

Intonation (2nd edition)
GP-P001.1
Choral Intonation Exercises

Albert Pinsonneault

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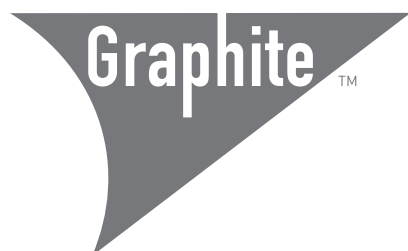
Albert Pinsonneault

ed. Michael Culloton

Intonation

(2nd edition)

choral exercises



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Praise for “Intonation:”

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“These choral intonation exercises have been most beneficial to the choirs at the University of Maryland. Since making them a regular part of our warm up and rehearsal routines, our singers’ awareness and sensitivity to both vertical and horizontal tuning issues have increased substantially. They are now able to assume much greater individual responsibility for the success of the entire ensemble for precise and accurate intonation. There is good flexibility within the exercises and any choir, from beginning to advanced, can improve by using them. I recommend them most highly!”

Edward Maclary
Emeritus Director of Choral Activities
University of Maryland, College Park, MD

“I once heard a conductor tell a room full of other conductors that singers don’t conspire to sing out of tune, and that it’s our job to help them hear their purpose in a piece. This collection of exercises will increase your choir’s awareness of pitch and function within a chord, and their intonation, with incredible quickness. Here’s a bonus that I know to be true: your singers will enjoy singing these exercises, too!”

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(The exercises are like gummy bear vitamins... great tasting medicine!!)

Michael Culloton
Conductor, Concordia Choir
Concordia College, Moorhead, MN

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Choral Intonation Exercises

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Forward for the Second Edition

When I began my career as a conductor, my choirs did not sing in tune. This led me down a path of pragmatic research into the acoustics, perception, pedagogy, and execution of good intonation with groups of singers. I am so gratified that today these exercises are in use in middle and high schools, universities, churches, and community and professional choirs.

Within this workbook are tried and true exercises, but they are also designed to be adjusted and reworked in numerous ways to fit each director's circumstance. Beyond that, I hope this limited set of exercises can be inspiration to new variations and riffs invented by the director to keep things fresh in the rehearsal space.

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The underlying principal is to create a space outside of repertoire where singers learn to hear and conceptualize good intonation, and to practice the various components that lead to consistent execution of good tuning. With practice, singers will automatically apply these techniques throughout rehearsal.

I'd like to thank Dr. Michael Culloton for his gracious edits of this manuscript, and Graphite Publishing for their support. Finally, thanks to all conductors who dedicate themselves to their singers, your work is valuable and needed.

- Albert Pinsonneault

A Note to the Director

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Purpose

Contained within this book are exercises designed to strengthen the intonation and listening skills of a choral ensemble and its members.

Contents

The exercises are organized in a graduated progression, moving from easier to more difficult. Various exercises concentrate on unison in a section or the entire ensemble, tuning consonant and dissonant intervals, tuning within functional harmony, alignment of vowels, and placement and intonation of various difficult intervals within a tonality.

Utilization

It is intended that one or a small number of these exercises be utilized at the end of vocal warm-ups, before moving on to the rehearsal of repertoire. The concentration and listening required to execute these exercises also brings a high level of focus to the ensemble prior to the rehearsal.

Pedagogy

Many choirs contain both individuals with advanced musicianship skills, and those who struggle to hear and replicate pitch with accuracy. Top choirs contain a higher percentage of advanced students while training choirs possess a lower percentage. Choirs at similar institutions may contain an equal mix of both types. These exercises seek to strengthen listening and intonation skills of students of **all abilities simultaneously**. In addition, they strengthen one vital skill that cannot be practiced individually, fitting oneself into the texture of an ensemble. This methodology is based on Edwin E. Gordon's audiation theory. A musician must be able to first hear musical material in their mind before being able to produce that musical material with accuracy. These exercises seek to strengthen the ability of singers to anticipate their next sound, not only in pitch, but also vowel, dynamic, and timbre.

