

## **SKYPE COACHING SUGGESTIONS** (with info for choruses, quartets or coaches)

Why use SKYPE for coaching? There are definitely other free web-conferencing programs out there. At this time, SKYPE is what I recommend as it seems to handle picking up the sound of a chorus or group pretty good as a unit. Other programs that I've tried, garbles the group's sound in an attempt to figure out which singing voice to make dominant.

If you would like to learn more about setting up SKYPE and some basic ways to use it, there are several, good, short, videos on YouTube.com to watch. Just search for words like "how to set up skype on a laptop" – one video that I found useful is: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhwens7f\\_tg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhwens7f_tg)

### **Planning for Success**

**GET THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOy0dL6CqoQ>

- This doesn't mean – go buy stuff. Laptop computer with camera, microphone and speaker built in (borrow one if needed) Bonus: Laptops often have small screen, but great cameras and microphones. If you can borrow a larger monitor to attach to the laptop for the coaching, it will be easier for the chorus/quartet members to see the expressions of your coach.



this shows a larger monitor for the chorus' view – the laptop is what controls the camera and sound .. so they need to be close to each other. This view is from the back row of a set of risers – and you can see the director on the right side of this pic. Try to be as compact as possible without feeling "tight".

- Have SKYPE installed as a program and setup an account on the laptop being used by the chorus/quartet.
- Make sure that your coach also has SKYPE installed and working on their computer also.
- Make sure that you have good WIFI (internet connectivity) in the room where your chorus or quartet will be coached? If WIFI is not available, using a cellphone as a Hot-Spot will work good – as long as the phone has good cellular service at that location.
- If you are not comfortable doing this, invite a "techie" friend or chorus member to be in charge of the SKYPE COACHING (setup, testing, and actual coaching).

### **COACHING COMMUNICATION**

- Your coach should make some "communication signs" – to help the coach communicate while the chorus is singing – perhaps just "STOP" so that the chorus knows to STOP when the coach wants to talk. Other basic vocal production signs could also be prepared and used as visual reminders while the chorus continues singing.



### **PRE-WORK**

- Once SKYPE is setup for both you and your coach make sure that your SKYPE works (see below). Also, if SKYPE is new to your coach, make sure they do the same. Being comfortable with the process ahead of time, will make the coaching session more productive.

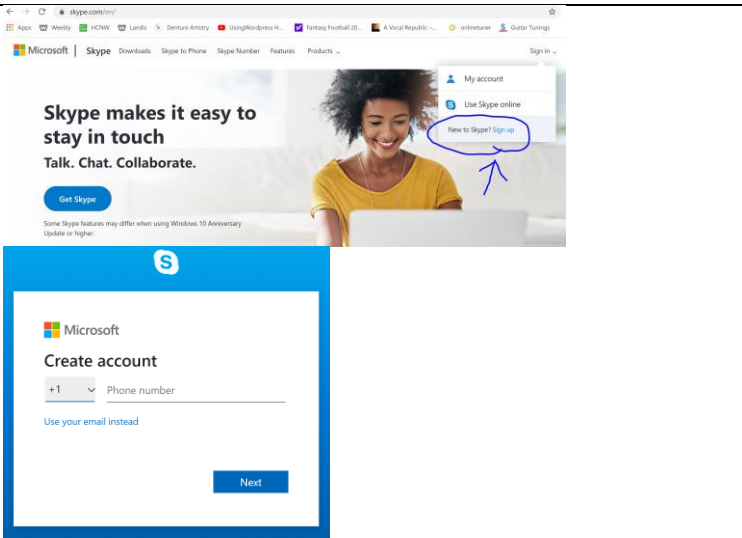
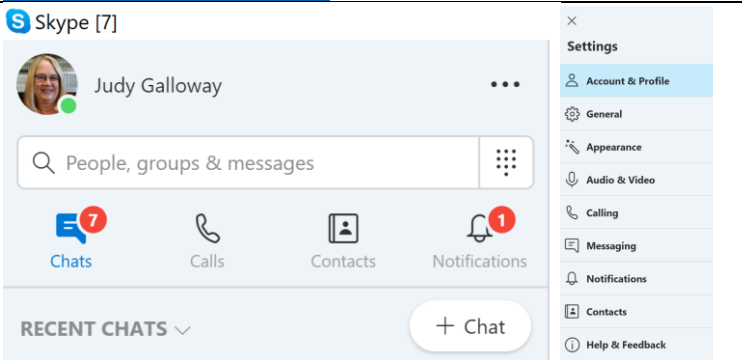
- After you're confident that your SKYPE is working, schedule a time to "test out" SKYPE with the coach, a week ahead of your coaching session. Share SKYPE contact information ahead of time and see if you can SKYPE your coach and talk with them. By doing this early, you can always try again to make sure things are OK. [Tip: Also test the distance – sitting at a computer camera is a lot different than a group standing 20-30' feet or more away]
- Once again, make sure to test "the plan" out once or twice before your appointed SKYPE coaching time is to start. A few simple tests ahead of time will avoid frustration on either end of the SKYPE call.

