

STARTING A CHAPTER WITH HARMONY, INC. – FIRST STEPS

Imagine the friendships and the fun you'll have when you gather with women to sing a cappella, barbershop style under the Harmony, Inc. banner! If you'd love to start your own Harmony, Inc. chapter here are some first steps to consider.

1) GATHER A START UP TEAM

Find at least one or two interested people to join you in creating this new chapter. Talk about your vision so everyone is on the same page when it comes to meeting your goals.

2) FINDING A DIRECTOR

If you don't already have someone who could direct your chapter, check with friends, local music groups and businesses. Contact churches and schools, any place that may have a music director. Put an ad in your local community paper. Talk to interested directors to get a sense of what their experience is and what their vision would be for a women's barbershop chorus. You may want to have a few people form a search committee to work specifically on this task and to interview potential candidates.

Inclusion consideration: when you are choosing your director ask about their commitment to an inclusive environment. You don't want to find out after the fact that they are not supportive of a diverse membership or that they have a leadership style that may not fit with your vision for your chapter.

3) RECRUITING MEMBERS

Talk to your friends, family and co-workers about your idea of starting a Harmony, Inc. chapter. Even if they aren't interested, they may know women who are. The more you talk about your idea, the more interest you'll generate. Use social media to get the word out. Put posters up anywhere and everywhere, in your library, grocery store, schools and at the office. Be sure to include an email or phone number so interested women can contact you to find out more. You'll need at a minimum of 14 members to charter a new chapter of Harmony, Inc. Contact our [New Chapter Development Coordinator](#). She'll provide you with all the information and support you need to get started.

Inclusion consideration: diversity benefits everyone and enriches your chapter so recruit widely with respect to age, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and abilities.

4) FIRST MEETING

Choose a place that is comfortable for at least a dozen interested women. Prepare an agenda, share the work of seeking out the right space, director, etc. See if there is an HI chorus or quartet in your area that would attend your meeting to sing and share their experience with Harmony, Inc.

Inclusion consideration: consider accessibility, ease of access, and environmental sensitivities when hosting your initial meetings.

5) JOIN HARMONY, INC

Have members of your start up group join Harmony, Inc. as Associate Members. This way you'll have access to our website, resources, music and social media connections to support your efforts.

6) SING

As Associate Members of Harmony, Inc. you'll have access to our Common Songs as well as the support of our music leaders.

7) LOCATION

Find a location that is accessible, has storage for risers, music stands, etc. A community center or hall is often ideal.

Inclusion consideration: many chapters rehearse in church facilities. As you are searching for an appropriate rehearsal space, please look at all suitable spaces in your community, since not all women feel comfortable in a church environment. If you decide that a church facility is the best alternative, be open to feedback from members and potential members about your rehearsal space as you begin forming your chapter.

8) DECIDING ON THE NAME OF YOUR CHAPTER

There are many ways to select a name for your chapter. Have a contest amongst those who are working with you towards this goal. Think about names that are meaningful and instill esprit de corps. Start thinking about a logo for your new chapter.

Inclusion consideration: ensure the name is not in poor taste, nor has a history that could be seen as racist or demeaning to any group of people.

9) MARKETING PLAN

Social media is a great place to start. Start a Facebook page to get the word out. Create a video sharing your plan and encouraging interested women to get in touch with you. Develop posters for sharing with various community groups, libraries and businesses. Contact school to see if they would help promote your group to their youth.

Inclusion consideration: talk about inclusion so women know that you are a group that doesn't just welcome women, but values all women. Show diversity in your promotional material.

10) START THE PROCESS WITH HARMONY, Inc.

Once you've got a director, at least 14 women committed to moving ahead with your new chapter, and an established location for rehearsals contact our [New Chapter Development Coordinator](#), if you haven't already, and she will walk you through the next steps.