



Lets Learn Kirtan

(Basics Indian Classical Music Concepts)

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For beginners these are some Basics Indian Classical Music concepts to start with

Bhatkhande Notation System

1. Notes in Music

Pure/Shudh Notes. :- S R G M P D N

Flat/Komal Notes :- R G D N

Sharp/Tivar Note :- $\overset{\uparrow}{M}$

Pure Note is 7 + Flat Note is 4 + Sharp Note is 1

So Total Notes is 12

2. Octave/Saptak

Middle Octave :- S R G M P D N

Lower Octave :- $\underset{\cdot}{N}$ $\underset{\cdot}{D}$ $\underset{\cdot}{P}$ $\underset{\cdot}{\underline{N}}$ $\underset{\cdot}{\underline{D}}$

Upper Octave :- $\overset{\cdot}{S}$ $\overset{\cdot}{R}$ $\overset{\cdot}{G}$ $\overset{\cdot}{\underline{R}}$ $\overset{\cdot}{\underline{G}}$

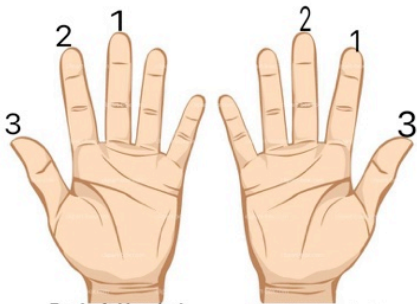
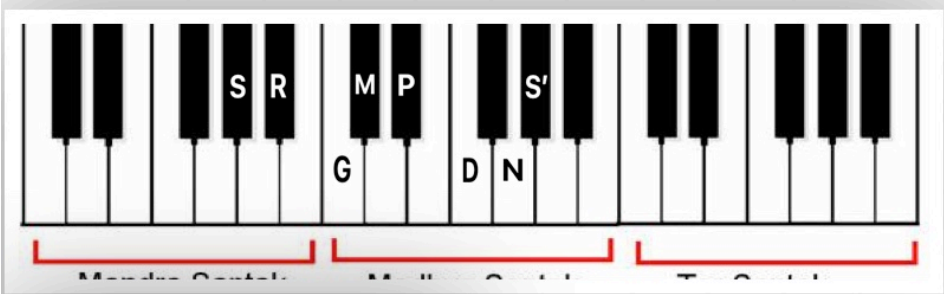
12 Indian Note/Pitch to Western Note/Pitch

Indian Notes	Western Notes
स S	C#
रे R	D
रे R	D#
ग G	E
ग G	F
म M	F#
म M	G
प P	G#
दु D	A
द D	A#
नी N	B
नी N	C

Swaras :-

There are Seven Main Swaras present in Indian Classical Music.

- 1) Sa: SHADAJ
- 2) Re: RISHABH
- 3) Ga: GANDHAR
- 4) Ma: MADHYAM
- 5) Pa: PANCHAM
- 6) Dha: DHAIIVAT
- 7) Ni: NISHAD

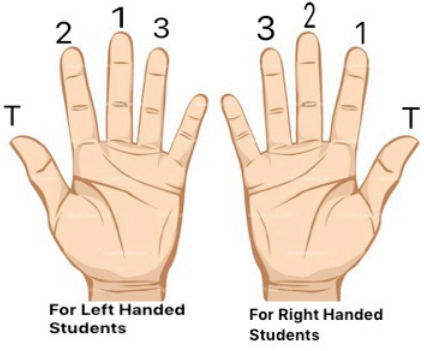
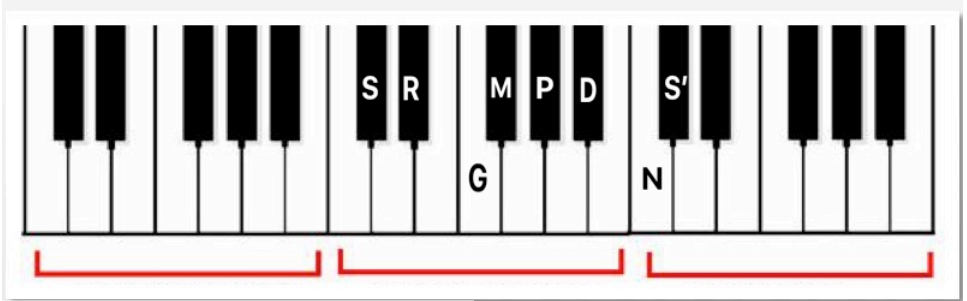


