Welcome to Wonderland!

We're so glad that you're interested in being in a musical play.

Some of you may already be familiar with the audition process. Some of you might be experiencing your first audition. Either way, we're here to help you prepare.

On the following pages you'll find everything that you need to know about auditioning for this great show, such as:

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Audition Tips:

1) A musical theater audition is NOT American Idol. This is an audition, not a “sing-off”. It’s all about storytelling. The director isn’t so much listening to voices as looking for who can tell a story with their voice, face, and body.

2) The director has a problem. She needs to put together a big puzzle and find just the right pieces to put it together best. She is not there to “judge” you – she is really, really hoping that you’ll be the right fit for one of her puzzle pieces. Your job is to help the director solve her problem. So there’s no need for you to be nervous!

3) If you’re nervous anyway, “hide” behind the character. Remember that it’s not “you” up there; it’s your character. Tell your character’s story the entire time when you audition. Get involved in telling the story and don’t spend time thinking about how your voice sounds when you sing.

4) Try to be aware of what your face and body are doing when you sing. Regardless of how your song sounds, if your face doesn’t tell the story of the song, the audience isn’t going to understand the story. Our brains process pictures before they process words, so if your hands are busy, say, tugging at the bottom of your shirt, the audience is going to think your song is about a shirt, no matter what words you’re singing!

5) Use clear diction. We need to understand every word that you say.

6) Sing loudly enough to be heard from across the room, but don’t scream.

7) When you are singing, you shouldn’t look at anyone in the room, especially not the director. You should look past the director at a spot on the wall that is at your eye level. Pretend that spot is a close friend to whom you are telling your story.

8) You do not have to memorize the song selections – we will have the words up on a music stand – but it will be to your advantage if you do memorize the words and can focus on telling the story. Even if you don’t have the song memorized, don’t spend your time staring at the words. Instead, only look at the words when you absolutely forget them. This applies to songs AND sides, but please see more about preparing sides on p.4.

9) If you are very young and are not really reading yet – don’t worry! We’ll work with you and “feed” you the words as you go along, but do try to pick one of the song selections and see how much you can memorize at home BEFORE the audition!

10) The director may give you advice about how to read a certain line, or how to read the whole scene. If that happens, try to incorporate the suggestions in your performance, even if it seems odd or wrong. Everyone will notice how well you take direction, and that has a huge impact on whether or not a person gets cast.
Alice in Wonderland Jr. Character Breakdown

ALICE, SMALL ALICE, and TALL ALICE: are differently sized versions of the same character. She is a spunky girl who enjoys adventures and is on a journey of self-discovery.

The CHESHIRE CAT: is played by three separate actors who play the head, the body and the tail of the cat. The Cheshire Cat serves at the Narrator for the story and is a very funny character.

The WHITE RABBIT: is an energetic, worrisome character that hardly ever stops moving. This character exudes a lot of energy and had a rapid-fire change of focus.

TWEEDLE DUM and TWEEDLE DEE: are a pair of goofballs similar to old comedy teams like Abbott & Costello or Laurel & Hardy.

MATHILDA: is Alice's older sister. She is no-nonsense and tries to keep Alice from being a "dreamer".

THE FLOWERS (ROSE, PETUNIA, LILY, VIOLET, DAISY, etc.): are snooty, mean girls who think they are the most important people in the whole world.

CATERPILLAR: part guru, part diva, the Caterpillar is comprised of five actors who play the head, body, and all those hands, which move in synchronized gestures to help emphasize a point. He provides the heart for the story and really convinces Alice to be herself.

The MAD HATTER: is the life of the tea party, and is someone who enjoys acting larger than life.

The MARCH HARE: is the counterpart to the Mad Hatter, and also enjoys a good party. A little less crazy than the Mad hatter, the March Hare is a happy fun character who enjoys playing.

The QUEEN OF HEARTS: is the big mean bully of the story. She has a commanding presence and is a little scary but funny at the same time.

The KING OF HEARTS: is in the shadow of the queen, though he has a very high-level vocabulary.

The DOORKNOB: is a very funny character based somewhat on Jimmy Durante.

The DODO BIRD: is the Captain of the Queen's Navy and is in command of the lobsters and other animals.

