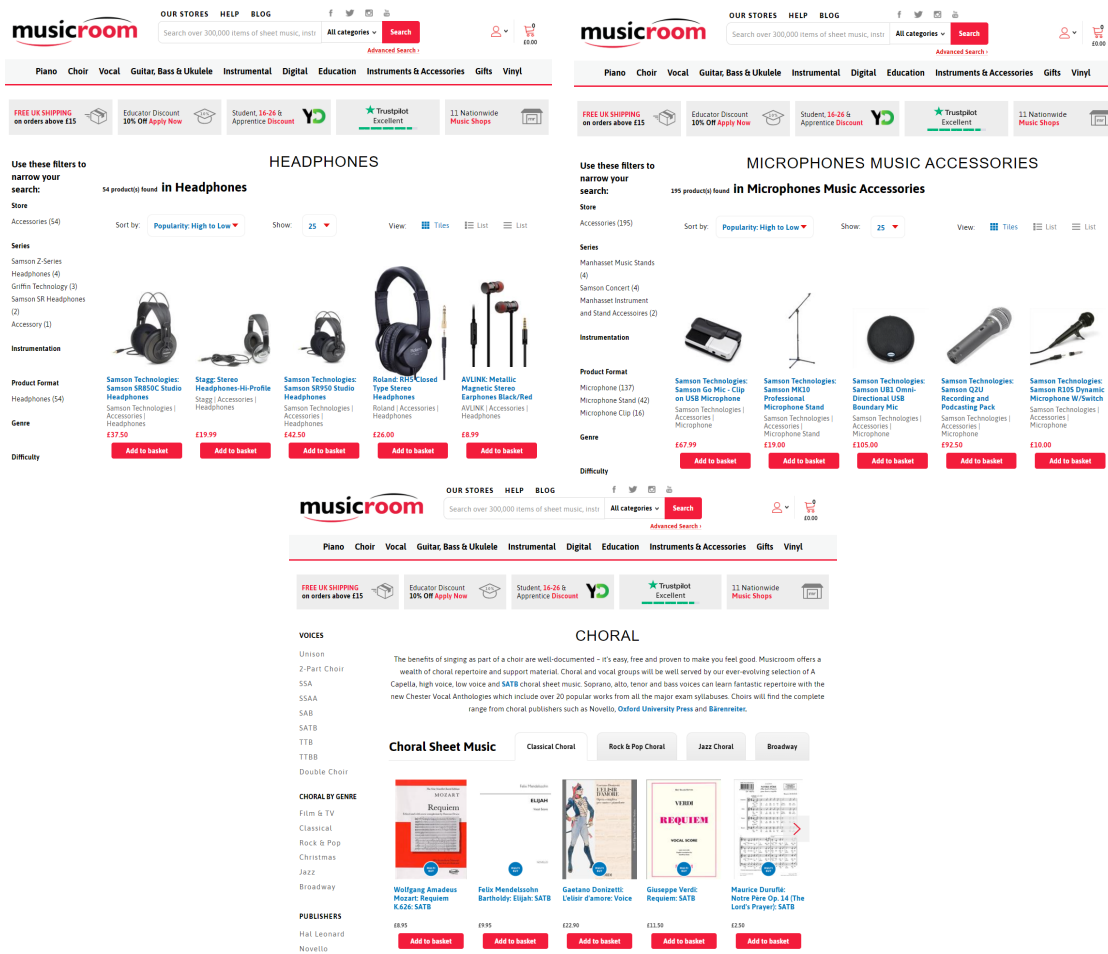
It may not be the same as singing live, but continuing to sing online with your choir can really invigorate your singers. It gives them something to work towards, to look forward to, and it can also be a tremendous learning experience for singers and directors alike.

We wanted to create this choral pack to help guide you through the process of setting up your own choir rehearsal from home. This is in no way a replacement for in-person choral singing, but it should keep you and your choir ticking a long until social distancing measurements have eased up.

Keep calm and sing!

What does the virtual choir instruction manual contain?

In this manual, you'll find everything from instructions on how to set everything up with your choir, tech products you may need to make the session work, through to digital sheet music options as well as physical sheet music.



What are my options for group videos?



FaceTime



Skype



Microsoft Teams

Zoom: <https://zoom.us>

You have a variety of options when putting together a group of singers on video conference. Aside from the obvious options such as FaceTime, Skype and Microsoft Teams, it would seem that Zoom is the most reliable option and the easiest to manage when directing a group of singers. We've included a link above to the site where you can download the app or simply use the video technology online.

