# MYSTIC CHORALE
# CREATING VIRTUAL CHOIR VIDEOS
# [INSTRUCTIONS FOR PC USERS]

Separate instructions are available for Mac users.

## OVERVIEW: The basic steps you need to create a video:

1. **PRACTICE WITH YOUTUBE**
   Practice along with the YouTube video we send you

2. **SET UP ZOOM**
   Set up your "recording studio"

3. **RECORD**
   Record yourself singing on Zoom while the YouTube video is playing

4. **SAVE YOUR RECORDING**
   Save and rename your recording

5. **UPLOAD THE FILE TO DROPBOX**
   Upload your recording into a Mystic Chorale Dropbox folder

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECORDING WITH ZOOM

### Getting Started

Before you begin, please scan these instructions and watch this instructional video for an overview of the process:

### Watch Nick Page's Instructional Video

For each song included in the season, Nick will create a YouTube video for you to sing along with and a link for where to upload your recording when it's done:

- A link to a recording with Nick and other members of Mystic Chorale singing the various parts, along with lyrics on the screen and Nick's conducting directions

- A link to upload your finished video into the Mystic Chorale's Dropbox

The directions may sound complicated, but please bear with us – there are a lot of steps, but it's not as difficult as it sounds. The results are AMAZING, and once you've mastered the process, you can make lots more!

### Getting Help

These instructions are for PC users using Zoom to record. They were created on a Windows 10 computer with a free Zoom account. All Zoom setups are not the same, so please bear with us.

If you need help following these instructions, or you are using a Mac or other device to record, please contact Paula Tusler, for Mystic Chorale technical support or to direct you to the right person: paulaztusler@gmail.com or 617.416.2617

## Step 1: Practice with YouTube

- For the song you are recording, open the link to that song in the email we send.

- Most tracks begin with a verbal introduction by Nick, followed by the syncing process. The syncing process involves your clapping twice along with Nick. The claps allow videos to be synchronized by Nick in the final video. Include the claps even when you are not recording to get the hang of it.

- Practice the song along with the video. Nick will provide cues and cut-offs. Keep the cut-offs clean, particularly syllables that end with a short soft "S".

- Please memorize the music as you would for a concert. Practice as many times as necessary.

- Test your earphones or earbuds to make sure that no extraneous sound is coming from your computer when you're listening to YouTube (this is to prepare for recording later).

## Step 2: Set Up Zoom

**Set Up Your Computer**

- Place your PC on a stable, flat surface. Select a background that is not too distracting.

- Place your light source in front of you so you can be easily seen. Being backlit by light from a sunny window or a lamp will place you in shadow. If you are in the dark, we may not be able to include your image in the group video.

- Check the location of your camera. You need to know where to look when you are recording.

- Have your headset/earphones or earbuds handy.

**Set Up a Zoom Account**

- Go to **www.zoom.us**.

- If you don't already have a Zoom account of your own, sign up for a free account.

- You will be prompted for your birthday (which they do not store) and your email address.

- After a security question, you will receive an email with a link where you can sign in.

- Log in and create a password. Answer any additional security questions.

**Open a New Meeting**

- If you are not already there, go to **www.zoom.us**.

- On the Zoom home page, click "Host A Meeting" (you will be creating your own meeting, with you as the only participant).

- Select "With Video On" in the dropdown menu.

- If prompted, click on "Join with Computer Audio". (You can check the checkbox that says "Automatically join audio by computer when joining a meeting" to make it permanent.)

- This is your own meeting. You have 40 minutes before you have to start over again (if you don't want to pay for a Zoom account).

**Adjust Your Sound Settings**

The first time you record, you need to check your audio settings.

- In the main Zoom window, look for the microphone icon in the lower left on the bottom menu bar (hover if necessary to find the menu bar).

- Click the tiny Up arrow to the right of the microphone icon.

- Choose "Audio Settings" at the bottom of the pop-up menu. The Audio Settings panel will open.

- If desired, you can use Test Speaker and Test Microphone to test your speaker and microphone volume. (Note that these tests will fail with headphones plugged into the computer.)

- Make sure that there is no checkmark next to "Automatically adjust volume" in the Microphone section.

- Select the "Advanced" button.

- Choose Disable in the dropdown menus for "Suppress Persistent Background Noise" and "Suppress Intermittent Background". Leave the other settings alone.

- Click the X at the top right corner of the Advanced panel to return to the main Zoom session.

- NOTE: If your version of Zoom does not have the Background Noise menus on the "Advanced" panel, return to "Audio Settings" and set "Suppress Background Noise" to "Low"

## Step 3: Record

When you have finished practicing your song with the YouTube video, and you have set up your computer, you're ready to move on to recording. It is a good idea to practice the recording procedure the first time with a short, easy song.