These exercises also seek to strengthen each singer's understanding of tuning at an aural level. Too often blanket chords are used for intonation purposes and they are ultimately of limited usefulness. Perhaps the basses will become experts at tuning major triads when they are the root of the chord, but what about when we move beyond triads in root position? The exercises in this book understand that all members of the choir should be able to experience the pristine intonation of all intervals. Only after experiencing, hearing, and understanding good intonation can singers be expected to replicate it within repertoire.

Many of these exercises can be repeated throughout the course of the year, increasing in difficulty as the choir strengthens. A typical learning progression on a single exercise over the course of the year might follow this formula:

Level 1:

1) The first several repetitions (weeks) with an exercise it is sung without any sense of meter or tempo, leading on every note for several seconds and allowing for the singers to adjust their sound until a desired intonation is achieved. The pedagogy here is that the singer must first know what it sounds like to sing in tune before they can be expected to anticipate that sound. Conductors can use verbal feedback to adjust (e.g. tenors: you're flat there), but also the singers should be encouraged to listen for the moment when the tuning "locks," and conductors should not move forward until that is achieved.

Level 2:

2) The exercise may then be repeated with silence between each note or chord. The silence provides time for singers to anticipate internally (audiate) the next sound, rather than relying on muscle memory. The silence should be long enough (3-4 seconds) so that all singers are encouraged to audiate, otherwise only the best "leaders" will audiate and the remainder will try to enter behind and/or quickly adjust without premeditation.

3) The exercise may be set to a slow but steady tempo, forcing singers to quickly anticipate the next sound, and to enter in rhythm.

Level 3:

4) The exercise may then be set to a steady rhythm with the insertion of silence between pitches (e.g. changing a sequence of half notes into quarter note-quarter rest) forcing singers to quickly audiate without the help of muscle memory.

5) The exercise then may be adjusted for the inclusion of

- a. dynamic transitions: successive contrasting dynamics, adding a new element that singers will audiate
- b. new or exotic vowel sounds: e.g. inserting the Russian vowels that flummox the choir on "Bogoroditse Devo"
- c. more advanced intonation systems; e.g. practicing just intonation for a piece by Machaut

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Vowels, placement of production, dynamic uniformity, vibrato rate, and timbral uniformity can all effect intonation, the separation between intonation and blend can become grey. These exercises will result in the creation of choral blend, however, they do not specify that blend. Throughout the execution of these exercises, conductors are encouraged to adjust pitch, vowel, dynamic uniformity, placement of production, and balance of sections or chords to their own taste. I can not specify exactly the quality of vowels, nor can I specify exactly when a minor third is in "tune," for numerous variations exist on both counts. Each conductor will have their own sense of vowels and intonation, as well as their own tolerance to ensemble uniformity, some desiring a highly homogenous "pristine" sound while others desire a more heterogeneous "colorful" sound.

Just as each conductor has their own ideal choral sound, the adjustments the conductor makes and encourages while working on these exercises with their ensemble will help steer the choir towards the conductor's idea of blend and intonation.

Execution

1) These exercises should be sung a cappella. Allow the singers to make mistakes and adjustments themselves. This will help train them to listen to themselves and their ensemble instead of focusing their ear on the piano.

2) The exercises should be performed either very slowly, or out of time with the conductor directing every change of pitch. Slowness in execution allows for the singer to listen and make adjustments continually, rather than simply relying on muscle memory.

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3) Conductors should adjust pitch, vowel dynamic uniformity, unity of motion, and the quality of unisons and intonation to fit their tastes.

4) Many of these exercises are in the major and minor keys of B, C-sharp, and F-sharp. The sharp keys add a brightness that aids hearing intonation. The conductor should feel free to transpose any exercise to additional keys as they see fit.

5) For the purposes of this manual, the five latin vowels (spelled with English homophones) can be pronounced as such: Ah = [a], Ae = [e], Ie = [i], Oh = [o], Oo = [u]. These vowels are only suggestions, and can be exchanged for any uniform sound or syllable that would benefit your ensemble.

