



West Coast Amateur Musicians Society Summer Music Camp 2026

Pre-Camp Information

Thank you for deciding to make our camp part of your summer music experience!

Herein you will find all sorts of information that will be helpful in deciding what to pack, and what to expect when you get to camp. Please also refer to the [FAQ](#) which is a one-page question-answer sheet of most commonly asked questions.

HOW DO I GET TO CAMP?

From Greater Vancouver Lower Mainland by car

Brentwood College School is located in Mill Bay, on Vancouver Island. From the Lower Mainland, take a ferry from Horseshoe Bay to Nanaimo and drive an hour south, or take a ferry from Tsawwassen to Schwartz Bay and drive an hour around the Saanich Inlet. We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** making ferry reservations to avoid long waits at the ferry terminal and late arrival at camp!

Public Transportation

Mill Bay is serviced by the 66-Duncan and 99-Shawnigan Lake routes from downtown Victoria.

CHECK-IN

Check-in time is from 2:00pm to 4:00pm on Sunday, July 19, in the McNeill Lounge of the Crooks Hall building. If you are staying in residence, you can park in the parking lot next to the Bunch Centre while you collect your registration materials. Then we ask you to move your vehicle to the long-term parking for the duration of the week so that day campers can use the parking lot closer to camp activities. Parking spots near residence buildings may be used for a maximum of 15 minutes for unloading on registration day. Your car will be towed if it is left anywhere other than the two parking lots marked on the map. Day students should arrive by 3:30pm.

After settling into your room, new campers may choose to explore the campus by following the campus map and the map of classrooms (found in the [Camp Booklet](#)).

Parents/guardians of all campers aged 14 yrs and under must attend a brief orientation session with their children in the McNeill lounge from 4:15 - 5:15pm.

From 5:30 - 6:00pm, there will be a fun "Meet-and-Greet" activity for ALL campers, all ages, which will take place in the McNeill lounge, beside the dining hall.

Dinner will follow at 6:00pm and orientation will begin at 7:00pm. The first musical session of the camp is a read-through of Brahms' *Schicksalslied* which follows the orientation session. We encourage all those not attending the orchestral rehearsal to attend the choral read-through.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

Musical Items

In addition to your instrument, all instrumentalists will need a music stand, and many singers also use one. If you have any spare stands that you'd be prepared to let other people use, please label them clearly and leave them in a classroom for others to borrow in that location - and remember to collect them at the end of the week. You may also find it useful to bring pencils, and wind clips or clothes pins (for outdoor performances) and stand lights. Cellists, please bring an endpin anchor (also known as a "donut", "endpin stopper", or "rock stop") which you must use at minimum in the Bunch Theatre Dance Studio. We do not want to damage the floors with metal endpins!

We do not supply any instruments at camp, other than the large percussion equipment and pianos/keyboards. If you're thinking you'd like to learn a new instrument, this is a great environment in which to try it out, but you'll have to bring it along with you. WCAMS owns a viola and Bb, A and C clarinets. If you would like to borrow these at camp, please contact [Irene Percival](#) prior to camp. Many of our coaches are available to provide lessons outside of the regular scheduled classes, but the cost of these lessons is negotiated between the student and the teacher (it is not included in the camp fees).

If you have an instrument which you "sometimes" play, such as a guitar, ukulele or a recorder, there may well be opportunities to use it at camp (for example in the Strumming and Singing, Celtic Music or Early Music sessions, where a wide variety of instruments is always welcome). There are also a great many options for vocalists, so don't feel you need to have an instrument with you, other than your voice!

You may need to bring your own music for your coached chamber group and/or any ad hoc music-making.

Some campers like to take advantage of the week to get together with other musicians and read through other music. We recommend that you bring your own music, or download something from IMSLP before leaving home. You may also request to borrow music from the limited WCAMS Music Library by contacting the strings/woodwind/brass librarians on the [WCAMS Music Library](#) page of the web site before camp. The librarians will arrange to have the music available to you at camp.

Non-Musical Items

In addition to your personal effects, you may find it useful to bring a water bottle, a coffee mug, an alarm clock, earplugs, a notebook, an extension cord, and a fan (in case of very hot weather).