- Check the microphone and video icons on the left end of the menu bar at the bottom of the Zoom window. If there a slash through either one, click it once to remove the slash.

- Plug your earphones, headset, or earbuds into your PC. Double-check that no sound is coming from your computer.

  **HINT:** Leave one earbud or headphone off so you can hear yourself singing along with the YouTube video. For many people, this will help you stay in tune.

- Make sure your face is centered in the Zoom window and that you are well lit. (Don't worry about the size of your window. It will be cropped in the final version.)

- Switch to the window containing the YouTube video. (Use ALT+TAB to switch between windows. Press it as many times as necessary to find the window you want and let go to select it.)

- Play the YouTube video, skip any ads, and cue it to right before the two claps. Press the Pause icon. Enlarge the video to full screen to make it easier to see.

  **Note:** Please don't record any long introduction that precedes the two claps.

- Switch back to Zoom. (Use ALT+TAB.)

- Press Record on the bottom menu ONCE to begin recording. If you don't see Record, click More and choose "Record on this computer". (You can also press ALT+R to start recording.)

- You will see a blinking red light on the upper left of your screen to indicate you are indeed recording.

- Switch back to YouTube (ALT+TAB).

- Press the Play button to restart the video and sing your part.

- The first thing you will be asked to do is to clap twice on cue. It is important to be accurate.

- The words will appear on the screen on the video, but you should sing to your camera. Remember to look directly at your camera, not the video, your screen, or printed words.

- Relax. The key is to look (and feel!) lively as you sing. We want these videos to reflect Mystic joy!

- Sing your part, and watch Nick for cut-offs, crescendos, and other cues. Be accurate and expressive. If you make a mistake, keep singing. Nick can remove some mistakes in editing. (You can also record another version if necessary.)

- At the end of the song, keep looking at the camera with a smile until you see the message "Don't Go Away".

- Note the shortened name for the song you just recorded (in capital letters) in the final instructions. (The rest of the instructions are repeated here, so don't worry if you can't absorb them all!)

- Stop the video in YouTube. You can close YouTube if you are finished recording.

- Switch back to Zoom (ALT+TAB) and press ALT+R to stop the recording. (You can also press the Stop icon on the menu bar, the standard black square icon used on old tape players.)

- When the recording stops, Zoom will display a message that the recording will be converted to mp4 when the meeting has ended. (You can make another video at this point, if you like, by following the same instructions.)

## Step 4: Save Your Recording

**Locate the Recording File**

- Click the End button on the right end of the menu bar and then "End Meeting for All". Your computer will convert any recordings you made during the session as soon as you end the meeting. Wait until the conversion is complete.

- On a PC, the conversion dialog takes you directly to the Zoom folder containing your mp4 file.

- There will be multiple files in the folder. Your recording will have the extension mp4.

   **Note:** If you made only one recording before you ended the meeting, it will be called "zoom_0.mp4".

   Additional recordings made during the same session will be numbered in the order you made them (example: zoom_1.mp4, zoom_2.mp4, etc.).

- Double-click your mp4 file to play it. It contains both the audio and video. (Unplug your earphones from your computer to listen to the recording.)

**Rename Your Recording**

When you are satisfied with the recording, you are ready to rename it.

- Right-click the mp4 file and choose Rename from the pop-up menu.

- Rename the file as follows:

    o  The section you sing in (Sop, Alto, Tenor, Bass)
    o  Your first name and last initial
    o  The name of the song as specified in YouTube
    o  (Leave the mp4 extension at the end.)

  **For Example:** "Nick P Bass WE RISE.mp4"

- Note the name of the folder containing the renamed file. (For example, 2020-09-30 16.51.18 ….)

# Step 6: Upload the File to Dropbox

You will receive an email with a link to the Mystic Chorale Dropbox folder for the song you have just recorded.

- Click the Dropbox link.

- Click on "Choose from Computer".

- Navigate to Documents and open your Zoom folder. (Zoom created the Zoom folder when you signed up for your Zoom account.)

- Look for the folder with the timestamp of the mp4 you just renamed.

  **Note:**  Each time you end a Zoom session after making one or more recordings, a new folder is created, with a new timestamp.

- Open the folder and select the mp3 file you just renamed.

  You can also search for the song you just re-titled:
  (For example, search for "Nick P Bass WE RISE".)

- In the next window, click Upload. Uploading may take a while.

- When uploading is complete, a message will be displayed saying, "Thanks, You're All Done."

- If you've recorded another song (not the same song again, please), you can upload that as well by clicking "Add More Files" in that same window. Be sure to navigate to the correct folder.

  **Congratulations! Be proud of your accomplishment! Your hard work will be well rewarded!**