The ENSEMBLE (KIDS PLAYINGIN THE PARK, ROCK LOBSTERS, TALKING FISH, ROYAL CARDSMEN, UNBIRTHDAY PARTIERS, etc.) are featured in all of the production numbers. There are many opportunities for featured acting and solo moments for the Ensemble members.
Introduction to "Sides"

On the next four pages you'll find 4 separate audition reading cuts (or "sides"). Please prepare all four of them, as you may be asked to read any one of them, or several of them, during the audition process. For selection #4 (ALICE, TWEEDLE DEE, and TWEEDLE DUM), please be familiar with all 3 roles.

Question: What do we mean by "prepare"?

Answer: To "prepare" these sides means to be as familiar with them as you possibly can. Since we will only meet once per week, the ability to memorize material quickly has to factor into our casting decisions. We will lean towards casting actors with good memories who are dedicated enough to take the time to fully prepare their auditions.

Q: Can I read from (hold) the sides at the audition?

A: Yes, but it will work to your advantage if you know the sides very well and don't have to rely on holding them in front of you and constantly refer to them during the audition. That said, we want you to focus your audition on creatively portraying a believable character, not on trying to remember the script. So if you want to hold the sides at the audition as a reference (especially for selection #4 with ALICE and the TWEEDLES), that's fine. Just don't bury your head in the script.

Q: What if I stumble on the words when reading?

A: If you stumble on the words, it's not the end of the world. Focus instead on really trying to listen to what is being said, and (in selection #4) react to it even when you are not the person speaking! Try to understand what the scene is about, what your character is trying to accomplish, and how that character would go about trying to achieve their goals.

Q: Do you want accents?

A: We would love it if Alice, Small Alice, Matilda, and the Queen and King of Hearts spoke with upper-class British accents. The Doorknob should have a Jimmy Durante style/accent (see link in Character Breakdown). Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum's speeches are modeled after comic routines by Abbott & Costello and Laurel & Hardy, so they should have similar rhythms/cadences.
ALICE

Should I or shouldn’t I? You know what they say: “If you don’t explore, you’ll never discover.” But my sister Mathilda always says, “Look before you leap.” Well, I’m looking and it looks pretty deep and dark and I can’t see the bottom and maybe it goes all the way to the center of the earth and I’ll be burnt to a crisp in the molten core like the bad marshmallow we’ve all heard so much about!

(pause)

Or not.

(pause)

Ok, I looked. Now it’s time to leap!
CHESHIRE CAT

Alice left the Tweedles to sort out their late-onset identity crisis and acute co-dependency and chased after the White Rabbit. She trailed him through the woods to his house—

(like a real estate agent)

A comfy little velveteen 2-up, 3-down, one-man-on-third, A-frame, watership-down hideaway warren just perfect for such an innnnteresting rabbit.

[note: this speech has several references crammed into it. There are references to:
-- a famous children's story (The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams)
-- a two-level house ("2-up")
-- baseball ("2-up, 3-down, one man on third")
-- a type of house ("A-frame")
-- a novel about the lives of rabbits (Watership Down by Richard Adams)
-- a reference to a Warner Bros. cartoon in which Bugs Bunny acts like a beautician who gives the monster a manicure ("Innnnnteresting rabbit") -- see link, above]
KING OF HEARTS

(like a seasoned trial lawyer)
The prisoner is charged with enticing her majesty, the Queen of Hearts, into a game of Simon Says, and thereby willfully and with Alice of forethought, didst put a bee in her royal bonnet and cause our beloved Queen to lose her royal temper!
READING #4: ALICE, TWEEDLE DEE, and TWEEDLE DUM

(ALICE bowls into TWEEDLE DEE and TWEEDLE DUM - identical oddballs - and all three fall down)

ALICE

Oh, I'm sorry

TWEEDLE DUM

Oh, how do you do, Sorry! I'm Tweedle Dum.

TWEEDLE DEE

And I'm Tweedle Dee. I've never met anyone named Sorry before.

(ALICE and the TWEEDLES shake hands at the same time in a confusing, elaborate handshake.)

ALICE

Oh, I'm sorry, but I'm not Sorry. I'm sorry.

TWEEDLE DEE

Oh, how do you do! I'm Tweedle Dee.

TWEEDLE DUM

No, I'm Tweedle Dee.

(ALICE and the TWEEDLES shake hands.)

TWEEDLE DEE

No, I'm Tweedle Dee. You're Tweedle Dum.

TWEEDLE DUM

Oh, am I? I'm sorry.

TWEEDLE DEE

What a coincidence! So is she!