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The Drone

Many existing ensemble intonation guides invite the chorister to tune intervals with the piano, or to hone the ear through singing exercises in unison. In contrast, the method in this book often employs an exercise performed over a choral drone, allowing for two outcomes:

- 1) Singers on moving parts are training their ears to tune to other singers and not an outside instrument.
- 2) Singers intoning the drone naturally open their ears to listen to the moving lines, thus strengthening their ability to hear outside their own part.

Memorization and Rote Learning

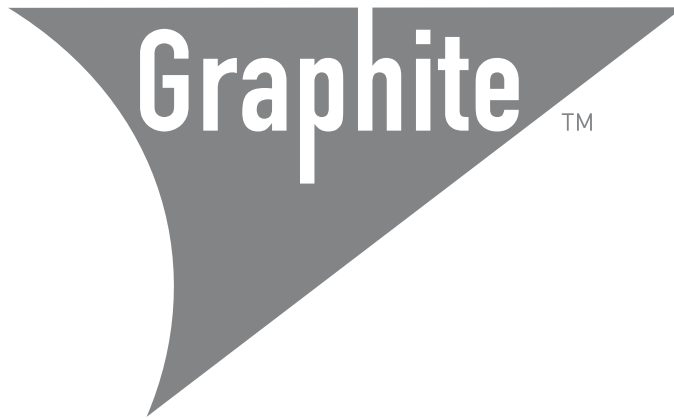
A singer is best able to listen when not looking at a score. Many of the following exercises may be taught or explained without the singers needing to see notation. More complicated exercises may be memorized in order to achieve the best results.

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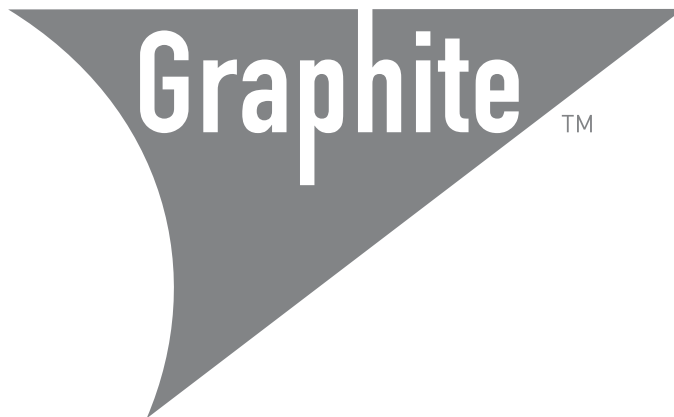
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For perusal p 1: Audiation, Onsets, Blend py.

from *Intonation*



The choir does not need music to sing this exercise.

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Trebles

Lower Voices

Ah Ae Ee Oh Oo

Level 1:

- 1) Singers learn to audiate pitch and vowel. Allow several seconds between pitches for all members of the choir to anticipate the next sound (not just the leaders).
- 2) Singers listen and arrive at a desired uniformity of pitch and vowel. Do not move on from one pitch until a clean unison is achieved.
- 3) Singers practice clean vocal onsets. Achieve good entrances by encouraging the choir to breathe and enter together and at pitch. A clean onset will indicate the singers are able to audiate the successive pitch/vowel accurately.

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Level 2:

- 1) The conductor may instruct each successive entrance to have its own dynamic. This increases the complexity of the exercise in that the singers will audiate for pitch, vowel, and dynamics.
- 2) The conductor may add other vowel sounds as desired or as suggested by repertoire rehearsed.
- 3) The conductor may conduct this exercise in a steady tempo, making the singers audiate more quickly, and in time.

2: Unisons of Pitch and Vowel

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from *Imitation*



Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

notable. elevated.

Level 1:

- 1) In turn, each section departs and returns to consonance by a prescribed interval (e.g. whole step, shown below). In departing they learn to tune their interval of departure (e.g. whole step). In returning to the choral unison their awareness of the unison increases.
- 2) In following sections, the return will naturally be drawn to the moving notes providing two outcomes. Their ears will be strengthened by listening to their own and another part simultaneously, and they will learn to discern for themselves when moving parts successfully tune departure intervals, and when they successfully rejoin the unison.
- 3) This exercise should first be conducted without a tempo, pausing to tune each passing pitch or interval.

