

Leonard Falcone International Euphonium and Tuba Festival ®

Recording Guidelines 2025

Last Updated: January 20, 2025

For the Preliminary Round, all applicants **MUST** submit a video entry; no audio-only submissions will be accepted. This shift to a video format is a proactive measure in response to recording practices and technology concerns, ensuring that the Falcone Competition maintains the highest integrity in alignment with evolving technology standards and practices. Once submissions are received, a non-adjudicator will verify recording integrity before blind evaluation by the judges, ensuring competitor anonymity throughout the process. This means that judges will have no access to, nor the means of ascertaining, the identity of any competitors throughout the evaluation process.

Audio/Video Recording Guidelines (to be strictly followed):

- There is to be absolutely **no editing** within any video submitted to the competitions. You may combine two videos of different movements, but you may **NOT** edit within a selection or movement. Editing is defined as any alteration to the recorded performance from the first to the last note within a movement or a work. It is permitted to trim the beginning or end of each file, i.e., before the music begins or after it concludes. Only one video submission per competitor will be accepted.
- If there are multiple movements, each movement may be recorded separately, but they must be combined into a single video in the specified order. Do not try to submit separate videos for each movement or piece; multiple videos will not be accepted.
- All required music must be combined into one video in the order listed on the [Required Music](#) listing and appear in that order on a single video for upload to YouTube during application submission. You may choose to use <https://filmora.wondershare.net> or another video editor to combine recorded videos if you have recorded the preliminary round music in more than one video. Additional details about posting the video can be found on the separate document [How to Post Your Video](#).
- Video must be recorded from a single, unobstructed camera angle (no zooming, panning, or cuts) with all performers continuously and clearly visible throughout the entire performance.
- Be sure to carefully set volume levels during recording and normalize the audio (if necessary) before submitting. This allows judges to hear all recordings more easily. Adjustment to the overall recorded volume of the track does not constitute editing. Volume automation is not permitted.
- Auto gain features should be disabled on your recording device to allow for an accurate dynamic representation of the performance.

- Do not embed any metadata in the submitted audio/video file. You may test for this by importing your file into a program such as iTunes; if the program can automatically determine identifying information such as the name of performer(s), location, etc., you have metadata embedded in the file.
- No speaking of any kind is allowed. Audible dialogue of any kind will result in disqualification. Caution all performers to avoid talking until the take has been completed. A good rule of thumb would be to hold silence for 5 seconds after any take, allowing for a clean submission.
- All video submissions must be privately shared with the Falcone Festival and available to our judging panel until you have been notified of the results of the judging of the preliminary round and comments have been received.
- Pitch correction or audio spectral editing of any kind will result in disqualification.

Recording Recommendations:

When submitting for a competition, your recorded sound is the only representation of your playing to the judges, so you should strive to record at the highest quality possible. However, when recording your audio/video entry, current technology now allows very affordable options for recording oneself on one's own device. The following suggestions are conceived as help for those applicants wishing to record themselves on a budget:

- Look for a portable video recorder with a built-in stereo microphone designed for recording live music.
- Use one location for all of your recordings.
- Shoot digital video with a camcorder or DSLR camera, with an external stereo condenser microphone attached. (The camera's built-in microphone will likely provide inferior audio quality.) Note: camera or camcorder must have an input for an external microphone.
- Smartphones or tablets can serve well as digital video recorders, using the built-in camera, provided an external stereo microphone is used. (The built-in microphone on most smartphones will provide poor audio quality.) Make sure that the microphones will point the same direction as the camera!
- Laptop computers also work well as digital video recorders using the built-in webcam with an external microphone. (The built-in microphone on most laptops will provide poor audio quality.) For the highest possible quality, professional microphones with a XLR connection may be used with a computer if used with an audio interface. Alternatively, look for a high-quality USB condenser microphone or a stereo condenser microphone with a 1/8" mini plug (only for laptops with a line-in/microphone input.) This process of recording directly to a computer can be easily undertaken using video recording software such as QuickTime Pro or iMovie (which are usually preloaded on laptops).

Pre-Recorded Accompaniment Policy

- While prerecorded accompaniment is allowed as part of your preliminary video recording, live pianists are preferred. If prerecorded accompaniment is used, it should be of high quality and in keeping with the style and character of the piece. However, if a live pianist is available, it is strongly encouraged to use them for the recording. The judges may take into consideration the quality and effectiveness of the accompaniment in their evaluation of the performance.
- **NOTE:** For all rounds following the preliminary round, accompaniment must be with the Festival assigned collaborative pianist—unless you choose to bring your own (live) accompanist with you, at your own cost.

Helpful Hints from Past Judges:

- Allow yourself plenty of time to record, well in advance of the due date. Plan for more than one take, with time to rest in between, so that you will sound your best each time.
- If recording yourself, experiment with your recording setup well in advance of your recording sessions to find the best microphone placement and setup.
- Record in a room with the best acoustics available to you. Avoid rooms that are either excessively dry or too reverberant. Judges are looking for a beautiful, clear, and natural sound, rather than a distant sound or one obscured by excessive reverberation.
- When recording with piano, seek out a good pianist and a good sounding in-tune piano. Plan for a page-turner if necessary.
- Avoid recording in locations with excessive HVAC or extraneous noises.

We strongly suggest reading through the separate document **How to Post Your Video** in advance of beginning your application.

Thanks to the U.S. Navy Band, Washington, D.C., for sharing their Guidelines and Procedures for the creation of this document.