

Rules for Playing in the Heritage Ensemble

1. A wrong note played timidly is a wrong note. A wrong note played with authority is an interpretation.
2. Tuning your instrument before playing is optional, better to stand out from the crowd.
3. If you play a wrong note, give a nasty look to one of your neighbours.
4. If everyone gets lost except you, follow those who get lost.
5. Markings for slurs, dynamics and ornaments should not be observed. They are only there to embellish the score.
6. Scottish snaps are optional.
7. If you are completely lost, stop everyone and say, "I think we should tune."
8. When everyone else has finished playing, you should not play any notes you have left. If you have notes left over, please play them on the way home.
9. Happy are those who have not perfect pitch, for the kingdom of music is theirs.
10. Stop at every repeat sign, and discuss in detail whether to take the repeat.
11. Listen carefully for the page number of the set being played and ask at least twice which page we should be on.
12. Tell your neighbour a different number, they'll appreciate the humour later.
13. Everyone should play the same piece, however starting times are best when varied through the ensemble.
14. Take your time finding pages.
15. The right note at the wrong time is a wrong note (and vice versa).
16. A true interpretation is realized when there remains not one note of the original.
17. If a passage is difficult, slow down. If it's easy, speed it up. Everything will work itself out in the end.
18. If the ensemble has to stop because of you, explain in detail why you got lost. Everyone will be very interested.
19. Strive to get the maximum NPS (notes per second). That way you gain the admiration of the incompetent.
20. Keep a fingering chart handy. You can always catch up with the others later.
21. When the conductor is smiling at you you have done the right thing, unless you are in the fiddle section.
22. When the conductor smiles at the fiddle section it is sarcastic and they have just missed an introduction or solo section.
23. Expression, phrasing and vibrato are damaging to the collective and are irrelevant.
24. The conductor is right, even when he is wrong.
25. Rests are provided in the music to allow you some space for individual musical expression.
26. Don't follow Bob Foggin.
27. EVER!
28. Rehearsal of arrangements has nothing to do with the performance. Just do your own thing.
29. Make up your own dance tempo. The conductor has his back to the dancers, so what would he know.
30. Don't ever turn up on time; no-one else will be there.
31. Ignore the conductor - he's only swatting at flies.
32. Appreciate the race for beat supremacy between the piano and percussion.
33. Torment the wind section by offering them sweets just before it's their turn to play the lead introduction.
34. Introductions should never be played at the tempo set by the conductor.
35. Introductions should be barely audible so the full band sounds really good when (and if) they join in.
36. The frilly bits organised at rehearsal are optional in performance.