For Left Handed Students

For Right Handed Students

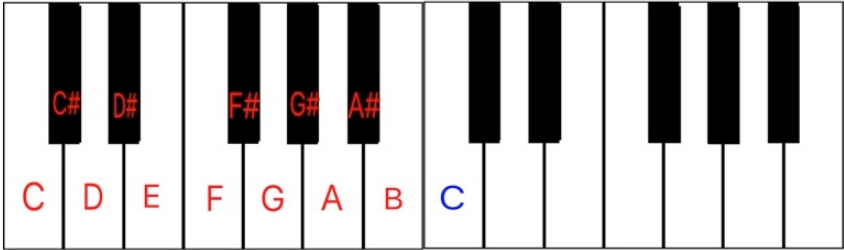
S	R	G	M	P	D	N	S'
1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2
S'	N	D	P	M	G	R	S
2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1

This Pitch for Kids & Women G#

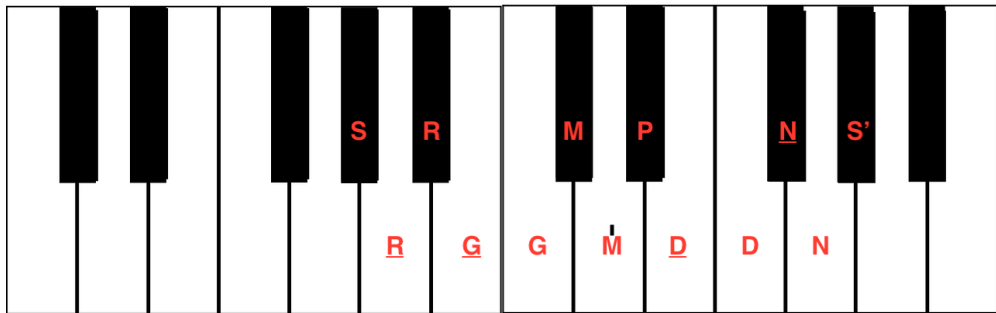


	S	R	G	M	P	D	N	S'
For Right Handed Mail Students	1	2	T	1	2	3	T	1
	S'	N	D	P	M	G	R	S
	1	T	3	2	1	T	2	1
	S	R	G	M	P	D	N	S'
For Left Handed Mail Students	1	2	T	3	1	2	T	2
	S'	N	D	P	M	G	R	S
	2	T	3	1	2	T	2	1

Pitch For Mail C#



12 Western Note/Pitch Keys



12 Notes Position On
Harmonium (G#)

ALANKAR

1. Aaroh: S R G M P D N S`
Avroh: S` N D P M G R S
2. Aaroh: SS RR GG MM PP DD NN S`S`
Avroh: S`S` NN DD PP MM GG RR SS
3. Aaroh: SRG RGM GMP MPD PDN DNS`
Avroh: S`ND NDP DPM PMG MGR GRS
4. Aaroh: SRGM RGMP GMPD MPDN PDNS`
Avroh: S`NDP NDPM DPMG PMGR MGRS
5. Aaroh: SRGMP RGMPD GMPDN MPDNS`
Avroh: S`NDPM NDPMG DPMGR PMGRS
6. Aaroh: SRGMPD RGMPDN GMPDNS`
Avroh: S`NDPMG NDPMGR DPMGRS
7. Aaroh: SRGMPDN RGMPDNS`
Avroh: S`NDPMGR NDPMGRS
8. Aaroh: SG RM GP MD PN DS`
Avroh: S`D NP DM PG MR GS
9. Aaroh: SM RP GD MN PS`
Avroh: S`P NM DG PR MS
10. Aaroh: SGP RMD GPN MDS`
Avroh: S`DM NPG DMR PGS

11.