Zoom Guide

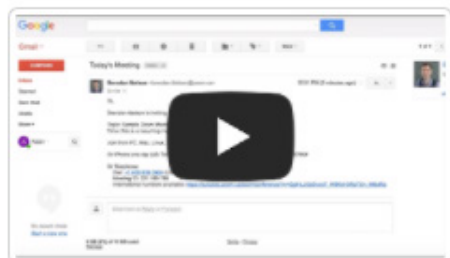


Click the link below to watch a short video guide explaining how to use Zoom:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMUxzrgZvZQ>

Click the link below to watch a Zoom tutorial best configured for choral singing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STXzs5qnPwg>

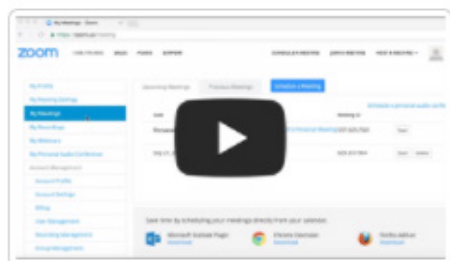
[Click here to view Zoom's official video tutorials](#)

[Click here for information on Zoom pricing](#)



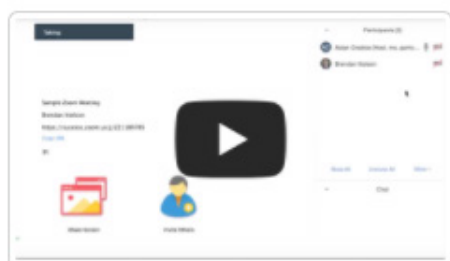
Join a Meeting

[Learn More](#)



Scheduling a Meeting with Zoom Website

[Learn More](#)



Meeting Controls

[Learn More](#)

What do I need in order to take a rehearsal (in order of setting up)?

1. A leader
2. Internet access (whole group)
3. Headphones (preferably with a microphone)
4. Sheet Music

How can I access choral scores quickly?

- Visit www.musicroom.com both physical and digital choral scores
- Physical choral sheets: our standard delivery option is fulfilled by Royal Mail. Deliveries generally arrive 4-5 working days from dispatch, but can occasionally take longer
- Digital choral scores: can be accessed immediately but are available for selected choral scores only

COPYRIGHT: Choirs must make sure that they have purchased the number of copies that they need. You must not just buy one copy of the score and then distribute this digitally to all your singers! Instead, if you have a choir of 30, for instance, you must purchase 30 copies of the score, which may then be digitally distributed to your members only.

Remember: for every sale made, the composer and/or arranger of the score receives a royalty. Illegally distributing the score denies the creators a return on their work and is an infringement of copyright law. Please make sure that every member of the choir has a purchased copy.

The screenshot shows the Musicroom website header. On the left is the Musicroom logo. To its right are links for 'OUR STORES', 'HELP', and 'BLOG'. Further right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Below these is a search bar with the text 'Search over 300,000 items of sheet music, instr' and a dropdown menu for 'All categories'. A red 'Search' button is to the right of the search bar. Below the search bar is a link for 'Advanced Search'. On the far right of the header are icons for a user profile and a shopping cart showing '0' items for '£0.00'. Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: Piano, Choir, Vocal, Guitar, Bass & Ukulele, Instrumental, Digital, Education, Instruments & Accessories, Gifts, and Vinyl.

VOICES

- Unison
- 2-Part Choir
- SSA
- SSAA
- SAB
- SATB
- TTB
- TTBB
- Double Choir

CHORAL BY GENRE

- Film & TV
- Classical
- Rock & Pop
- Christmas
- Jazz
- Broadway

PUBLISHERS

- Hal Leonard
- Novello
- Walton Music

CHORAL

The benefits of singing as part of a choir are well-documented - it's easy, free and proven to make you feel good. Musicroom offers a wealth of choral repertoire and support material. Choral and vocal groups will be well served by our ever-evolving selection of A Capella, high voice, low voice and **SATB** choral sheet music. Soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices can learn fantastic repertoire with the new Chester Vocal Anthologies which include over 20 popular works from all the major exam syllabuses. Choirs will find the complete range from choral publishers such as Novello, [Oxford University Press](#) and [Bärenreiter](#).