Level 2:

- 1) The conductor may add other vowel sounds as desired or suggested by repertoire being rehearsed.
- 2) The conductor may conduct this exercise in a steady tempo, making the singers audiate more quickly, and in time.

Level 3:

- 1) Other intervals may be used, or patterns of intervals or scales. For example, departing up two whole steps and returning, down two whole steps and returning, or up and down a minor pentachord. Experimenting with modes may also prove valuable.

3: Sliding Into Vowel Alignment

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from *Intonation*



1.

2.

3.

In this exercise, singers are asked to slide into unison of pitch and vowel at the same time.

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To execute this exercise, singers should be sliding slowly into unison of pitch, and also "sliding" / morphing gradually between vowels.

Because this practice asks singers to listen for vowel and pitch alignment simultaneously, singers will begin to hear vowel unisons as integral to tuning, same as pitch unisons.

Above we have three versions of this exercise. A first version has part of the choir sustaining a single pitch and vowel while the other part "finds" them. The second version has both parts coming from opposite vowel shapes to a shared vowel shape; one part sustaining pitch and the other bending down a whole step during the process. The third iteration has both parts moving pitch and vowel. Vowels and pitches can be altered as best suits your choir and repertoire.

Assigning the parts along geographical seating of your choir (e.g. trebles verses tenors and basses or the right half of your choir and the left half of your choir) will promote listening across the ensemble. A more randomized mixed part assignment (e.g. birthday months 1-6 verses months 7-12) will promote close listening / blending to those in immediate vicinity.

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4: Perfect Pentachords

The choir may need music to sing this exercise.
Memorization encouraged.

Level 1:

- 1) In turn, each section departs and returns to a perfect fifth consonance by a prescribed pentachord (major or minor, but modal pentachords may be introduced as a more advanced technique). Singers learn to tune their scale degree interval within the context of the perfect fifth.
- 2) “Droning” singers ears will naturally be drawn to the moving lines, strengthening their listening skills.
- 3) This exercise should first be conducted without a tempo, pausing to tune each passing pitch or interval.
- 4) This exercise can be sung using solfege, numbers, text from repertoire, or a neutral vowel.

Take particular notice of the major (and minor) third scale degree (Mi/me). Compared to these intervals on the equal-tempered piano, the just minor third should be a bit wider (higher) and the major third shorter (lower). Both major and minor thirds are often sung flat. Use this exercise to encourage a strong sense of in-tune thirds, utilizing the context of the perfect fifth.

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Level 2:

- 1) The conductor may add other vowel sounds as desired or as needed by repertoire demands.
- 2) The conductor may conduct this exercise in a steady tempo, making the singers audiate more quickly, and in time.

Level 3:

- 1) Other modal pentachords may be used, e.g. Lydian (#4) and Phrygian (b2, b3).

For perusal 4a: Perfect Pentachords (major) '.



from *Intonation*

Sing with a pure and uniform vowel or solfege

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

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4b: Perfect Pentachords (minor)

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Sing with a pure and uniform vowel or solfege

S

A

T

B

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5: Misaligned Pentachords



$\text{♩} = 120$

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

3

S

A

T

B

Routinely, some singers sing just after the beat. The “late” singers most often engage at one-quarter behind the beat length, as in this exercise singing a sixteenth note behind the quarter note beats. Singers who engage after the beat are not aware that they are “behind,” because their internal connection between time, tempo, and sound has evolved so that this feels “correct.”

Lack of rhythmic unison impacts intonation, because you cannot tune elements that are not together in time.

This exercise simply asks each section of the choir to try to deliberately sing behind, and then to all sing exactly together. In doing so, we are helping to move “late” singers sense of pulse closer to the front of the beat. Utilize a syllable that begins in a consonant (e.g. “di”) to focus on the rhythm of each onset.



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6: Tuning the Major Mode

ble. elevated.

The choir does not need music to sing this exercise.

There are two exercises here.