Aaroh:

S
SRS
SRGRS
SRGMGRS
SRGMPMGRS
SRGMPDPMGRS
SRGMPDNDPMGRS
SRGMPDNS'NDPMGRS

Avroh:

S'
S'NS'
S'NDNS'
S'NDPDNS'
S'NDPMPDNS'
S'NDPMGMPDNS'
S'NDPMGRGM'PDNS'
S'NDPMGRSRGMPDNS'

Palte :-

Based on 3rd Alankar

1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1
S	R	G	S	S'	N	D	S'
R	G	M	R	N	D	P	N
G	M	P	G	D	P	M	D
M	P	D	M	P	M	G	P
P	D	N	P	M	G	R	M
D	N	S'	D	G	R	S	G
N	S	R'	N	R	S	N	R
S'	R'	G'	S'	S	N	D	S

Mack different palta use this formula

- 123 12 SRG SR
- 123 13 SRG SG
- 123 321 SRG GRS
- 13 23 12 1 SG RG SR S

Bhatkhande Notation System

1. Swaras under which there is no sign above, they are called 'Shudh Swar'.
Like – S R G M P D N

2. The swaras under which the horizontal line is drawn are called 'Komal swaras'.

Like – R G D N

3. For identification of tivra Ma , a standing line is drawn upside

Like – Ṁ

4. The number of words increased use this sign (S) and The number of swaras increased use this sign (-)

Like:-

	1	2	3	4
word (Ram)	Ra	S	S	M
Swar	S	-	-	G

5. Taal/Beat is very important in music.

The taals consists of different number of beats starting from 6 beats going up to 16 (normally). these are most commonly used Taal ones.

Khand/Vibhag : The each interval between the bars is called Vibhag.

Sum (The first beat) : Shown by a cross below the beat.

Khali : Usually the beat in the middle of the taal. Marked by o below the beat.

Taali : Starting of each Khand other than Sum and Khaali is shown by Taali. Sum is taken as the first taali. The next taalies are numbered and shown hence from 2 onwards.

Dadra Taal (6 Beat)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Dha	Dhi	na	Dha	Tin	na
×(sum)			∅(Khali)		

Kehrva Taal (8 Beat)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Dha	ge	na	ti	Na	ke	dhi	na
×(sum)				∅(Khali)			

Teen Taal (16 Beat)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Dhin	Dhin	Dha	Dha	Tin	Tin	Ta	Ta	Dhin	Dhin	Dha
X				2				0				3			

Roopak Taal (7 Beat)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tin	Tin	Na	Dhin	Na	Dhin	Na
X			2		3	

If you are Gurbani Kirtan learning has beginner-level students, here are some content topics to help you get started:

1. Introduction to Gurbani Kirtan: Overview of Gurbani Kirtan, its history, and its role in Sikhism.
2. Basic Concepts of Music Theory: Introduction to the basic concepts of music theory, including rhythm, melody, harmony, and tempo.
3. Gurbani Kirtan Ragas: Introduction the different ragas used in Gurbani Kirtan and how they are associated with different times of day, seasons, and emotions. Learning
4. Gurbani Kirtan Shabads: Guidance on how to learn Gurbani Kirtan shabads, including how to read and understand the Gurmukhi script, and how to listen and repeat shabads.
5. Vocal Techniques: instruction on the basic vocal techniques needed for Gurbani Kirtan, including proper breathing, pitch, and tone.
6. Shabad Pronunciation: Guidance on how to correctly pronounce Gurbani Kirtan shabads, including common pronunciation errors and how to avoid them. Basic Music
7. Instrumental Instruction: Introduction the basics of instrumental instruction, including how to hold and play instruments such as the harmonium.

