

Good Things to Know About Singing in a Quartet



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1. Singing in a quartet can be extremely fun and rewarding! You'll encounter new challenges and discover new avenues for creative expression – you'll be able to choose your own music, create your own interpretation, pick your own costuming, develop your own choreography, etc. Undoubtedly, quarteting will strengthen your vocal, listening, and performance skills . . . and it will make you a stronger singer in your chorus. Chances are, you'll develop some fabulous friendships in the process.

If you're not certain this is for you – give it a try by getting together with others to sing tags or practice chorus or regional songs.

2. The most important considerations when looking for quartet mates are:
 - a. Blend of voices. Enlist a “fifth ear” to help you assess your blend. You can have four good voices but simply not have a good blend together.
 - b. Similar goals/aspirations. Some people want to be in a quartet to have friends with whom to sing and hang around . . . and others want “the shiny hat.” Every path requires a different level of commitment – not just desire, but the actual ability and willingness to invest the time, energy and \$ to meet those goals.
 - c. Personalities that get along well. You will be spending a lot of time together – and it's a lot more fun if you like each other.
 - d. Membership in Sweet Adelines. Every member must be a registered member with Sweet Adelines International, whether that be as an active chapter member or a member-at-large.
3. It's not unusual for 2 or 3 people to decide to quartet together, but have difficulty finding the right person(s) to round out the foursome. Consider having someone try switching voice parts – or looking outside your chorus. There are advantages to being in a “chorus quartet,” especially for singers who are new to quarteting: having a built-in repertoire, all members learning the same techniques from the director and coaches, and having opportunities to sing at chorus performances.
4. Once you form your quartet, you can choose to “register” it with Sweet Adelines International. Registration offers the opportunity to compete at regional contest and it gives you exclusivity to your quartet name. You can search for available quartet names on the SAI website in the Members Only/Quartet Search section. Sound-alikes and protected names (e.g. of previous quartet champions) are not available.

Registration fees:

May 1–January 15: Quartet registration fee is \$125 USD.

January 16–March 31: Quartet registration fee is \$125 USD + \$30 USD processing fee.

Registered quartets don't have to compete . . . but competing quartets have to be registered. New quartets planning to compete in regional competition must be registered with the

organization at least 60 days prior to your contest date. A member may belong to more than one registered quartet. Quartet members may compete in up to two different quartets during the same regional contest as long as they are in different competition divisions (e.g., one quartet in International Division and one in Open Division) but no more than two members per quartet may compete in the second quartet in the same regional contest. Quartets must renew their registration every year (or the name becomes available for another quartet to register).

5. Early on in your quartet relationship, establish expectations and discuss how you will choose and learn music, select coaches, buy costumes, etc. – and how you will deal with disagreements, personnel changes, etc. Also, assign roles or agree on whether you'll share or rotate responsibilities for duties such as leading warm-ups, creating choreo, serving as Quartet Contact, Treasurer, Stylist, etc. Quarteting is a team sport – successful quartets have members who communicate well and know they can count on each other to deliver.
6. Before you are permitted to sing in public as a representative of your chorus or Sweet Adelines International, it's likely you will have to audition for your Director or music team/chorus. This is to assure the quality of the quartet's performance will represent our organization well – and to give your quartet helpful guidance on what to work on next. Please see your chorus' standing rules for specific details.
7. You will enhance your success in quarteting if you have regular and well-planned rehearsals – and an occasional coaching session. Plan time in your rehearsals for vocal and physical warm-ups, polishing existing repertoire, learning new music, working on specific vocal or visual skills, and quartet business. Record or videotape your rehearsals so you can hear/see them as an audience member does – and enlist the help of one or more coaches to help you continuously improve. It is customary to pay coaches so inquire about coaching fees before booking a coach. Although in-person coaching sessions are ideal, some quartets submit recordings or coach via Zoom for interim sessions.
8. Quartets must adhere to Sweet Adelines International policy regarding copyrights for music. All necessary permissions, grants of rights, and licenses for the use of musical works in any public performance/recording or in competition must be secured, and all applicable fees must be paid. When your quartet purchases music from International Sales or an arranger, you will get these rights – and if you compete, you'll be asked to submit a form that confirms you have the rights to your competition numbers. If purchasing single-song sheet music through International Headquarters, you'll want to pay for 4 copies.
9. If you are planning to compete, be sure that the arrangements of your competition songs are cleared in the Song Assessment Tool, which can be found on the SAI website. If you do not see your particular song/arrangement on the list, there is a process where you can submit information and have your song reviewed for approval.
10. Singing in a quartet does not have to cost a lot of money – but be prepared that there could be expenses for quartet registration, entering regional competition, purchase of music and learning tracks, coaching, workshops, costuming, etc. Fortunately, you have the ability to earn money through paid performances and launching your own fundraisers.

11. There is a wealth of resources available to you. Check out Member Resources and International Sales on the SAI website <https://sweetadelines.com/> as well as some of the other resources below:
- a) Quarteting Information <https://sweetadelines.com/quartetting>
 - Information and directions for online quartet information
 - Quartet name search
 - b) Quartet Handbook
 - c) Judging Category Description Book (if you're going to compete, you'll want to be familiar with this book) <https://sweetadelines.com/education/jcdb>
 - d) Music Resources from Sweet Adelines: <https://sweetadelines.com/resources/find-purchase-music>
 - Published Music and international arranged music
 - Videos/CDs from previous International Quartet competitions
 - Books, videos, CDs for warm-ups, breathing, improving your vocal skills
 - Song Assessment Tool <https://sweetadelines.com/song-assessment-tool>
 - e) Additional sheet Music Resources
 - <https://www.sheetmusicdirect.com/>
 - <https://www.sheetmusicplus.com/>
 - Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) <https://shop.barbershop.org/>
 - f) The free searchable online database of learning tracks, who makes them, and where to find them! <http://barbershoptracks.com/>
 - g) List of Barbershop Arrangers with contact information
 - <https://sweetadelines.com/resources/contact-arrangers>
 - <https://www.barbershopconnections.com/>

Enjoy!