Begin with the drone and the scale in unison/octaves (4a).
Once mastered add in the contrary motion of the scale (4b).

Level 1:

- 1) This exercise should first be conducted without a tempo, pausing to tune each pitch or interval.
- 2) Pay special attention to the quality of each interval in relation to the tonic drone. Look out especially for thirds, fifths, and sevenths.
- 3) Sing on solfege or a neutral syllable.

Level 2:

- 1) The conductor may add other vowel sounds as desired or needed by repeating the exercise.
- 2) The conductor may conduct this exercise in a steady tempo, making the singers audiate more quickly and in time.

Level 3:

- 1) Insert silence in the moving (scale) line, thus requiring the fresh audiation of each note in relation to the drone.
- 2) In order to try this with mixed parts, simply count off ("1-2-3") down the line, assign "1s" to drone, "2s" to perform the scale from high do descending, and "3s" to perform the scale from low do ascending, then rotate through twice so everyone performs every part.

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For perusal purposes only. 6a: Tuning the Major Mode

from *Intonation*



Sing with solfege or a pure and uniform vowel. notable. elevated.

Soprano
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Alto
do do

Tenor
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Bass
do do

For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.

S
do do

A
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

T
do do

B
do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do



For perusal p 6b: Tuning the Major Mode 2 PY.

from *Intonation*



Sing with solfege or a pure and uniform vowel notable. elevated.

Soprano

do _____ do _____

Alto

do ti la sol fa mi re do do re mi fa sol la ti do

Tenor

do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Bass

do _____ do _____

For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.

S

do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

A

do _____ do _____ notable. elevated.

T

do _____ do _____

B

do ti la sol fa mi re do do re mi fa sol la ti do



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7: Tuning the Minor Mode

ble. elevated.

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The choir does not need music to sing this exercise.

There are two exercises here.

Begin with the drone and the scale in unison/octaves (5a).
Once mastered add in the contrary motion of the scale (5b).

Level 1:

- 1) Very infrequently is a choir presented with a warm-up in minor. The natural minor scale presents some unique challenges, with its whole steps surrounding tonic. In 5b, the second-to-last set of pitches creates a sound with two adjacent whole steps, great preparation for the added-note harmonies often found in contemporary choral music.
- 2) This exercise is just like 4a and 4b, and should be executed as such.

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Level 2:

- 1) This exercise can be repeated utilizing any mode. It is especially useful with chromatic and whole-tone scales.

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For perusal p 7a: Tuning the Minor Mode pY.

from *Intonation*



Sing with solfege or a pure and uniform vowel

notable. elevated.

Soprano

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

Alto

do do

Tenor

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

Bass

do do

For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.

S

do do

A

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

T

do do

B

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do



For perusal p 7b: Tuning the Minor Mode 2 pY.

from *Intonation*



Sing with solfege or a pure and uniform vowel

notable. elevated.

Soprano

do _____ do _____

Alto

do te le sol fa me re do do re me fa sol le te do

Tenor

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

Bass

do _____ do _____

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S

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

A

do _____ do _____

T

do _____ do _____

B

do te le sol fa me re do do re me fa sol le te do



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8: Tuning Mi and Me

ble. elevated.

The choir may need music initially to sing this exercise.

Level 1:

- 1) This exercise moves straight into the troublesome major and minor third within the perfect fifth. Conduct initially without a tempo, allowing singers to adjust into clean intonation for the major third and minor third.

Level 2:

- 1) Have the droning voices hold, but add breaths or separation between the pitches of the moving parts so the singers must audiate their subsequent entrance into Mi, Me, or Do.

Level 3:

- 1) Give a steady tempo for the exercise, with separation between the pitches within the moving line. Do not sacrifice intonation in order to have steadiness of rhythm. If intonation suffers, slow the tempo or return to note-by-note conducting.

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Take particular notice of the major (and minor) third scale degree (Mi/me). Compared to these intervals on the equal-tempered piano, the just minor third should be a bit wider (higher) and the major third shorter (lower). Both major and minor thirds are often sung flat. Use this exercise to encourage a strong sense of in-tune thirds, utilizing the context of the perfect fifth.