8. **Basic Rhythm Instruction:** Instruction on basic rhythm, including how to clap, tap, or play percussion instruments to keep a steady beat.
9. **Practice and Rehearsal Techniques:** Guidance on effective practice and rehearsal techniques, including how to develop a practice routine, set achievable goals, and work through technical challenges.
10. **Performance and Presentation:** Importance of presentation and performance in Gurbani Kirtan, including how to prepare for performances, develop stage presence, and communicate effectively with audiences.

1. Introduction to Gurbani Kirtan: Overview of Gurbani Kirtan, its history, and its role in Sikhism:-

Gurbani Kirtan is a form of devotional music that has a deep-rooted history in Sikhism. It involves the singing of hymns from the holy scripture of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib, accompanied by music played on traditional instruments.

The roots of Gurbani Kirtan can be traced back to the time of the Sikh gurus in the 15th century. The founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, used music as a means to convey his message of peace, love, and unity to the masses. Over time, Gurbani Kirtan became an integral part of Sikh worship and a means to connect with the divine.

The hymns sung in Gurbani Kirtan are in the Gurmukhi script, the language used in the Guru Granth Sahib, and are known as shabads. These shabads are divided into different ragas, each associated with a specific mood or emotion.

Gurbani Kirtan is performed in the Gurdwara, the Sikh place of worship, as well as in homes and other settings. It is not only a means of spiritual expression but also a way of preserving

and passing on the rich cultural heritage of Sikhism.

Through the practice of Gurbani Kirtan, Sikhs seek to connect with the divine and attain inner peace and harmony. It is a form of meditation that uplifts the soul and inspires the mind.

2. Basic Concepts of Music Theory: Introduction to the basic concepts of music theory, including rhythm, melody, harmony, and tempo.

Music theory is the study of the principles and practices of music. Here is a brief introduction to some of the basic concepts of music theory:

1. **Rhythm:** Rhythm is the pattern of beats or pulses that underlies a musical composition. It includes elements such as tempo (the speed of the beat), meter (the organization of beats into groups), and accentuation (the emphasis placed on certain beats).
2. **Melody:** Melody is the sequence of pitches (or notes) that create a memorable and recognizable tune. It is usually the most prominent and memorable aspect of a musical composition, and often involves repetition, variation, and development of a central theme.
3. **Harmony:** Harmony is the combination of different pitches or chords that create a sense of unity and coherence in a musical composition. It often involves the use of chords, which are groups of notes played simultaneously, and can create tension, resolution, or a sense of movement or direction within a composition.

4. **Tempo:** Tempo refers to the speed or pace of a musical composition. It can range from very slow (such as a ballad or lullaby) to very fast (such as a dance or march), and is often indicated by a metronome marking or tempo indication in the score.
5. **Dynamics:** Dynamics refers to the volume or intensity of a musical composition, and can range from very soft (*pianissimo*) to very loud (*fortissimo*). It is often indicated in the score by markings such as *crescendo* (gradually getting louder) or *decrescendo* (gradually getting softer).
6. **Form:** Form refers to the overall structure and organization of a musical composition. It can involve the repetition of sections (such as verse and chorus in a song), the development of themes or motifs, and the use of contrasting or complementary sections to create a sense of variety and interest.

Understanding these basic concepts of music theory can help you appreciate and analyze different musical compositions, as well as enhance your own performance and composition skills.

3. Gurbani Kirtan Ragas: Introduction the different ragas used in Gurbani Kirtan and how they are associated with different times of day, seasons, and emotions.

Ragas are the basis of Indian classical music, including Gurbani Kirtan. They are melodic frameworks consisting of a set of notes, or swaras, that are combined in a specific manner to create a specific mood or emotion. In Gurbani Kirtan, ragas are used to enhance the beauty and meaning of the shabads and to evoke a particular emotion or feeling in the listener.

