

Conducting Guidelines

Score Mastery – How to study a song

Posture – feet, knees, chest, shoulders, neck/head

Stick Technique – holding the baton; conducting planes, vertical, horizontal, and frontal

Patterns – 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/4, 6/8, asymmetrical



2/4 Legato Beat Pattern



3/4 Legato Beat Pattern



4/4 Legato Beat Pattern



6/8 Legato Beat Pattern

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Use of Left Hand – cueing, crescendo & decrescendo, phrasing

Conducting Guidelines

Cueing

Efficiency of Conducting Gesture – preparation beats, releases

Precision and Poise

Style – marcato, legato, elongation

Musicality – steady tempo, dynamics, phrasing, ritardando, etc.

Overall Impression

Famous Conductors

Reynolds states that there are just two principles behind conducting motions.

- The first principle is that the players will attack the sound the way the conductor strikes the baton on the ictus, or the beat point.
- The second principle is that the way the conductor moves through space is the way the players will move air through their instrument or the bow on the string.

These basic principles imply that the conductor needs to possess a large vocabulary of gestures.

Famous Conductors

Boulez explains that gestures are “as personal as a voice,” and that the “relationship between music and gesture has physiological aspects that depends on each individual.

Fennel explains, “Conducting is not an art of speech; it is the art of gesture, pantomime, and ballet...”

Famous Conductors

Munch states that a conductor has two ways of communicating—facial expressions and gesture, but the “look in his eyes is often more important than the motion of a baton or the position of a hand.” Along with gestures, facial expressions, and the eyes, “the breath” is considered to be of utmost importance.

Frederick Harris, Jr. *Conducting with Feeling*. Galesville, MD: Meridith Music Publications, 2001, p. 16.

Famous Conductors

Bernstein observes in “The Joy of Music” that “a conductor who breathes with the music has gone far in acquiring a technique.”

Dennis Russell Davies simply explains that “any good conductor always uses positive eye contact and breathes with the musicians. Those are the two major things a conductor has to do.”

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