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For perusal p 8: Tuning Mi and Me py.

from *Intonation*



The choir may need music initially to sing this exercise.

Sing with solfege or a pure and uniform vowel. notable. elevated.

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

S

A

T

B



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9: Tuning Non-Chord Tones Within the Modes

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The choir may need music initially to sing this exercise.
Memorization encouraged.

Level 1:

- 1) The moving parts singing ascending and descending diatonic triads within the context of a tonic-dominant drone. The moving line will leap into diatonic pitches not part of the tonic triad. The singers will learn to tune all intervals in relation to the harmonic context.
- 2) Solfege is provided for the choir, but a neutral syllable may be used as desired.
- 3) Unlike earlier exercises, this one is best at a steady tempo. Begin quite slowly, and stop to fix out-of-tune intervals.

Level 2:

- 1) Have the droning voices hold, but add breaths or separation between the phrases of the moving parts so they may articulate their subsequent entrance.

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For 9a: Tuning Non-Chord Tones Within the Major Mode

from *Intonation*



The choir may need music to sing this exercise. Memorization encouraged.

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Soprano
Do mi sol la fa re mi sol ti do la fa sol ti re mi do la sol ti re do

Alto
Do mi sol la fa re mi sol ti do la fa sol ti re mi do la sol ti re do

Tenor
Sol

Bass
Do

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S
Do

A
Sol

T
Do mi sol la fa re mi sol ti do la fa sol ti re mi do la sol ti re do

B
Do mi sol la fa re mi sol ti do la fa sol ti re mi do la sol ti re do

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For p 9a: Tuning Non-Chord Tones Within the Minor Mode

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The choir may need music to sing this exercise. Memorization encouraged.

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Soprano
Do me sol le fa re me sol te do le fa sol te re me do le sol te re do

Alto
Do me sol le fa re me sol te do le fe sol te re me do le sol te re do

Tenor
8
Sol _____

Bass
Do _____

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S
Do _____

A
Sol _____

T
8
Do me sol le fa re me sol te do le fa sol te re me do le sol te re do

B
Do me sol le fa re me sol te do le fa sol te re mi do le sol te re do



Notes on Exercises 10-23

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The remaining exercises address various other ensemble and intonation difficulties, as noted by their title and brief notes.

All of the techniques from the previous exercises may be utilized to strengthen the subsequent exercises, including:

- 1) the substitution of text
- 2) adding or changing dynamics
- 3) adding rests or breaks in moving lines to force audiation
- 4) adding a steady tempo
- 5) altering the mode of the exercise, or transposing to a new key

Exercise #10 explores chromatic pitches within the perfect fifth.

Exercises #11, #19, and #20 present common intonation problems within moving harmonies, specifically the tuning of the third and seventh scale degree (#11) and chromatic ascending lines in harmony (#19 and #20)

Exercise #12 strengthens intonation of pure intervals without a drone, and with both parts moving into each dyad.

Exercises #14 and #16 work the audiation of perfect fifths and fourths.

Exercise #15 helps navigate diphthongs in a controlled manner.

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Exercise #17 moves in eight-part harmony derived from only four parts. The singers must learn to balance each harmony.

Exercise #18 teaches the aural understanding of suspensions as dissonant tension resolving into consonance.

Exercise #21 focuses on length of notes and internal rhythmic integrity as it influences intonation

Exercises #21a and #21b require students to audiate in rhythm in order to have clean onsets without sliding into pitch

Exercise #23 provides the choir a rhythmic warm-up with simple harmonies.

For p

10: Chromatic Intervals Within the 5th

from *Intonation*

Align vowel. Once the choir can sing successfully, add breaths between the half notes of the moving part to force singers to audiate each successive pitch and vowel.



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Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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For p

11: Tuning Within Changing Harmonies

from *Intonation*

Common intonation challenges are presented within each voice part:
Tendency tones (3rds and 7ths of tetrachord), and non-chord tones.