There are 31 Ragas commonly used in Gurbani Kirtan, each with its own unique character and associated with different times of day, seasons, and emotions. Here are a few examples:

1. Raag Bhairav: This raga is associated with the early morning hours and is said to create a feeling of devotion and reverence.
2. Raag Todi: This raga is associated with the late morning hours and is said to evoke feelings of longing and yearning.
3. Raag Basant: This raga is associated with the spring season and is said to evoke a feeling of joy and celebration.

Each raga has a specific set of rules governing its composition, including the sequence of notes, ornamentation, and improvisation. In Gurbani Kirtan, the use of ragas adds depth and richness to the music and helps to convey the spiritual message of the shabads in a more meaningful way.

4.Learning Gurbani Kirtan Shabads: Guidance on how to learn Gurbani Kirtan shabads, including how to read and understand the Gurmukhi script, and how to listen and repeat shabads.

1. Learn the Gurmukhi script: Gurbani is written in the Gurmukhi script, which is different from the Roman script used in English. It's essential to learn the Gurmukhi script to be able to read and understand the shabads. You can find resources online or join a class to learn the script.
2. Understand the meaning of shabads: Before you start singing or playing shabads, it's essential to understand their meaning. Gurbani has deep spiritual and philosophical teachings, so it's important to understand them to fully appreciate the shabads. You can read translations or attend classes to understand the meaning of shabads.
3. Listen to kirtan recordings: Listening to kirtan recordings is an excellent way to get familiar with the tunes and rhythms of shabads. You can find kirtan recordings on various online platforms or attend kirtan events to listen to live performances.
4. Repeat shabads: Once you are familiar with the tunes and rhythms, start practicing by repeating shabads. Focus on the

pronunciation and try to match the rhythm of the kirtan recording. You can start with simpler shabads and gradually move to more complex ones.

5. Attend classes: Joining a class or finding a teacher can help you learn more effectively. Teachers can guide you in pronunciation, rhythm, and meaning, and provide feedback on your progress.
6. Practice regularly: Regular practice is key to improving your kirtan skills. Set aside a specific time every day to practice and stick to it. With consistent practice, you will improve your pronunciation, rhythm, and overall performance.

Remember that learning Gurbani Kirtan shabads is a lifelong process. Be patient, stay committed, and enjoy the journey.

5. Vocal Techniques: instruction on the basic vocal techniques needed for Gurbani Kirtan, including proper breathing, pitch, and tone.

1. **Breathing:** Proper breathing is essential for singing any kind of music, including Gurbani Kirtan. To breathe correctly, take a deep breath from your diaphragm, rather than just from your chest. This will allow you to sustain notes longer and control your singing better.
2. **Pitch:** Pitch refers to how high or low a note is. In Gurbani Kirtan, the pitch is typically based on the male voice, so it's important to find a comfortable range that suits your voice. You can practice singing scales and arpeggios to improve your pitch accuracy.
3. **Tone:** Tone refers to the quality of your voice, such as whether it sounds bright, dark, or nasal. In Gurbani Kirtan, a clear and bright tone is preferred. To improve your tone, practice singing with proper breath support and focus on opening up your throat.
4. **Diction:** Diction refers to the clarity of your pronunciation. In Gurbani Kirtan, it's essential to pronounce the words correctly, as the meaning of the shabads is central to the practice. Practice enunciating each syllable clearly and distinctly.
5. **Rhythm:** Rhythm refers to the pattern of beats in the music. In Gurbani Kirtan, the

rhythm is typically based on the traditional taals or rhythms used in Indian classical music. Practice clapping or tapping along with the rhythm to internalize it.

6. Expression: Expression refers to the emotion and feeling conveyed through your singing. In Gurbani Kirtan, it's essential to convey the devotion and reverence associated with the shabads. Practice singing with intention and emotion to bring out the deeper meaning of the shabads.

Remember to warm up your voice before singing and to take breaks to rest your voice when needed. With practice and dedication, you can improve your vocal techniques and become a skilled Gurbani Kirtan singer.

6. Shabad Pronunciation: Guidance on how to correctly pronounce Gurbani Kirtan shabads, including common pronunciation errors and how to avoid them.