Choral Sheet Music

Classical Choral

Rock & Pop Choral

Jazz Choral

Broadway



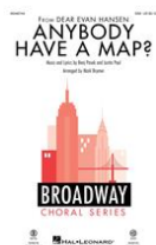
ABBA: Dancing Queen:
Arr. (Roger Emerson):
SATB
£1.99

Add to basket



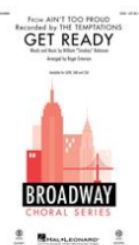
Jeff Richmond: I See Stars:
Arr. (Mark Brymer): SSA
£1.99

Add to basket



Benj Pasek: Anybody Have A Map?:
Arr. (Mac Huff): SSA
£1.99

Add to basket



Smokey Robinson: Get Ready:
Arr. (Roger Emerson): SSA
£1.99

Add to basket



Smokey Robinson: Get Ready:
Arr. (Roger Emerson): SAB
£1.99

Add to basket

Taking an online rehearsal

Taking an online choral rehearsal is very different from rehearsing in a venue with singers when you can see and hear their interactions.

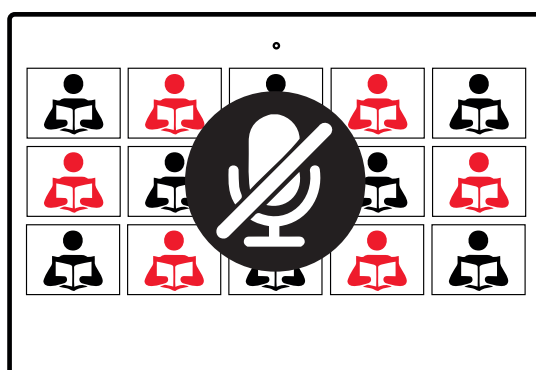
The variety of online meeting sites offer many things, but do not enable singers to hear themselves singing at the same time, owing to the different latency speeds of different computers. Hence, before you begin, become familiar with the mute button – you will need it! It may be tempting to ask your choir to unmute for certain sections, but it can be extremely off-putting for the singers, and is almost impossible to sing along to.

If you are rehearsing with children, you will need to consider online safety, and put in place rules to ensure your rehearsal is a safe environment, (for example, requiring parents to be in the same room as their children when rehearsing.)

In many or even most cases it may not be possible to have more than one leader involved in a session, but if you are in a position to have someone to help you, it will make your life much easier. An assistant can keep an eye on the singers, and help sort out any technological problems, as well as potentially fielding questions from the choir, allowing you to progress with the rehearsal. But for these purposes we will assume you are leading the rehearsal with no assistant.

Allow some time at the beginning of the rehearsal to allow your singers to join, to cater for any problems in joining the meeting which may need solving, and to allow a short while for greeting your singers – when singing as a group is not allowed, the social side to a rehearsal can be as important as the musical one.

IMPORTANT: Mute your whole choir before you start rehearsing. You can always unmute them, or they can unmute themselves later. However, do encourage them to unmute themselves to ask questions if they need to, which will help to develop the two-way nature of the rehearsal. If you have lots of singers and are worried about interruptions, consider having a number of breaks in the rehearsal when your singers can ask their questions.



Some choirs will be too large to fit all the singers on one screen. Do change your screen view as you rehearse, so you can see all your singers and interact with them so that they feel involved.

More than anything, planning your rehearsal is important. Do not feel that just because you have marked everything up in your score, you should not go over it again with your singers in rehearsal. It will still help them to work through these passages.

If you are learning new music, and need to rehearse individual parts, consider allowing the other singers to join in if they wish, which will help keep up their interest. Apart from anything, it will give them a better idea of what the other parts are doing – always a good thing.

Don't feel you have to aim for absolute perfection! You are rehearsing in an unusual situation – the most important thing is that your singers enjoy themselves.

Once you have rehearsed your piece, consider having a sing through at the end with accompaniment for everyone to have a good sing, recap what they have learnt and reap the rewards of their rehearsing.

THE MUSIC

How should I prepare the music for the rehearsal?

Once you have chosen the piece you wish to perform virtually, do spend some time thoroughly preparing your score. Obviously you would do this anyway! However, in a virtual choir, preparation takes on even greater importance.

Preparing your scores can be done in a number of ways:

1. You could type up a document which clearly labels any places where singers should take care, and note any general points about singing the piece
2. As you would in an everyday choir rehearsal, you can verbally communicate score marks and instructions to your choir members via Zoom

The clearer your instructions to the choir at this point, the easier your job will be when it comes to rehearsing, and particularly if you decide to put together a virtual recording of the piece. So it is worth spending the time on it.

