

**OVER & OVER
(REHEARSE)**

RUNNING A REHEARSAL

Once the initial planning phase is complete, do your best to run a productive rehearsal with your group. People have given up their time and you don't want to take that for granted. By making sure they are properly prepared for what they are required to do, they will be more able to use their gifts.

In rehearsal, communication about the music needs to be clear. Practice the physical signals you will use to communicate to your team members so everyone is on the same page. Standing in a circle facing the other team members can be helpful as you work through gestures. This is not how your group will stand to lead worship, so be sure to rehearse these techniques in the formation you will have during worship.

Take note of particular sections of songs that need more communication and be very clear with your team. Show these changes as early as possible.

Encourage your team members to mark their music, especially places where you need them to watch. This avoids repeating the same sections over and over because of the same mistakes.

A break in your rehearsal can be an ideal time for devotions together, as well as any announcements or discussion. Some people feel rushed to leave once practice has ended so using your break time like this can cultivate relationship building in your group.

It is a good idea to finish your rehearsal with a familiar piece or run a piece that went well earlier in your practice. This helps the group to leave on a positive note and reminds them of what has been accomplished.

Include a time for prayer in your rehearsal. This can be at any time during your practice but it is important that your group surrounds itself with prayer on a regular basis.

PLAYING TOGETHER

To be an effective worship team, it is important to understand each instrument's contribution to the group and how the individual parts fit together. Key elements to your worship songs like rhythm, melody and dynamics will be affected by the instrumentation you use.

When you have a clear plan for your song, it is easier to communicate the instrumentation you need to achieve this plan. Not every instrument needs to play all of the time. It is a matter of understanding the instrumentation available, abilities, and the needs of your congregation.

Musical contrast, like the rise and fall of dynamics, should be worked out in rehearsal so everyone makes those changes together. If dynamics should change during a live worship time, allow the leader to direct those changes. If a response time that has been rehearsed goes longer than expected, you may drop some instruments out to lower dynamics or have the melody played instrumentally, rather than sung, to allow people to respond. You will need to communicate this clearly to your team.

Common rhythms used by the rhythm section (mainly drums and bass guitar) lock the song together and give it a common style or groove. Finding a groove for the song to sit in is important as it establishes direction. When your whole group grabs a certain rhythm together, it can be a very effective musical technique.

Listen to the balance of your group. Ideally, you would include a sound technician in your ensemble who knows the group and can balance what the congregation hears. If you don't have someone to listen to you as you rehearse, record your practice times and listen to the balance. When you are playing or singing, you should be able to hear every other member of the group in a ratio that is appropriate to the song and overall sound. When one instrument is overpowering the others, it is a sign that you need to change the volume of certain instruments.

People worship through the lyrics of a song. Use the balance of the singers as a good reference point for the overall volume of the group. Once this is established, the volume of the other instruments can be set appropriately. Remember, you should be able to hear your congregation singing. If you can't, then you need to adjust the overall volume accordingly.

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YOUR TEAM

Your team may have various combinations of the instruments listed below. This chart will help you manage your group and the instrumentation you use in each song.



Lyrics, Melody and
Harmony

VOCALS



Chords, Melody and
Rhythm

PIANO



Chords, Rhythm and
Melody

ACOUSTIC GUITAR



Chords, Lead Lines and
Melody

ELECTRIC GUITAR



Tempo, Rhythm and Groove

DRUMS



Root of the Chord, Rhythm
and Groove

BASS GUITAR



Chords, Lead Lines and
Rhythm

KEYBOARD / SYNTH



Lead Lines, Melody and
Chords

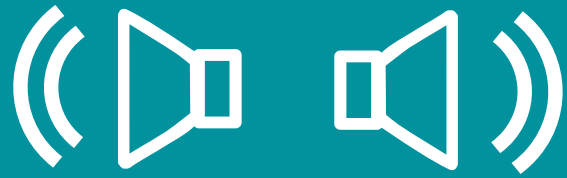
BRASS



Groove, Rhythm and Tempo

AUXILIARY PERCUSSION

SPREADING OUT THE SOUND



Worship songs need to be clear and easy to follow. This doesn't mean you need to have simple arrangements. Most teams will have instruments that play in similar registers. You need to be aware of the instruments in your group and how they are contributing to the overall sound. Spreading out the sound ensures that multiple instruments are not playing the same notes regularly.

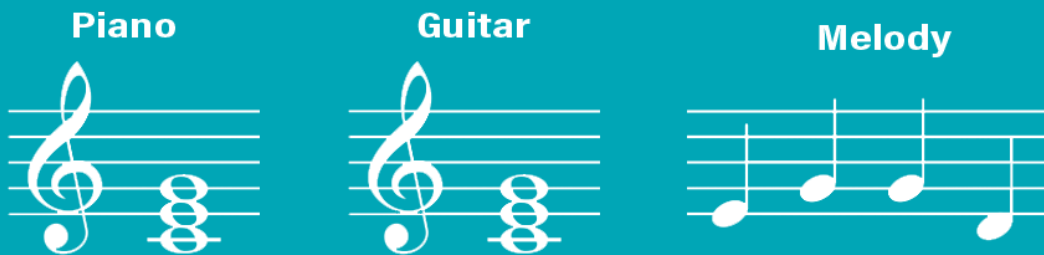
To spread out the sound of your group, you need to try to work in different registers. The register refers to the specific octave you are playing in. Doing this can accomplish two things:

- 1) Make a smaller ensemble sound fuller
- 2) Give clarity of sound to a larger group.