Correct pronunciation of shabads is important for communicating the meaning and spirit of the Gurbani Kirtan. Here are some tips for pronouncing shabads correctly:

1. **Learn the Gurmukhi script:** The first step in correct shabad pronunciation is to learn the Gurmukhi script, which is the script used for writing Gurbani Kirtan. This will help you understand the pronunciation of individual letters and words.
2. **Practice pronunciation:** Practice pronunciation by repeating shabads after a teacher or recording. Pay attention to the individual sounds of each letter and the stress placed on certain syllables.
3. **Listen to recordings:** Listen to recordings of experienced performers to hear how they pronounce shabads. Pay attention to the nuances of their pronunciation and try to imitate them.
4. **Be mindful of common errors:** Some common errors in shabad pronunciation include mispronouncing vowels or consonants, incorrectly emphasizing syllables, and adding

or omitting sounds. Be mindful of these errors and work to correct them.

5. Seek feedback: Ask for feedback from a teacher or mentor to ensure that your pronunciation is correct. They can provide guidance on any areas that need improvement and help you refine your technique.
6. Respect the spiritual nature: It's important to remember that shabads are sacred and carry deep spiritual meaning. Treat them with respect and approach the task of pronunciation with humility and reverence.

By practicing shabad pronunciation regularly and seeking feedback from experienced teachers, you can improve your technique and communicate the meaning and spirit of the Gurbani Kirtan more effectively.

7. Basic Music Instrumental Instruction: Introduction the basics of instrumental instruction, including how to hold and play instruments such as the harmonium.

1. Getting started: Start by sitting in a comfortable position with the harmonium on a stable surface. Place your feet flat on the ground, and adjust the height of the harmonium so that the keys are at a comfortable height for you.
2. Holding the harmonium: Hold the harmonium with both hands, placing your fingers on the keys. Your right hand should be on the higher keys, and your left hand on the lower keys.
3. Pumping the bellows: The harmonium requires air to produce sound, which is created by pumping the bellows. Hold the handle with your left hand and use your right hand to push and pull the bellows to create a steady flow of air.
4. Playing notes: To play a note, press down on the appropriate key with your finger. Start with the middle octave and practice playing the notes in a scale.
5. Playing chords: Harmonium is often used to play chords that accompany the melody. To play a chord, press down on multiple keys at the same time. The most common chord

used in Gurbani Kirtan is the Sa Re Ga Ma Pa chord.

6. Practice regularly: Regular practice is essential to improve your harmonium playing skills. Start with simple exercises and gradually move on to more complex ones.

Remember to keep your posture relaxed and natural while playing the harmonium. It may take some time to get used to the instrument, but with practice and patience, you can become proficient in playing the harmonium for Gurbani Kirtan.

8. Basic Rhythm Instruction: Instruction on basic rhythm, including how to clap, tap, or play percussion instruments to keep a steady beat.

Keeping a steady rhythm is crucial to any form of music, including Gurbani Kirtan. Here are some basic instructions on how to develop your rhythm skills:

1. **Clapping:** Clapping is a simple way to keep time with the music. Start by clapping on the downbeat (the first beat of each measure). Once you're comfortable with this, try clapping on every beat, or on the offbeats (between the beats). Experiment with different patterns to internalize the rhythm of the music.
2. **Tapping:** Tapping your foot is another way to keep time with the music. Like clapping, start by tapping on the downbeat, and then try tapping on every beat or on the offbeats.
3. **Percussion instruments:** Percussion instruments, such as the tabla or dholak, are commonly used in Gurbani Kirtan to provide rhythm and accompaniment. If you have access to a percussion instrument, try practicing basic patterns such as the teental or dadra taal.

4. Practice with recordings: Practice keeping rhythm by listening to recordings of Gurbani Kirtan and trying to follow the beat. This will help you internalize the rhythm and develop your sense of timing.
5. Practice regularly: Like any skill, developing rhythm takes time and practice. Set aside regular practice time to work on your rhythm skills, even if it's just a few minutes each day.

