

Barbershop Tag Teaching Guidelines

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Tag Teaching Guidelines, Items 1 – 6 are critical for successful Tag Teaching

Tag (Definition):

A **Tag**, in barbershop music, is a dramatic variation put in the last section of the song. Its rough analog in Classical music is a coda.

Tags are characterized by heightening the dramatic tension of the song, frequently including a hanger, or sustained note (Under which the other singers carry a melody). In addition, good tags can be sung as short, stand-alone works. Tags may be soft and tender but are typically characterized by loud, "paint peeling," ringing chords. According to the competition rules of the Barbershop Harmony Society, every song entered for a competition must have a tag.

Retrieved from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_\(barbershop_music\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_(barbershop_music)), 11/07/2011.

Purpose of this Barbershop Tag Teaching Guidelines

Promote Tag singing and to get more singers teaching Tags.

Tag Teaching Guidelines

1. **Know the words to the Tag;** without the correct words, no Tags can be taught. A Tag list is helpful.
2. **Know the starting chord with reference to the key or tonal center;** this is important for teaching the individual parts and to help give, if needed, everyone's starting pitch before beginning to sing the Tag.
3. **Know the individual parts and the best teaching order for Tenor, Lead, Bari, Bass, and if applicable, any additional parts.**
Start with the part containing the most notes, the two parts with most perfect intervals, and/or a strong duet quality.
4. **Know the sound of each individual chord in the Tag being taught;** knowing when a chord is incorrect can be helpful in identifying appropriate part corrections.
Learn the sound of each chord by playing the chords on a piano or listening to a group sing the Tag.
5. **Know the unique characteristics for the Tag;** Examples: Bass pick-up, Tenor has the melody, Lead post, Bari solo, individual parts singing different words at the same time, contrapuntal part movement, etc.
6. **Always start with a simple, easy Tag for each new Tag session or when inviting another singer to sing a Tag with unknown singing abilities.**
Result: Instant chords sung with a successful and fulfilling outcome for all singers and listeners.
7. Use the following teaching aids when teaching Tags:
 - a. Vocally give the key or tonal center before teaching individual parts to the Tag; find an appropriate key or use a pitch pipe.
 - b. Teach the first part until it is learned, then teach the second part with the first part singing along quietly. After the two parts have their parts memorized, teach the third part with the other first and second parts singing along quietly. Continue to teach the fourth part using the same process or sing the fourth part yourself; this helps everyone remember their part.
 - c. Teach the Tag at the intended singing tempo or word rhythm interpretation; do not short cut and sing the part fast when teaching the individual parts; this helps everyone sing the Tag together.
 - d. Use audible pulsing of held notes and visual hand gestures (horizontal pulsing) to identify other moving parts.
 - e. Use visual up and down hand gestures to show the different pitches as you teach the individual parts.
 - f. Use number or solfeggio language to denote the notes of the scale for those who know the appropriate language; this can be done audibly or by using visual hand/sign language.
 - g. Teach one section of the Tag at a time for longer Tags; greater than two to four bars or measures.
 - h. Let singers know if they are singing unison or octave/doubling another part; if they do not know, they may be tempted to avoid someone else's part by finding another note other than the intended notes to be sung.
 - i. To correct out of tune chords, first verify the unisons, octaves, perfect fourth and perfect fifth intervals are keenly locked and in tune before correcting the other parts of chords; verify the vowels are also perfectly matched with good vocal production.
 - j. Reading (singing) written Tags are helpful but it is encouraged that singers learn the Tag quickly so they are not reading but focusing on listening to the chords, tuning, balancing, interpreting, matching vowels, visually connecting with the other Tag singers, etc. as they sing the Tag.
 - k. When learning a Tag, other singers that know the Tag can spot or assist singers by giving hand gestures (see "e" above) or by singing the correct notes as needed.
 - l. If singers are successful at singing their part correctly by themselves but struggle when singing against or with the other parts, tell them to not listen to the other parts, only their own. After successfully singing/experiencing the Tag sung correctly, they can then carefully listen to the other parts and chords.
8. If there are other singers standing by listening to Tag singing, invite them to sing a Tag. Sharing Tags with other singers allows everyone an opportunity to sing and promotes positive Tag singing sessions.
9. Only one singer per part is allowed to sing a Tag unless helping a singer learn their part or the Tag is being taught to a group or Chorus of singers.
10. Always encourage and invite new or experienced singers, who have not experienced Tagging, to teach or sing Tags.
11. <http://www.BarbershopTags.com/> – is the best Tag website containing over 1500 freely-downloadable Tags. Many Tags come complete with learning tracks, sheet music - even video clips of them being sung.

Tag – Why Teach or Sing Tags?

- Instant Fun, blending your voice with others while locking and ringing chords.
- Learning the Barbershop craft; fine-tuning of chords, vocal production, balance of chords, vowel matching, interpretation, diphthongs, singable consonants, exercises and improves tonal memory, etc.
- Learning to hear and identify chords and chord progressions used and not used in Barbershop singing.
- Getting singers hooked on Barbershop singing.
- Tag teaching/singing improves the Barbershop knowledge and vocal and listening skills of Chorus singers, Quartet singers, Directors, Coaches, and Judges.

Tags!

Tags Number: 1 and 5 are perfect for starting a Tag session

Sheet Number: 1
Men

Tenor Lead

1 Lit - tle Mid - night Rose. 2 Be - hind. When I Leave the world be - hind.

Bari Bass

Rose. Ed Waesche

3 You, we all love you. 4 Just the e - cho of a sigh, good - bye

Barbara Tate

Tenor Melody

5 Please tell me why. 6 I love you so my Mi - chelle. My Mi - chelle.

E Minor

7 The sha-dow of your smile when you are gone. 8 Till we meet a - gain some - time.

C Minor C Major

Bob Jones

9 Tears, my tears, my tears. 10 You raise me up to more than I can be.

Bari Melody

Paul Davis () = Optional 5th Voice / Part Darwin Scheel

11 May our paths meet a-gain some meet a - gain some time. 12 When it's sleep - y time down south.

C Major

Wayne Grimmer