

# SIGHTREADING TIPS

## BEFORE YOU PLAY

Take 10 to 60 seconds to prepare.

**1. Start with the Time Signature, Key Signature, Tempo, and Style of Music**

These markings at the top of the chart will guide you.

**2. Scan the piece for:**

High Notes and Low Notes—Don't be surprised while you're reading.

Accidentals—They're easy to spot BEFORE you do a read-through.

Challenging Rhythms—Figure these out ahead of time.

Difficult Licks—Quickly work out a fingering.

Leaps of Pitch—Know where you will need to shift.

**3. Look over the chart's "road map."**

\*Repeats \*1st and 2nd endings \*D.S. or D.C. \*Coda signs \*Repeated bars

**4. Just before you're going to play: Decide on a LEFT HAND POSITION.**

Starting position for the left hand is crucial to a successful beginning.

**5. Finally, count out two full measures and begin to play.**

Have the feel and rhythm of the first bar in your mind before you play it!

## WHILE YOU'RE PLAYING

**1. Don't stop**

No matter what happens, keep going! In a rehearsal or gigging situation, the rest of the ensemble will not stop for you. So, you must practice without stopping.

**2. Recover from any errors**

If you do make a mistake, jump back in whenever you can.

If you are having a difficult time keeping up with the tempo, try playing just the downbeats of each measure. Then try the whole exercise again at a slower speed.

**3. Keep your place**

Even if you are unable to play most of the notes, make sure you keep your eyes on the page and know where you should be.

**4. Count. Count. Count.**

Always count when you are sightreading music.

Make sure you always know where the downbeat is.

Subdivide your counting based on the fastest rhythm in the music.

If it is difficult for you to count while reading, try counting out loud.

## AND REMEMBER: BE MUSICAL

Make it sound like you're playing a line you've known for a long time.