The points below have been made with a view that your choir may like to record what they are rehearsing at some point.



Things you might like to note down on or alongside your score include:

Breaths. Mark down in each part where you would like breaths to be taken, and how long you would like these breaths to be. (This could be a tick, with the abbreviation 'qu', or 'cr' for quaver or crotchet above it, for example).

Are there any places where you would like singers not to take a breath, where they might be tempted to? If you would like your singers to stagger breaths, remind them not to sing any consonants early. Are there any places where singers need to think about taking an early breath?

Do you want the notes at ends of phrases to be exactly as written in the score?

Pay particular attention to hard consonants and 's's' at the ends of phrases, which are very noticeable on recordings. Decide how long you would like the last note of the piece to be and note it down clearly.

How do you want your choir to sing the piece?

When your singers are recording at home, they won't have the rest of the choir with them to encourage them, so you will need to guide them in how you would like the piece sung. It's harder to sing stylishly when you're singing in your bedroom or living room, so a guide before the start of the piece as to what you are looking for will help your choir.

Do the vocal parts split in the piece?

Before you rehearse, decide which singers you would like to sing which part – don't leave it to chance. In addition, if you have strong, keen singers, in a recording situation you can ask them to sing more than one part – one of the benefits of a virtual performance is that you can have one person singing more than one part at the same time!

Warmups!

Warm-ups work very well in an online situation. They are quick, easy, and simple to lead. Plan a few warm-ups before your rehearsal. Your singers will need them more than ever – most rooms in a house do not offer the acoustics to make singing feel easy! Anything you can do to help your singers warm up and relax into a rehearsal will help them.



How can I support the singers as a director?

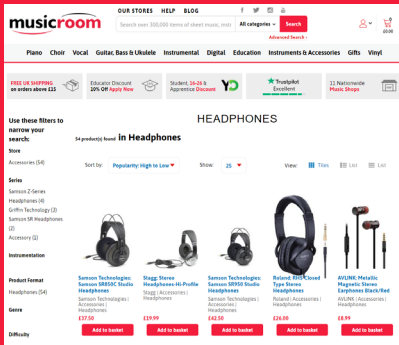
Taking an online rehearsal can feel like a very one-way street from the conductor's perspective. Do encourage your singers to ask questions freely – they may even have picked up on something you have missed in the score.

You can even invite other singers to join in from elsewhere. This is one area where a virtual choir can offer some advantages. There is no reason why you cannot include, say, former singers from the choir who have moved away, or new singers who may be interested in joining you. You can turn your online rehearsals into a good recruitment tool for your choir.

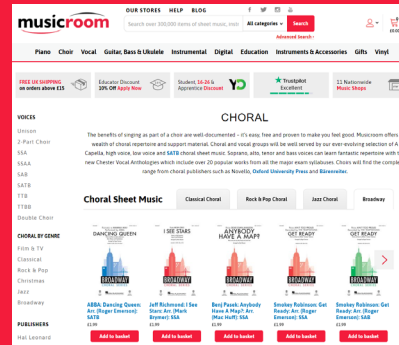
Think about your accompaniments. If you are using a backing track, then check that your singers can hear it clearly enough. If you are directing from the keyboard, it is less easy to see what your singers are doing when you are playing – and as you cannot hear them this is quite important. If you are rehearsing and accompanying at the same time, consider rehearsing some passages without accompaniment so you can connect with your singers a little more.

Do encourage your singers to offer feedback on how they feel the rehearsal went, perhaps by email afterwards.

Above all, be encouraging! Many choral singers are not used to singing on their own, and can feel very much out of their comfort zone when they are not surrounded with their friends from the choir. But regular online rehearsals, while they may not be quite the same as the real thing, can really help keep your choir together and even allow it to grow. A choir can often already feel like a family – and meeting up online to rehearse can make these special bonds even stronger. Good luck!



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW HEADPHONES ON MUSICROOM](#)



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW NEW CHORAL TITLES RELEASED ON MUSICROOM.COM](#)

Shop at www.musicroom.com

musicroom

Use the code **VIRTUALCHOIR20** for **20% off** your first order on both digital or physical choral sheets to get your first rehearsal under way!



DISTRIBUTED BY

HAL•LEONARD®
EUROPE