Dorm buildings and rooms do not lock, however campus security is diligent and there have never been issues. You can keep valuables in your room, in the desk's top drawer, which can be locked with a padlock. You must supply your own padlock.

Flip flops are useful for the showers. If you like to use a slip mat in the shower, you should bring your own.

You may also like to bring a bathing suit and flip flops. Swimming is possible from the school's boat dock. There is no lifeguard, so swimming is at your own risk. Please stay close to the dock and check the tides.

Although no money is required at camp, you may want to bring some cash to acquire books, printed music or CDs available by donation in support of our annual fundraiser. In addition, we usually collect cash for tips for the Brentwood kitchen staff.

WHAT DO I WEAR?

Camp is very casual - shirts, shorts, sandals - just comfortable summertime clothing. We have had many years of very hot weather during the week of camp, but of course there is no guarantee. Even during a hot spell, the evenings can be cool, so come prepared for some variability in weather.

As far as concert dress is concerned, there is no "dress code" at all. When attending the faculty concerts in the evening, many campers just wear what they've had on during the day, although some like to dress up a bit. For student concerts (which involve performances by virtually everyone at the camp), there is again no official code. Many people wear something dressier for the concert performances, but again, this is not the type of "formal wear" that you might wear in town. Women tend to be in skirts or sundresses, men perhaps in slacks or shorts, but no ties, no jackets, no fancy shoes - it's camp! Whatever you're comfortable in will be acceptable, and some people don't dress up at all for the concert events.

DO I NEED TO BRING FOOD?

Each meal at Brentwood is a set menu: breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and dinner. All hot entrées are served by the Brentwood service staff. There will be two lines: one line for regular meals and a second line for people with dietary restrictions (vegan, vegetarian, allergies, etc). The lines will be clearly labelled. Those campers coming through the "dietary" line should let the server know what their dietary needs are and the server will ensure they are served the appropriate food. Milk, juice, water, tea and coffee are available at every meal.

Each residence has a lounge area with a full fridge [and microwave] for the campers' use. If you would like to make use of the kitchen, you may like to bring your own cutlery, plates, kettle or coffee maker. If you like dessert after dinner you are welcome to bring sweet treats, or purchase some from the nearby shopping plaza; campers often gather in the lounges in the evening and share snacks.

Brentwood cannot accommodate guests for one-off meals, so if you have invited a guest to attend one of the concerts, many of the local establishments in Mill Bay would welcome their patronage!

If you have any questions about campus food contact Kim at kimaippersbach@gmail.com.

WHAT WILL MY ACCOMMODATION BE LIKE?

Camp participants are housed in student dorms on the Brentwood campus. All dorm rooms are configured as shared occupancy (2 people per room). Those who have paid for a private room will

use a room as single occupancy. There are no private washrooms in any of the rooms; all washrooms are communal hall washrooms, with 3-5 sinks/toilets/showers serving 4-8 rooms.

Bedding is provided, but you will have to make your own bed. Some people like to bring an extra pillow. Towels will be provided, but if you like to use a large bath towel, bring your own. A supply of fresh towels will be stacked outside each bathroom, and extra sheets are available in dorm common rooms if you would like to change your own sheets. You may also wish to bring extra hangers, an extra blanket, a reading lamp, padlock or a fan (dorms are not air-conditioned).

There are no accommodations available for overnight guests. If friends or family wish to attend an evening concert, they should book accommodation off-site.

COMMUTERS

If you are staying off-campus, there are two parking lots available (marked on the campus map) as well as some street parking. Day campers can make use of the common rooms in the Mackenzie or Allard dorms to "hang out" when not busy with classes.

MOBILITY

WCAMS will be renting a golf cart to assist those who have mobility issues to move quickly between classes and other activities. The golf cart will be driven by Katie Coombs along a pre-arranged route. If you have physical mobility issues, and would like to take advantage of this service, please attend a meeting on Sunday at 4:15pm in the Dining Hall, where the golf cart route will be planned.

In consideration of those with mobility issues, the tables at the front of the Dining Hall (near the food) will be reserved for those with physical limitations. In the spirit of inclusivity, we ask if other campers would allow those with mobility issues to "jump the food line", and offer to return their food tray, as they may require more time to get their meals.

