

MODULE 2

BUILDING YOUR BOOK

From a folder of random songs to a book that belongs to you

**ACTING
THE
SONG**

WHAT EVEN IS AN AUDITION BOOK?

WHAT IT IS

Your curated collection of songs that show who you are as a performer — not who you wish you were.

Think of it as your resume, but instead of listing skills, you're demonstrating them — live, in the room, in 90 seconds.

WHAT IT IS NOT

- ✗ Every song you've ever learned
- ✗ Songs you like to listen to
- ✗ Songs that impress your voice teacher
- ✗ Songs from the show you're auditioning for
- ✗ Songs that are technically impressive but emotionally empty

THE 4 + 2 FRAMEWORK

LEGIT BALLAD

Classic, pretty, old-school sound.
Think Golden Age.

LEGIT UPTEMPO

Traditional musical comedy.
The 'charm song' energy.

YOUR
CORE 4

CONTEMPORARY BALLAD

Modern, messy, talky storytelling.
Less operatic, more human.

CONTEMPORARY UPTEMPO

Pop, rock, belt, fire.
The song that makes the table sit up.

ONCE YOU HAVE YOUR CORE 4...

Add these if they fit your type:

+1

COMEDY SONG

Not 'you try to be funny.' A song where the SITUATION is funny and you play it completely straight. Think sketch comedy not stand-up.

+2

POP / ROCK SONG

The contemporary world runs on this stuff. If your voice lives here, show it. If it doesn't — don't force it. No one needs to hear a soprano belt 'Rolling in the Deep' into oblivion.

These are conditional. If they don't fit your type, skip them. The Core 4 is non-negotiable.

SING THE ROLES YOU CAN ACTUALLY GET CAST IN. TODAY.

This is not an insult. This is strategy.

TYPE

Age matters. Voice type matters. Energy matters. Cast yourself honestly – casting directors will.

SISTER

"Sister Songs" are your secret weapon: songs from OTHER shows that feel like the character you WOULD be cast as.

EGO

If your voice teacher is picking your songs to show off their own knowledge – that's their ego, not your career.

WIN

The audition that makes a director sit forward isn't the most technically perfect one. It's the most specific one.

DREAM ROLE MAPPING

1

List 5-10 roles you could realistically get cast in RIGHT NOW. Not your dream role in 2035 – today.

2

For each: What's their vibe? The nerd? The ingénue? The villain who's also kind of funny? Get specific.

3

Now find the Sister Song – a song from a DIFFERENT show that character would sing. This is your audition cut.

Rule: Do NOT sing from the show you're auditioning for - unless specifically asked. Bring the Sister Song instead.

HOW TO ACTUALLY FIND GOOD REP

Your rep knowledge is probably uneven. That's fine. Here's how to fix it.

YT

YouTube Rabbit Holes

Search '[Show Name] Original Broadway Cast' and just watch. Fall down the hole. This is research, not procrastination. (It's also procrastination.)

AI

AI as a Librarian

Try: 'I'm a 17-year-old mezzo who plays quirky sidekicks. Suggest 5 contemporary uptempo songs that fit my type but aren't overdone.' Then go find the sheet music yourself.

REC

Cast Recordings

Listen to the whole album before you pick a song. Know the story, know who sings it. You should be able to talk about the character — not just the notes.

ASK

Ask People Who Aren't Your Voice Teacher

Talk to older students. Ask your director. The best leads come from humans who have actually sat in audition rooms.

YOUR 16-BAR CUT IS A MINI-PLAY

It's not a 'sample.' It's a complete dramatic arc.

THE MOMENT BEFORE

Something just happened. We catch you mid-thought, mid-feeling. You don't start the song – you arrive at it. What's the 5-second event that made you explode into this?

THE TURN

Halfway through, something shifts. You realize something, decide something, or want something more. If your emotional state is identical from bar 1 to bar 16, start over.

THE CLIMAX

Land the vocal peak AND the emotional peak at the same moment. These should not be two separate events. They're the same thing.

HOW TO ACTUALLY CUT IT

01

Start at the chorus or the second verse – NOT the intro. The pianist doesn't need 8 bars of 'setting the scene.'

02

Your cut needs a beginning, a build, and a button. It should feel like it ends on purpose – not like someone pulled the plug.

03

Mark your music CLEARLY. Circled start, double bar end. If the accompanist is confused, that's your fault – and your audition is already tanking.

04

Listen to your cut on its own, out of context. Does it make dramatic sense? Could a stranger feel something watching you do it? If not – find a different 16 bars.

THE ESOTERIC SONG TRAP

"Nobody's ever heard of it" is NOT a selling point.

If you can't describe why YOU connect to it, you probably don't.

Choosing an obscure song to prove you've done obscure things is not interesting – it's defensive. Nine times out of ten, it's a voice teacher showing off, not a student connecting deeply.

The audition that makes a director lean forward? It's the one where a student takes a song everyone has heard and makes them feel like they've never heard it before. THAT is the job.

FOR NEXT WEEK

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

- 1** Pick your 16-bar cut. No changing your mind the morning of.
- 2** Mark your music clearly for the pianist. Circled start, double bar end.
- 3** Write your Verbs — what are you DOING in each section? (Pleading? Daring? Convincing?)
- 4** Know your 5 Ws. I will ask you before you sing. This is not a bluff.

Be ready to work. See you then.