

**Suggestions for Preparing for Music Theory at the Collegiate Level (based on a format by Dr. Matthew Santa, Associate Professor, Texas Tech University)  
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For many incoming freshmen, music theory is the course that instills the most fear. Not only do Theory and Aural Skills require the mastery of several skills, such as writing, identification, memorization of "rules," aural dictation, singing, and piano proficiencies, but these skills must be used quickly. Below are some things that you can do to help prepare for your first semester of music theory, and to hopefully avoid having to take any remedial courses.

- 1) Make sure that you have access to a computer and the internet. Several websites exist that have music theory information, but one of the best is Ricci Adams' [www.musictheory.net](http://www.musictheory.net). This site has several tutorials concerning music theory fundamentals. Additionally, if you own a Mac, and the Wanda L. Bass School of Music is an Apple Digital Campus, you can download a program called Aquallegro. Not only does this program have written theory quizzes, but it also has ear training quizzes. The program (version 4.5) can be downloaded at <http://andyvn.ath.cx/?sect=tech&cat=soft&topic=aqu>.
- 2) Start playing the piano, even if it is not your primary instrument. As a music major, you will be expected to have a certain level of piano proficiency. You don't have to study with a college professor, just someone who can teach you the basics of the instrument.
- 3) Start singing, even if voice is not your primary instrument. As a college music major, you will be expected to be able to sing melodies on sight. We don't expect everyone to have an operatic voice, just to be able to match pitch, and have a range of about an octave and a half. If you've never sung, start singing with the radio, television, iPod, etc. Start singing your solo lesson music, your ensemble music, etc.
- 4) Do not spend your money on books like "Music Theory for Dummies," "Music Theory Made Easy," "Lies My Music Theory Teacher Told Me," or any other music theory book available at your local bookstore. If you want a theory book, then purchase the textbook that you will be using for the first four semesters of your music theory career at OCU: Miguel Roig-Francoli's *Harmony in Context*. However, make sure that you also purchase the Workbook/Anthology, and the sets of CDs that accompany both the textbook and workbook. This is available in a bundle at the OCU Bookstore. Also, be wary of used textbooks and workbooks, because pages and assignments may be missing, and you may not realize it until it's too late.