

SFJAZZ Monday Night Band Audition & Enrollment Info

SFJAZZ ensembles are audition only.

1. Complete the audition form. You will be contacted by SFJAZZ staff with an audition time.
2. If you cannot make any of the audition dates, we will consider video auditions.
3. Musicians who have been accepted into the ensemble will be notified by the Education Department and given a private link to sign up for the band.
4. To complete enrollment, the class must be purchased (\$450 public, \$400 members).

Instrumentation

We accept all standard big band instruments (saxophone, trombone, trumpet, guitar, piano, bass, drums). Other instruments will be accepted on a case-by-case basis, including voice, vibraphone, B-3, flute, percussion, etc. While we of course value great improvisers, we are also looking for strong section players with good sight-reading abilities. *Please note we may accept two of each rhythm section instrument.*

What to Expect at Auditions

You will be given 10 minutes, though most auditions do not take that long. Judges will be evaluating you based on technique, musicality and familiarity with the jazz language, improvisation and sight-reading ability. Auditioners will play (or sing) two pieces: a standard and a blues. Please note that because sight reading is not a part of the vocal audition, all vocalists audition via video by including a link in their audition form.

Standard: Latin charts are ok.

Blues: Unaccompanied, played in the jazz/bop tradition, medium tempo. Suggested blues heads:

- Au Privave
- Billie's Bounce
- Straight, No Chaser
- Mr. PC
- Blues for Alice
- Bag's Groove
- Tenor Madness
- Watermelon Man
- C Jam Blues

Sight Reading: You will be asked to sight read 1 to 2 charts.

Backline provided: Piano, bass amp, guitar amp, drum kit with cymbals (no need to bring your own).

Drummers: please bring sticks and brushes

Guitarists and bassists: bring your own cables

Horns:

- Medium swing blues: play the head once, then play three choruses of a solo, then the head out (no repeat).
- A jazz standard of your choice. This should be in a different tempo to the blues, and can be Latin or swing. Play the head once, then take two choruses of solo, and come back in with the head once.

Guitar and Piano players:

- Medium swing blues: play the head once, then play two choruses of a solo, then comp through the changes twice as if you were accompanying a soloist.
- A jazz standard of your choice. This should be in a different tempo to the blues. It can be Latin or swing. Play the head once (melody only or with self accompaniment), then take two choruses of solo, and then comp through the changes.

Bass players:

- Medium swing blues: play the head once, then play two choruses of a solo, then walk through the changes twice as if you were accompanying a soloist, once with a “two feel” and once with a “four feel.” There is no need to play the head again afterward.
- A jazz standard of your choice: this should be in a different tempo and feel to the blues. Play the head once, then take two choruses of solo, and come back in with the bass line only for one chorus.

Drummers:

We want to hear you play in different feels / tempos. You will be asked to play the following:

- 12 bars medium swing as if playing a blues (feel free to demonstrate your knowledge of the melody)
- 16 bars bossa nova, medium
- Up-tempo swing for 32 bars
- 12/8 funk feel for 16 bars
- 3/4 ballad feel with brushes for 8 bars
- Other Latin feel or odd meter feel of your choice for 16 to 32 bars
- Trade 4's with yourself four times (32 bars, 4 bars time and 4 bars solo)
- Open solo (no longer than 2 minutes please)

Percussion:

Please be able to demonstrate proficiency on either Afro-Cuban or Brazilian percussion instruments such as congas, timbales, bongos, cowbell, shekere, maracas, claves, güiro, pandeiro, agogó, tamborim, surdo, afoxé, ganzá, and any auxiliary instruments as required. Depending on your instrument preference, we will ask you to play the following:

- 8 bars of straight tumbao using one and two conga drums in 4/4 (and/or)
- 8 bars of swing feel tumbao on congas
- 8 bars of cáscara on the timbales, in either 3-2 or 2-3 clave (and/or)
- 8 bars of martillo pattern on the bongos
- 8 bars of any hand percussion instrument (güiro, maracas, pandeiro, tamborim, agogó, etc...)
- You are welcome to demonstrate a brief solo on any of the major Cuban or Brazilian instruments (no longer than 2 minutes please)

Vocalists

Please note that because sight reading is not a part of the vocal audition, all vocalists audition via video by including a link in their audition form. If you are unable to include a link, you may send a video file to eputnam@sfjazz.org.

Prepare a standard and blues (medium tempo); you are encouraged to improvise on either song if you feel comfortable doing so. You may also wish to demonstrate one or all of the following: chromatic scale, major scale, harmonic minor scale, mixolydian scale (major scale with lowered 7th degree). Please no ballads or slow blues numbers; we would like to hear you sing something that demonstrates a strong sense of rhythm/swing feel, jazz phrasing, and comfort with the harmony and dynamic range that singing with a 20-piece jazz Orchestra would require.

To all auditioners: although the MNB does usually include a few more traditional pre 1960s jazz pieces in the repertoire, for the most part, the focus is on modern styles, hybrids and sub-genres of recent jazz music. Please keep in mind that we hope to see players demonstrate a firm foundation in the traditional roots of jazz as well as modern rhythmic, harmonic, and phrasing concepts.

For questions, contact Erin Putnam, Ensembles Manager, at eputnam@sfjazz.org or 415.283.0332.

Good luck and have fun! We can't wait to hear you.