

# Seven Ways to Score a Four-Voice Chord for String Orchestra

Adapted from Arthur Heacox, *Project Lessons in Orchestration*

	1 8 voices	2 5 voices	3 7 voices	4 8 voices	5 8 voices	6 9 voices	7 9 voices
Violin I	S.	S.	S.	S. div.	S. div.	S. div.	S. div.
Violin II	A.	A.T. div.	A.F. div.	A.T. div.	A.T. (8va) div.	A.T. (8va) div.	A.T. (8va) div.
Viola	T.	F.	A.T. div.	F.B. div.	A.T. div.	A. F. div.	A.T. div.
Cello	B.	B.	B.	B.	B.	T.B. div.	S. B. div.
Double Bass			B.	B.	B.	B.	B.
Reduction							

1. Four Voices: A simple four-voice scoring.
2. Five Voices: For increased resonance a “filler” (F) voice is added (if enough strings are available) to the original four voices. It is not a true fifth voice, but fills in chord tones as needed. Therefore, parallel octaves and unisons are not a concern. If it is not needed, it simply doubles one of the inner voices.
3. Seven Voices: Double bass is added; remember it sounds an octave lower than written. Divisi inner voices does not provide more volume, but a beautiful blend and resonance.
4. Eight Voices: The soprano is doubled in octaves. The lower violas also are doubling the bass. If it goes below the range of the viola, add additional filler. This arrangement is full and brilliant.
5. Eight Voices: The filler is eliminated. Each upper voice (SAT) is doubled an octave higher, the bass an octave lower. Violin II and the Violas could each play the alto and tenor voices in octaves respectively, but the blend would not be as good as that above.
6. Nine Voices: All open spaces are filled in except for the bottom two and top two voices, which is acceptable and often desirable. Notice the interval of a fifth between the top two voices. This is not a problem, and also give space for the melody.
7. The soprano is in three octaves, the cello doubling the soprano an octave below. This arrangement is very rich since the melody is in a resonant portion of the cello’s register. The filler is used only if it is needed. This arrangement is the fullest and most effective of all seven scoring.

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

John B. Dykes

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system contains six measures of music. The second system begins at measure 6 and also contains six measures. The notation is for piano accompaniment, featuring a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating the key of D major. The music consists of chords and melodic lines in both hands, with some sixteenth-note patterns in the bass line.

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 1 - Five Voices

John B. Dykes  
Robert Reno

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes parts for Soprano (S.), Violin I, Violin II (A.T. *div.*), Viola (F. (F), (T)), Cello (B.), and Piano. The second system includes parts for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Cello (Vc.), and Piano. The score is in 4/4 time and features a variety of musical textures, including melodic lines for the strings and a harmonic accompaniment for the piano.

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 2 - Seven Voices

John B. Dykes  
Robert Reno

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line for Soprano (S.) and four instrumental lines: Violin I, Violin II (A.F. *div.*), Viola (A.T. *div.*), and Cello (B.). The second system includes Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.), with a grand piano accompaniment below. The score is marked with a '6' at the beginning of the second system, indicating the start of a new section. The piano part features a complex harmonic texture with many chords and moving lines in both hands.

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 3 - Eight Voices

John B. Dykes

Robert Reno

S. in octaves

Violin I

A.T. *div.*

Violin II

(F) *div.*

Viola

F.B. *div.*

B.

Cello

B.

Double Bass

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 4 - Eight Voices

John B. Dykes

Robert Reno

S. in octaves

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

A.T. 8va *div.*

A.T. *div.*

B.

B.

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

6

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 5 - Nine Voices

John B. Dykes

Robert Reno

S. in octaves

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

A.T. 8va *div.*

A.F. *div.*

T.B. *div.*

B.

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Db.

6

# Almighty Father, Strong to Save

## Setting 6 - Nine Voices

John B. Dykes

Robert Reno

S. in octaves

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Reduction

Chord needed a 5th; changed tenor in viola from E3 to G3

To avoid mixing melody with bass, changed soprano in cello

Needed 5ths; changed tenor in violin II and viola (C5 to E5; C4 to E4)

Needed 5ths; changed tenor in violin II and viola (B4 to D5; B3 to D4)

To avoid mixing melody with bass, changed soprano voice in cello

Need 5ths; changed alto in violin II (E5 to B5); tenor in cellos stays on B

Removed the "extra" 7th of the chord in the alto in the viola  
 Needed a 5th; changed alto and tenor voices in alto (F3/A3 to A3/C4)  
 Space between upper voices is fine, especially with proper resolution of 7th

Removed the "extra" 7th of the chord in the alto in the viola  
 Needed a 5th; changed alto and tenor voices in alto (G3/B3 to B3/D4)

Removed the "extra" 7th of the chord in the tenor in the viola  
 Tenor voice in viola stays on G3 to fill in 5th