



Placement Recording and Theory Test Information

Who needs to send in a placement recording?

1. **All instrumentalists** registered for SJW Jazz Camp Online must submit placement recordings. Our faculty will use these recordings to assess your level of experience playing jazz and create a class schedule that will give you the information and experience you need to take your playing to the next level.
2. Vocalists **do not** need to submit Placement recordings.

Recording guidelines for instrumentalists

1. Each applicant is required to submit **two recordings**: one **blues selection** and one **additional song selection chosen from the list on the next page**. Sheet music excerpts and play-along tracks are available (see link below) to help you practice and record these selections. If you're completely new to playing jazz, feel free to omit your blues selection and just submit one recording of either "Dorian's Lament" or "Mr. Stan Ford Funk" (see below).
2. For your blues recording, please choose either "**Blues of the Day**", "**Tranquil Blues**" or "**Blues for Liddle**" for your blues selection. Sheet music and chord changes are provided, choose whichever blues melody and chord progression that fit your skills the best.
3. For your additional recording: SJW welcomes students at all levels of experience, from beginners to advanced improvisers. Our placement evaluation materials include songs appropriate for each level.

Below is a list of options for your additional recording. Please choose one tune from this list to record:

- **“Dorian’s Lament” / “Mr. Stan Ford Funk”**: Recommended for students with little or no improvisation experience.
 - **Additional info on these materials is available by clicking here.**
 - i. “Dorian’s Lament” - An easy swing tune using the concert Bb Dorian scale
 - ii. “Mr. Stan Ford Funk” - An easy funk tune using the concert F Mixolydian scale
- **“So What”**: Recommended for students who have studied some improvisation. This song includes relatively simple chord changes and a written excerpt.
- **“Blue Bossa”**: Recommended for students who have learned or are beginning to learn some jazz tunes that shift keys.
- **“Ice Cream with Lee”**: Recommended for students who are comfortable improvising over tunes with denser harmony (more chord changes).
- **“Lester Leaps In”**: Recommended for students who are comfortable improvising over tunes with multiple key centers and quicker tempos.
- **“Recordame”**: Recommended for students with extensive improvisation experience. This tune features difficult chord changes, shifting key centers and a more challenging excerpt.
- **“Ko Ko”**: Recommended for students with extensive and advanced improvisation experience. This tune features difficult chord changes, a fast tempo, and an advanced written excerpt.

Written excerpts and play-along recordings for each of these tunes are available online by clicking here.

We recommend that you select compositions that you’re familiar with and that will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your current skill set as a jazz musician. Don’t choose the most difficult song you can play, we’ll get the best grasp of your musicianship if you select something that is easier for you. Aim to demonstrate a strong grasp of jazz fundamentals rather than focusing on creative risk-taking, or flashy, virtuosic playing. Use these tunes to demonstrate fundamentals such as your harmonic vocabulary, rhythmic concept, phrasing, and ability to maintain the song form.

The written excerpts are based on famous jazz solos, or composed by SJW faculty. Listen to the original recordings when available. Do your best when it comes to your execution of the written excerpt; pay close attention to the notes, rhythms, and articulations. If there is a portion of the excerpt that is out of your range, simply play those notes up or down an octave.

If you cannot read music, no worries! Plenty of Jazz Campers attend every summer who don't read music. The jazz tradition is rooted in learning and teaching by ear, so there's no real requirement to read music at Jazz Camp Online. If preparing these written excerpts is too overwhelming, we encourage students to learn these melodies by ear from the original recordings. For example, if you search for the name of any one of the selections listed above (such as "Blue Bossa"), you can find the original recordings of these selections on YouTube, your favorite streaming service, or on CD at your local library.

Note: If you can read music, do not opt out of preparing and playing the written excerpts. If you opt out of playing the provided excerpts, we will assume you don't read music and you'll likely be placed in classes with other students who don't read music.