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Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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12: Expanding and Contracting into Consonance

from *Intonation*

Chromatic motion in two parts toward diatonic intervals



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Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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13: Chord Shifts



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Choir 1

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Choir 2

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

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A printed score is not needed for this simple but powerful exercise. Write the whole note chords on the board, project, or teach via solfège then divide the choir into two mixed choirs in whatever way you like, having choir 2 move ahead to the next chord while choir 1 stays on the first chord for several beats before moving to the next chord to join them.

This exercise allows singers to experience dissonance and consonance, and strengthens the inner ear as it anticipates moving into and out of the dissonance while listening for good intonation between parts.

This can be used with any simple chord progression, and can be sung on solfège or a neutral syllable.



For p... 14a: Fifths in Audiation

from *Intonation*

Encourage singers to quickly align both vowel and pitch.
Examine the quality of the onset.
Singers will learn to mentally anticipate interval and vowel.
Encourage uniformity and purity of vowel throughout (no diphthongs).



SA

Ah, Ah, Ae, Ae, Ee, Ee, Oh, Oh, Oo, Oo, Ah!

TB

For p... 14b: Fifths in Audiation

*same notes as above.



SA

Ah, Ah, Ae, Ae, Ee, Ee, Oh, Oh, Oo, Oo, Ah!

TB

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15: Controlled Diphthongs

from *Intonation*

Encourage singers to quickly align both vowel and pitch.
Encourage smooth transition between vowels without a break in sound.
Conduct each transition and breath, singers must change vowels together.
Add your own diphthongs or triphthongs as fits your needs.



SA

Ah - ee Ae - ee Ah - oh Ee - oh Oo - Ae Ah!

TB

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16a: Fourths in Audiation

from *Intonation*

Encourage singers to quickly align both vowel and pitch.
Examine the quality of the onset.
Singers will learn to mentally anticipate interval and vowel.
Encourage uniformity and purity of vowel throughout (no diphthongs).
Portamento on "Oh" vowel.



SA

Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Oo.

TB

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16b: Fourths in Audiation

*same notes as above.



SA

Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Ah, Ae, Ee, Oh, — Oo, Oo, Oo!

TB



17: Finding Balance in Harmony

For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.
Beginning 8-Part Singing with only 4 Parts. (S1=T1, S2=T2, A1=B1, A2=B2)



Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

S

A

T

B

8

S

A

T

B

15

S

A

T

B



For p

18: Suspension as Accented Dissonance

from *Intonation*

The musical material repeats in the second stanza with added suspensions.
Encourage the singers to listen to the way their dissonance resolves into consonance.



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Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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S

A

T

B

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S

A

T

B

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Fc 19a: Sharpening the Bass, Tempering the Soprano

from *Intonation*



The bass voice rises chromatically while the soprano navigates tendency tones (3rds and 7ths of the tetrachord).

Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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TB

SA

TB

Fc 19a: Sharpening the Alto, Tempering the Tenor



The alto voice rises chromatically while the tenor navigates tendency tones (3rds and 7ths of the tetrachord).

Sing with a pure and uniform vowel

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TB

SA

TB

For perusal purposes only. 20: Omnibus Progression py.

from *Intonation*

Encouraging a long and steady crescendo,
utilize whatever syllable, vowel, and/or accent desired.



*Sing with a pure and uniform vowel
poco a poco cresc. throughout*

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Musical score for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts, measures 1-7. Dynamics range from *ppp* to *mp*. A large 'Graphite' watermark is overlaid on the score.

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Musical score for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) parts, measures 8-11. Dynamics range from *mf* to *ff*. A large 'Graphite' watermark is overlaid on the score.



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from *Intonation*



Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

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5

* Second Repeat end at m. 8

S

A

T

B

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In this exercise we are working on (1) audiating full chords even when some of the chord tones are absent, (2) having rhythmic integrity within long-held notes, (3) practicing crisp onsets and releases, and consistent volume throughout in an objective contemporary music style.

For maximum effect, avoid the common stylistic decay at the end of each sung pitch. Encourage your singers to sing at a consistent dynamic until the onset of the silence of the rest. The rests should be heard as the "entrance" of silence in the texture as much as the exit of sound.