TWEEDLE DUM

(to ALICE)

Are we related?
Song Lyrics

You will be asked to sing one or more of the following song cuts for the audition. You will sing individually (a solo), and you may also be asked to sing in a group.

We've posted four song cuts on the website. Each cut has two versions: Vocal and Instrumental. The vocal versions are there for learning purposes, but you will be singing along to the instrumental version, so MAKE SURE THAT YOU PRACTICE WITH THE INSTRUMENTAL VERSION.

Don't try to imitate the vocal quality of the person singing on the vocal version. Sing the way you think the character would express him/herself.

**Song #1: Alice In Wonderland Theme**  
*(sung by Ensemble)*

Alice in Wonderland  
How do you get to Wonderland?  
Over the hill or underland  
or just behind the tree?  
When clouds go rolling by  
they roll away and leave the sky  
Where is the land beyond the eye  
that people cannot see?  
Where can it be?

**Song #2: I'm Late**  
*(sung by the White Rabbit)*

(Note that the lines in blue below are sung by the ensemble on the vocal track and have slightly different wording. For audition purposes only, the soloist will sing the words printed below)

[spoken] Oh, no! Oh, no! Oh, no! Oh, no!

[sung] I'm late, I'm late for a very important date.

No time to say, "Hello", Goodbye!

I'm late, I'm late, I'm late, I'm late,

I'm overdue. I'm in a rabbit stew

Can't even say "Goodbye", Hello!

I'm late! I'm late I'm late!

I run and then I hop hop hop

I wish that I could fly.

There's danger if I stop stop stop

And here's the reason why:

I know I'm late.

It's clear.

So why am I still here?

I'll never make it now, I fear!

I'm late! I'm late! I'm late!
**Song #3: Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah**  
*(sung by the Caterpillar)*

Zip-a-dee-doo-dah
Zip-a-dee-ay
My, oh my, what a wonderful day!
Plenty of sunshine heading my way,
Zip-a-dee-doo-dah
Zip-a-dee-ay

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**Song #4: Painting the Roses Red**  
*(Sung by the Queen of Hearts)*

(Note that the lines in blue below are sung by the ensemble on the vocal track and have slightly different wording. For audition purposes only, the soloist will sing the words printed below)

Who's been painting my roses red?
Who's been painting my roses red?
Who dares to taint with vulgar paint
the royal flower bed?
For painting my roses red,
someone will lose his head!
Dance Audition Hints

The choreographer (person who invents the dance steps for the show) will teach you a small routine that you will learn in groups.

Do your best, but ultimately, choreographers are most interested in who looks energized and exciting while moving in time with music

If you mess up the steps, put your feet in the wrong place, or forget what to do with your hands, it is not the end of the world. Even very polished dancers mess up sometimes. No one expects you to be perfect. However, when you miss something, it is important that you keep smiling and keep going! A big smile and an air of confidence can hide a multitude of mistakes with your feet. Even if you do the steps perfectly, if you are not doing something interesting with your face, or if you look like you're really concentrating hard instead of enjoying it, the staff may pick someone with slightly less dancing ability, who looks like they're having fun.

As a general note, make sure when the choreographer is teaching the steps, you are standing in a place where you can see. Frequently, people uncomfortable with dance try to hide in the back. It doesn't work. The point is not to hide, but to show us what you can do!
Casting

We selected Alice in Wonderland, Jr. because it includes many characters AND because there is a LOT for the ENSEMBLE to do. In fact, with the exception of ALICE, the ENSEMBLE is onstage more than any other character. Smaller roles will double as ENSEMBLE. There are solos and acting "bits" that we will cast from the ENSEMBLE as we enter the rehearsal process.

As mentioned on p.2, casting a show is like assembling a large jigsaw puzzle. If you are not cast in the show, that DOES NOT mean that your audition performance was not of a good quality. It simply means that there wasn't a good fit for you in this particular show. The "fit" decision usually has nothing to do with anything under your control. We may have had too many singers with low voices, too many tall actors, too many short actors -- you get the picture!

Similarly, if you auditioned hoping to be given a certain role and you are cast with a different role, that means that the directors needed you most in the role in which you were cast. Again, remember that the ENSEMBLE is considered a role.

being in a show is being on a team. Every single player on the team is vital to the success of the whole piece. NO ONE ACTOR is more important than any other actor onstage.

Above all, if you audition for the show, it is understood that you are committed to being on the team and will accept whatever role you are given. Please honor that commitment.

Enjoy the audition process -- and BREAK A LEG!