Additional guidelines for brass, woodwinds, and strings

1. Blues selection: play the written melody of either **“Blues of the Day”**, **“Tranquil Blues”** or **“Blues for Liddle”**. Then improvise a two chorus solo, followed by the melody for the last chorus. A *“chorus” equals one time through the song’s form.*
2. For your additional Placement Evaluation piece, choose a selection from the list above. Play the written melody, improvise a two-chorus solo, and then play the melody again one last time.

Additional guidelines for piano and guitar

For both selections play the written melody or excerpt once, improvise a two-chorus solo, and then comp the chords for the last chorus as if you were accompanying a soloist. A *“chorus” equals one time through the song’s form.*

Additional guidelines for bass

For both selections, play the written melody or excerpt once, then walk a bass line (or play a stylistically appropriate bass line if the tune doesn’t have a swing feel) for two choruses. Improvise a solo for your last chorus on each selection. A *“chorus” equals one time through the song’s form.*

Additional guidelines for drums

Drummers are strongly encouraged to submit video recordings for best placement results in student ensembles. Audio files can be accepted as well, but video is preferred.

1. Blues selection: use the written excerpt (marked as “piano/vibraphone” charts) for **“Blues of the Day”**, **“Tranquil Blues”** or **“Blues for Liddle”** and do your best to frame and set up the melody that’s being played by the saxophone on the provided play-along audio tracks. “Play the melody” for the first chorus, then play time for the following two choruses. On your last chorus, take a solo! A *“chorus” equals one time through the song’s form.*
2. For your additional Placement Evaluation piece, use the written excerpt (marked as “piano/vibraphone” charts) for any of the selections listed above. Use this written melody as a reference, and do your best to frame and set up the melody that’s being played by the saxophone on the provided play-along audio tracks. “Play the melody” for the first chorus, then play time for the second chorus. On your third chorus, play as if you were trading with other musicians – i.e., alternate between improvising and playing the groove in four-bar phrases (or whatever division works with the song you choose). On your last chorus, take a full on solo! A *“chorus” equals one time through the song’s form.*

How to prepare your placement recordings

Recordings must clearly feature your playing. While recordings must be audible, the overall recording quality does not affect an applicant's audition. **Please use the provided play-along tracks, and make sure that both the accompaniment and your instrument or voice can be heard in the recording.**

You can make your recording using a computer, smartphone, digital recorder, or any other type of recording device. There are many apps and programs that can make audio recordings, so you are welcome to use whatever software you're familiar with. If you are looking for free software to make these recordings, we suggest the "Voice Memos" app, which is available for iOS and Android devices, or **the audio recording and editing program Audacity, which is available for Windows, Mac, and Linux computers by clicking here.**

SJW can accept audio and video files directly from smartphones and tablets. If you're using another device, like a computer or stand-alone audio recorder, please make sure your recordings are one of the following file types: MP3, MPEG, MPEG-4, AAC or WAV format before submitting them. **If you're confused about file types, just send us whatever you've got and we'll contact you if the files don't work with our registration system.**

Deadline for placement recordings

Once you register, we will start sending you task notifications regarding your placement recording. Please submit placement recordings as soon as possible after registering for Jazz Camp Online. For the most accurate placement in classes, please submit your placement recordings by Wednesday, July 1st.

How to submit your placement recordings

To submit your Placement Evaluation Recordings you will need to create an account (if you don't have one already from last year) at www.stanfordjazz.org and register for your chosen program. You will then receive an email with instructions on how to upload your recordings to your account.

Music theory evaluation

All students registered for the **full-day** SJW Jazz Camp Online are required to submit a music theory evaluation for placement in theory classes during the program.

Click here to take the evaluation online.

Participants in the **half-day** Jazz Camp Online **DO NOT** have to submit this theory evaluations.

If your questions aren't answered here, please don't hesitate to contact Steven Lugerner, our Camp Director / Faculty Director at 650-736-0324 x309 or by e-mail at slugerner@stanfordjazz.org