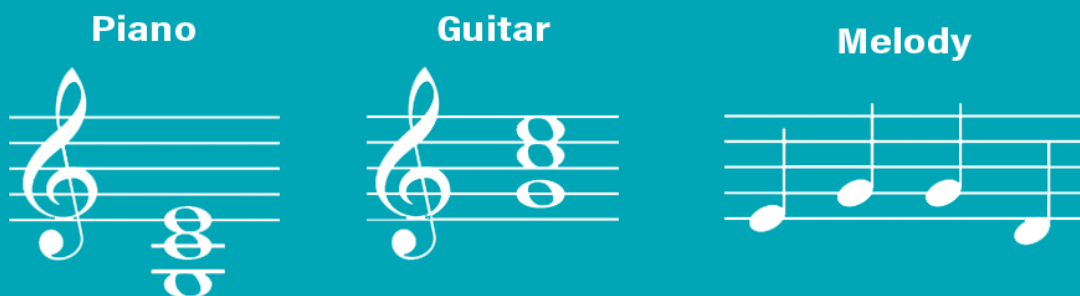
The chords used by piano and guitars, as well as the melody being sung, are usually in similar registers. This congestion can make a good arrangement sound muddy or undefined. If you can spread out the register (octave) that some of the chords are played in, or spread out the notes of a chord (playing arpeggios), there will be more definition to the sound. This clarity will help the congregation to easily identify the melody.

The more instruments you have playing the same notes, the greater the volume those notes will be. You need to be constantly aware of balancing the melody. The melody carries the lyrics which the congregation worships through. This, rather than the chords or rhythm of a song, is the most important part.

Chords played in the same register as the melody



*The same chords **spread out** and played in different registers*



This gives the melody its own space in the music

MUSICAL TRANSITIONS

Musical transitions require planning and practice. A solid understanding of music theory will be helpful as you plan and navigate transitions.

Here are some tools for musical transitions:

Selecting Keys - If possible, either select songs that are in the same key or take the songs you've chosen and put them in the same key. Be very careful to check what this does to the melodic range. It may put a song in a register that is way too high or low for congregations to sing comfortably.

Key Changes - When it is not possible to put your chosen songs in the same key, there are techniques that can be used to change key without stopping between songs. Using relative keys or playing the dominant chord of a new key as a transition chord are some of the methods you can try.

Manage Tempo Changes - The leader and members of the rhythm section need to communicate effectively when there are changes to the tempo of songs. Changing the tempo during the last section of the initial song can help establish the tempo for the next song. A prolonged chord held by some instruments and a rhythmic drive into a new tempo can also provide a tempo change.



Ambient Sounds - At the end of an initial song, synthesizer or pad sounds played on a keyboard or guitar can provide space in the music and allow a new song to be established. These sounds should have less melodic features and more background presence.

Using "Hooks" from Songs - Elements of one song can be incorporated into another to establish a transition. This could be a melodic line, a chord progression or a rhythmic pattern. These elements are an audible cue for the congregation that the song is changing.

Just Switch - Sometimes, there is no musical element that can tie two songs together effectively. Even some key changes can sound awkward. When this occurs, it is okay to finish one song and start the next one.

It is important to **PLAN** and **PRACTICE** your musical transitions.

THE OTHER STUFF THAT'S NOT MUSIC

There are other factors to consider in supporting your group as they lead the congregation. The most important is the words on screen. These need to be large enough to read and presented in a clear font. While it may be nice to add color and pictures to some of your slides, if it distracts from the lyrics, then it will distract from the singing and the opportunity to engage in worship.

Be sure the displayed slides change ahead of time so there is an awareness of what is coming next and lyrics aren't missed. People will sing more confidently if you can time this well.

Have your words/slides in the order you will sing them. Jumping back and forth between slides is sometimes required. Be sure the person operating the words on screen can see the worship leader's gestures, or hear their instructions, to indicate which set of words should come next. It is ideal if the person who is changing words on screen is a part of your team and rehearses with you. It will help make this part of the service as seamless as possible.

Personal equipment, such as amplifiers and instruments, are the responsibility of the owner to ensure they are cared for and kept in working order. There is other equipment that your group will use regularly that they should know how to care for. For example, cables, stage monitors, microphones and stands are all essential to the effectiveness of your group. Ideally, you should have a person on your team that can help you look after all of this equipment and teach the team to do the same.

Understanding how to communicate with your sound technician is vital when it comes to hearing yourself on stage. A monitor mix is designed to help your team hear themselves while playing. This can sound totally different from what the congregation is hearing. Working with your sound technician in rehearsal is the best way to deal with this, before you have the added responsibility of leading the congregation.

Using a microphone properly is important. Be aware of the type of microphones at your ministry unit and the correct way to use them.

AUDIO/VISUAL technicians need to be a part of worship team rehearsals. They are part of the team and therefore are part of leading the congregation in worship.