Remember to keep a steady pace and focus on the rhythm, rather than getting distracted by other elements of the music. With practice and dedication, you can improve your rhythm skills and become a confident player in Gurbani Kirtan.

9. Practice and Rehearsal Techniques: Guidance on effective practice and rehearsal techniques, including how to develop a practice routine, set achievable goals, and work through technical challenges.

Here are some tips for effective practice and rehearsal techniques for Gurbani Kirtan:

1. **Develop a practice routine:** Set aside regular practice time in your schedule, and stick to it as much as possible. Make sure you have a quiet and distraction-free space to practice, and have all the necessary materials ready, such as your instrument, music, and any accessories.
2. **Set achievable goals:** Set specific and achievable goals for each practice session. This can be as simple as learning a new shabad or practicing a difficult passage. By setting achievable goals, you can measure your progress and stay motivated.
3. **Break it down:** When working on a difficult passage, break it down into smaller sections and work on each section separately. Once you have mastered each section, gradually put them back together until you can play the entire passage smoothly.
4. **Focus on technique:** Don't just focus on playing the notes or singing the shabad

correctly. Pay attention to your technique, such as your breathing, posture, and finger placement. This will help you develop good habits and avoid injury.

5. Record yourself: Recording yourself while practicing or rehearsing can help you identify areas where you need improvement. It can also help you evaluate your progress over time.
6. Work with others: Rehearsing with others, whether it's a band or a choir, can help you improve your timing, coordination, and communication skills. It can also be a fun and rewarding way to practice.
7. Stay motivated: Keep yourself motivated by setting long-term goals, such as performing at a Gurdwara or learning a specific shabad. Celebrate your achievements along the way, and don't be too hard on yourself if you make mistakes or encounter challenges.

Remember, practice makes perfect. By developing a regular practice routine, setting achievable goals, and focusing on technique, you can improve your skills and become a confident performer in Gurbani Kirtan.

10. Performance and Presentation: Importance of presentation and performance in Gurbani Kirtan, including how to prepare for performances, develop stage presence, and communicate effectively with audiences.

Presentation and performance are important aspects of Gurbani Kirtan, as they can enhance the spiritual experience for the audience and create a more engaging and memorable performance. Here are some tips on how to prepare for performances, develop stage presence, and communicate effectively with audiences:

1. **Preparation:** Prepare your music and practice regularly in the weeks leading up to the performance. Familiarize yourself with the shabads or compositions that you will be performing, and rehearse with any accompanying musicians or vocalists.
2. **Stage presence:** Develop a strong stage presence by standing tall, maintaining eye contact with the audience, and projecting confidence. Move naturally on stage, and use gestures and facial expressions to convey emotion and passion.
3. **Attire:** Dress appropriately for the occasion, following any guidelines or traditions that are in place for Gurbani Kirtan performances.

4. **Communication:** Communicate effectively with the audience by introducing each shabad or composition, providing context or background information where appropriate, and explaining any significant musical features. Be respectful and mindful of the spiritual nature of the music, and avoid distracting or inappropriate behavior.
5. **Engage the audience:** Engage the audience by encouraging them to participate, whether it's through clapping, singing along, or simply listening attentively. Consider using call-and-response techniques or involving the audience in certain portions of the performance.
6. **Be present:** Stay focused and present in the moment during the performance, avoiding distractions and remaining attuned to the music and the audience. Embrace any mistakes or unexpected moments with grace and humor, and maintain a positive and upbeat attitude throughout.

Remember, the goal of Gurbani Kirtan is to connect with the divine through music and to share that experience with others. By preparing for performances, developing stage presence, and communicating effectively with audiences, you can create a powerful and meaningful experience for all those involved.

About the Author



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You born on April 05, 1989 in Bhandartal village of Katihar, Bihar. He did his M.A and M.Phil in Indian Classical Music from Panjab University, Chandigarh in 2015-2019.