22a: Clockwork Chords

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from *Intonation*



Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

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This exercise complements "Note Length and Rhythmic Intensity" but inverts the challenge for the singer. Note lengths are all uniform in the first three measures, with the challenge for the singer being to precisely place each note's attack and release.

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Clockwork Chords can be sung on *Solfège* or a neutral syllable. I suggest beginning with a neutral syllable with a consonant on both ends, (e.g. "dot") so that singers can practice the precise length of each eighth-note. As singers acclimate to the challenge, the consonant can be removed on the front and/or back end of the syllable with the hardest challenge being to sing on a consonant-less vowel.

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22b: Clockwork Chords 2

from *Intonation*



Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Expanding on "Clockwork Chords," this exercise utilizes the same harmonies but gives very specific note durations building also off the work in "Note length and rhythmic intensity." Rhythm has an incredible impact on intonation, in that a chord that does not align in time cannot also align in tuning. Attending to precision in entrance and exit of each sound here further strengthens these skills. Be sure to ask the singers to sing full volume into the rest, in a contemporary performance style.

As in "Clockwork Chords," this can be sung on Solfege, or a neutral syllable. I suggest beginning with a neutral syllable with a consonant on both ends, (e.g. "dot") so that singers can practice the precise length of each note. As singers acclimate to the challenge, the consonant can be removed on the front and/or back end of the syllable with the hardest challenge being to sing on a consonant-less vowel.

For peru

23: Rhythmic Arpeggiations

from *Intonation*



Andante ♩ = 92

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S
Dee dee _ dee dee dee dee dee dee

A
Cha cha cha cha _ cha cha cha cha cha

T
Doot doot doot doot doot doot doot (etc)

B
Da da da da da da da (etc)

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Graphite notable. elevated.

S
(etc)

A
(etc)

T
TM

B



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S
Doot doot doot doot

A
1. 2. notable. elevated. TM

T
1. 2. 8

B
1. 2.

7
For perusal purposes only. Do not copy.

S
doot doot doot (etc)

A
Cha cha cha — cha cha cha cha cha (etc)

T
Dee dee — dee dee dee dee dee dee (etc)

B
Da da da da da da (etc)

notable. elevated.

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S

A

T

B

11

S

A

T

B

Da da da da da da (etc)

Doot doot doot doot doot doot doot (etc)

Cha cha cha cha cha cha cha cha

Dee dee dee dee dee dee dee dee

13

S

A

T

B

Graphite™

notable. elevated.

(etc)

(etc)

15

S

A

T

B

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17

S
Da da da da da da da (etc)

A
Dee dee dee dee dee dee dee dee (etc)

T
Cha cha cha cha cha cha cha cha (etc)

B
Doot doot doot doot doot doot doot (etc)

19

S
Doot doot doot

A
Doot doot doot

T
Doot doot doot

B
Doot doot doot

For perusal pi 24: Legato Blend py.

from *Intonation*

Encourage resonant and sustained singing.

Practice mixed breathing to achieve a seamless line.

May be sung on neutral syllable or text (e.g. "alleluia").

Entrances should be inconspicuous, like adding a subtle additional organ stop.



♩ = 56-60

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T

B

8

S

A

T

B

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Albert Pinsonneault

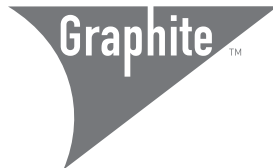


Conductor Albert Pinsonneault is Director of Choral Activities at the University of St. Thomas, where he conducts the Chamber Singers and Concert Choir and teaches in the graduate program in choral music education. Dr. Pinsonneault is also Founder and Artistic Director of the Madison Choral Project, Wisconsin's only fully-professional chamber choir. Most recently he was Associate Director of Choral Organizations at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music where he conducted the University Singers, co-conducted University Chorale, taught the graduate choral literature sequence, and mentored graduate students in choral music.

A graduate of St. Olaf College (BM), the University of Minnesota (MM) and the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati (DMA), Dr. Pinsonneault's scholarship focuses on choral blend and intonation, the physical/kinesthetic act of conducting, and the music of F. Melius Christiansen.

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