

A Guide to Selecting your Voice Part to Sing in a Barbershop Chorus

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This sheet is designed to help the non-barbershop singer to find his comfort zone. Here are a few guidelines to consider.

1. Barbershop music is four-part harmony, a capella (that is, no organ, piano or other accompaniment) singing with the melody (Lead) contained in the second tenor line.
2. Voice ranges are slightly different from the traditional Soprano-Alto-Tenor-Bass voicing. For example, the Tenor and Lead parts are written in the treble clef and are sung an octave lower.
3. The choice of what voice part you wish to sing is **entirely yours**.
4. The only rule is that you should sing in your **comfort zone**.

NOTE: IF YOU DON'T READ MUSIC, YOU MAY WISH TO GET HELP TO DETERMINE WHICH BBS PART YOU SHOULD SING. YOU WILL BE PROVIDED WITH WORDS, MUSIC AND A LEARNING CD.

Tenor

Tenor Range is in the Bb -> Bb Range.

The Tenor Voice is best if it is free, easy, light, and brilliant and has sparkle. The singer will be very sensitive to **when the note is most important in the chord**. This is the sports car mentality: light, quick and sensitive.

Lead

Lead Range is Eb to F.

The Lead voice is strong, open, and flexible. **Ideally**, the singer will be a story-teller and his voice will be lyrical with a minimum of vibrato. This is the Ferrari personality: quick, responsive and, oh, so beautiful.

Baritone

Baritone Range is C to Eb.

A **great** Baritone voice is warm, resonant, and the singer is pitch-aware and flexible. The singer will sing softer when his part is higher than that of the lead and with more resonance when it is lower than the lead's. Baritones are the Mercedes Benz of the chorus: Smooth, elegant and, oh, so rich.

NOTE: IF YOU SING TENOR IN A CHURCH CHOIR OR A CHORUS, YOU MAY BE A TENOR, A LEAD OR EVEN A BARITONE IN A BARBERSHOP CHORUS:

Bass

Bass Range is Gb (F is called for in I'm Sitting' on Top of the World) to Bb. **Ideally**, the voice is rich, resonant, round, tall and ever-present. The singer can manage the voice with skill from low to high without changing voice quality or placement. Basses are the stretch HumVee limousines of the chorus.