

# Approximate skill levels for the UNH Youth Symphony Orchestras

## Concert Orchestra (generally for younger students):

- Violin:
  - **Tone:** Perform with a characteristic but developing tone quality, capable of basic dynamic variations.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in first position, with backward and forward extensions (Low 1 and High 3).
  - **Rhythm:** Accurately perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs and simple dotted rhythms.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required. UNH-YSO coaches are not able to teach students their parts individually by rote.
  - **Shifting:** Shifting to third position is required for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> violin parts. Students unable to shift may still be accepted but may be restricted to “3<sup>rd</sup> violin” (viola treble clef) parts.
- Viola:
  - **Tone:** Perform with a characteristic but developing tone quality, capable of common dynamic variations.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in first position, with backward and forward extensions (Low 1 and High 3).
  - **Rhythm:** Perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs and simple dotted rhythms.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required. The UNH-YSO coaches are not able to teach students their parts individually, by rote.
  - **Shifting:** Shifting is rarely required of Concert Orchestra violists.
- Cello:
  - **Tone:** Perform with a characteristic but developing tone quality, capable of common dynamic variations.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in first position, with backward and forward extensions.
  - **Rhythm:** Perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs and simple dotted rhythms.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required. The UNH-YSO coaches are not able to teach students their parts individually, by rote.
  - **Shifting:** Half-position and an introduction to higher positions is very valuable for Concert Orchestra cellists.
- Bass
  - **Tone:** Perform with a characteristic but developing tone quality, capable of common dynamic variations.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in first position and half-position.
  - **Rhythm:** Perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs and simple dotted rhythms.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required. The UNH-YSO coaches are not able to teach students their parts individually, by rote.
  - **Shifting:** First and half-positions are required. The use of 3<sup>rd</sup> position on the G string is strongly encouraged.
  - Note: Bassist will be asked to perform a chromatic scale from the open E string up to “B” on the G string (first position).

### **Symphony Orchestra (generally for older students):**

- **Violin:**
  - **Tone:** Perform with a resonant tone, capable of subtler dynamic changes.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in at least first and third positions. 1<sup>st</sup> violin parts will require numerous, additional positions.
  - **Rhythm:** Accurately perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs, complicated dotted rhythms, and syncopations.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required.
- **Viola:**
  - **Tone:** Perform with a resonant tone, capable of subtler dynamic changes.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in first and third positions.
  - **Rhythm:** Accurately perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs, complicated dotted rhythms, and syncopations.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required.
- **Cello:**
  - **Tone:** Perform with a resonant tone, capable of subtler dynamic changes.
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune in half- through fourth position, preferably more.
  - **Rhythm:** Accurately perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs, complicated dotted rhythms, and syncopations.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required.
- **Bass**
  - **Tone:** Perform with a resonant tone, capable of subtler dynamic changes
  - **Pitch:** Play in tune from half position through high G (octave harmonic).
  - **Rhythm:** Accurately perform rhythms ranging from whole notes to sixteenth notes, including slurs, complicated dotted rhythms, and syncopations.
  - **Theory:** A solid ability to read music is required.