**SET-UP**

- Be prepared for odd things to need to be found or taken care of (long enough power cords, lighting, riser location, distance from singers to the laptop, WIFI (yep, it might not be what you'd hoped for), etc, etc (The risers might have to be moved/angled differently than normal.)
- Consider running a full pre-test perhaps at the rehearsal before the actual coaching, but for sure, arrive at least 30 minutes ahead of the coaching session to get your equipment into place, and to run one last "SKYPE" test with the coach before the coaching session actually begins. A few simple tests ahead of time will avoid having your chorus and coach ready to go –and no way to reach each other.

**SKYPE SETUP**

(please remember to be flexible, SKYPE (like any modern computer program) makes regular updates, so things might look different than what I'm showing below. Be patient and hunt around if you need to) for something similar to what I'm showing.

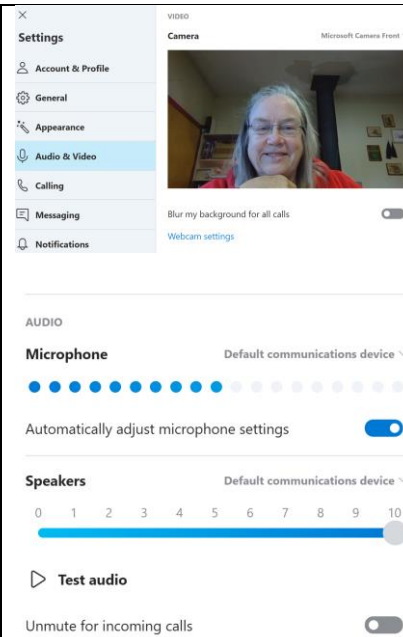
<p>If not already done: Install SKYPE and setup an account on the laptop. Write down your SYPE contact info and password.</p> <p><a href="http://www.SKYPE.com">www.SKYPE.com</a></p>	
<p><b>SETTINGS</b> In the top left corner of your screen, should be your name (and pic maybe) with 3 dots afterwards .... Click on the 3 dots – and select "SETTING"</p>	

## TEST/ADJUST AUDIO & VIDEO

Click on the “Audio & Video” option and you should see your face (and a smile)

Scroll down and test the computer’s microphone (talk and watch the dots move) and the speakers...  
Click on TEST AUDIO

Once things look good, then close the Settings window.



## Runing Tests – or starting the coaching:

Once you and your coach are set up to use SKYPE and you both have your SKYPE running on your computers – then:

1. On the left side of your screen is a list of people that you could SKYPE with – find your coach and click on his/her name
2. Your coach's name will be on the top of the right side of the window – with 3 icons in the top right corner of that window.
3. Clicking on the “camera” icon will start your SKYPE call...
4. Your coach will need to response/answer on his/her computer to start the conversation and coaching session.
5. You will want the video and the audio button ON so that the coach can watch you. To end the SKYPE call, click on the red button with the phone

