

TAG WRITING TIPS

Excerpts from the **2018 Arrangers Workshop at HCNW** session
“The Art of Writing Tags” by Paul Olguin

Stand-alone tags provide an opportunity for singers to practice listening and vocal skills important to producing the characteristic Barbershop Sound.

Are you thinking about entering a tag in the **First Ever Region 13 Arrangers Workshop at HCNW Tag Writing Contest**? Here’s a 2nd set of Tips from Paul Olguin to help you on your way:

(1) Tags can be composed of classic Barbershop chords and familiar progressions singers recognize from songs they’ve sung.

(2) A tag lyric can be carefully chosen to provide an opportunity to work on matched resonance from vowel to vowel through the turn of a diphthong, or tackle managing those pesky consonants.

(3) A tag is fun to sing for the singer and often contains a “tiddlie” that features a particular part.

Here’s an example of a tag that includes some classic Barbershop chord progressions and a lyric with several target vowels and lots of “r’s” to manage that ends with a Bari tiddlie, for women’s voices:

We Long to Ring Some Good Old Barbershop Chords

Words & Music by Paul Olguin

Arranged by Paul Olguin

The musical score is written for Tenor Lead and Bari Bass in 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The Tenor Lead part is on a treble clef staff, and the Bari Bass part is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "We long to ring some good old bar-ber-shop chords, bar-ber-shop chords! love those chords!". The score includes four numbered measures (1-4) above the Tenor Lead staff. Measure 1: Tenor Lead has a quarter note G4, quarter note A4, quarter note Bb4, quarter note C5. Bari Bass has a half note G2, half note Bb2. Measure 2: Tenor Lead has a quarter note D5, quarter note E5, quarter note F5, quarter note G5. Bari Bass has a half note C3, half note E3. Measure 3: Tenor Lead has a quarter note A5, quarter note Bb5, quarter note C6, quarter note D6. Bari Bass has a half note F3, half note A3. Measure 4: Tenor Lead has a quarter note E6, quarter note F6, quarter note G6, quarter note A6. Bari Bass has a half note B3, half note D4. The piece ends with a double bar line.

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Are you “hearing” a tag of your own? Your Barbershop Friends would love to sing it with you!