You may wish to bring any accessibility aids you require such as slip mats or suction cup grab bars for the showers. These items will not be provided.

If you have any questions about these adaptations for those with physical challenges, please contact Katie Coombs at katiecoombs87@gmail.com.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR COURSES?

You don't have to sign up for anything! Chamber music groups are the only activity for which pre-registration is required, and these have already been organized. If you signed up for a chamber group but have not been contacted, please contact [Irene Percival](#), our music co-ordinator.

Faculty members will describe their sessions at our Sunday night orientation. On the first full day of camp (Monday) you simply follow the timetable and attend those classes that you think might be of interest to you. If on the Tuesday you want to try something different, you are free to do so. After that time, it's best to decide what you want to stick with, as performances are held Friday and Saturday nights, and by Wednesday the class coach will want to know who is going to be performing. You can read [Class Descriptions](#) of all the classes.

There are some classes in which enrolment is limited. The Large Symphony Orchestra and Choral Orchestra can only accommodate a fixed number of wind and brass players. The wind and brass coaches will take camper's wishes and abilities into consideration, and assign these parts at the Monday "Onlys" (first) session. The assignments will be posted on the whiteboard outside the Dining Hall by lunchtime on Monday.

The assignment of strings for the Advanced and Intermediate Ensembles have already been made and will be posted on the whiteboard at registration time.

Repertoire for all our large ensembles is posted on our [Repertoire page](#).

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES AT CAMP

WCAMS provides financial assistance to music students, youth, adults and families who could not otherwise afford to attend camp. Donations by campers and several fundraising activities support this fund. In 2014, WCAMS established a permanent Endowment Fund with Vancouver Foundation whose annual distributions also supplement our Financial Assistance program.

If you have a CD you don't listen to anymore, some printed music that you no longer play, or a best seller or favourite book from your book club, please consider donating these items to our Used Book/Music/CD Sale. Please only donate "like new" or "gently used" items, and ensure that printed music contains all parts. You can drop these items off at the table at registration. You can browse other people's donations in the entrance-level hallway of the Arts building. Help yourself to whatever grabs your fancy, in exchange for a monetary donation, anytime during the week.

Thanks very much for helping out!

PARENTS / CHAPERONES of CHILDREN & YOUTH

Anyone under the age of 19 MUST be accompanied by an adult chaperone, and must have a waiver signed by parent or legal guardian (not the chaperone). These forms must be submitted before camp. If you are bringing an under-19 and have not yet filled out the waiver form, please download and print the form from here:

<https://apply.wcams.ca/pdf-forms/Waiver2026.pdf>

and mail it to the address provided on the form before arriving at camp.

All children and youth MUST attend their appropriate class during the four morning sessions. If a morning class has to be missed due to illness, Joan Carne, the Child/Youth Morning Program Liaison and the coach(es) must be notified.

Musically advanced youth may attend a morning adult class in place of one of the youth classes with permission of the coach teaching the adult class. In this case, the parent/chaperone should inform Joan and the coach of the youth class which will be missed.

This year, we are introducing a full afternoon program for children and youth, which will include both indoor and outdoor games and activities. This program is optional and will be discussed during the mandatory Child/Youth Orientation meeting at 4:15 on Sunday.

Youth are welcome to attend afternoon and evening sessions: Orchestra 101 (for instrumentalists), Strumming and Singing and the Drop-In Singing class (for everyone) are highly recommended.

QUIET TIME

Our camp schedule is a very busy one, and both youth and adults become quite tired by mid-week. We have a daily Quiet Time from 2:00 to 3:00, and we encourage you to make use of this time for relaxing. If you do not feel you need to rest, there are a few “drop-in” classes offered during this time which you may attend intermittently, depending on whether or not you need a rest that day. Please do not practise in any of the residence buildings during Quiet Hour, but you can make music in any of the classrooms.

LAST DAY

On the final morning, Sunday, July 26, there are no scheduled activities. Breakfast is served from 8:00 – 9:00am. You must vacate the premises by 10:00am.

We hope that camp will be a great experience for you, and look forward to seeing you there. If you have any other questions, please call 604-313-9651 or [Email](#) our Info Line, and your question will be directed to the appropriate person.

See you soon!