



Orff-Schulwerk Gesellschaft Deutschland e.V.

Professional Association for Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy
Member of the IOSFS (International Orff-Schulwerk Forum Salzburg)

Concept for the implementation of

ORFF-SCHULWERK LEVELS-Courses I – III

based on the
Recommendations and Guidelines: Orff-Schulwerk Studies
of the



**International
Orff-Schulwerk Forum
Salzburg**

Preface

The Orff-Schulwerk Association Germany e.V. (a registered association) has drawn up these guidelines for conducting Orff Schulwerk Level courses, especially for implementation in the People's Republic of China. Our non-profit organization points out that neither current nor future offerings can guarantee the annual implementation of follow-up courses at all three levels. This depends, among other things, on:

- the continued existence of the organization
- the availability of a local cooperation partner who will handle the professional advertising of the course, act as a contact for interested participants, as well as organize the rental of rooms and the availability of instruments etc., on site
- enough potential course participants for the cost-effective implementation of the courses
- unforeseeable circumstances, such as illness, epidemics, strikes, force majeure (e.g., due to weather conditions), etc.

Level Courses

The term "Level Courses" has been used worldwide in the Orff-Schulwerk community for some time. It refers to extended, multi-year study and continuing education courses. The IOSFS supports the international use of this term for clarity. These courses offer ongoing in-depth study and convey the artistic and pedagogical strategies of the Orff-Schulwerk. The goal of these courses is to provide teachers with in-depth knowledge of the concept, strong communication skills, independent and critical thinking, and creativity for their own (lesson) planning.

Framework Conditions

Level courses provide a more comprehensive understanding of the Orff Schulwerk than short workshops and other learning models. The teaching concepts for the level courses are in-depth, reflective, and require intensive engagement, even outside of the course units. They serve as professional development and are conducted based on a content description and defined participation requirements. The complete certification program comprises at

least three level courses and can generally be completed after two years at the earliest (e.g., after courses in 2025, 2026, and 2027).

Exemplary teaching in the tradition of the Orff Schulwerk illustrates the connections between content, teaching strategies/methods, and objectives. These courses offer a learning path that leads to creative thinking, playful learning, pedagogical growth, and artistic creation in elementary music and movement/dance pedagogy.

Through a progressive curriculum, skills and understanding are developed about:

The body - body sensitization and awareness, Movement and dance technique, design, and improvisation

The voice - vocal production and expression, use of a natural singing and speaking voice

Instrumental playing - the body as an instrument (sound gestures), small percussion instruments and mallet instruments (instruments with a definable pitch)

Learning through body, voice, and instrumental playing takes place primarily in a group setting.

The artistic and pedagogical applications of the Orff Schulwerk level courses manifest themselves in different cultural and linguistic contexts. This requires adaptation and sensitivity according to local values and practices. The content and principles of this concept emphasize central principles that enable the recognition and application of the Schulwerk in every context.

Umbrella Organizations

Level courses are held under the responsibility of an Orff-Schulwerk association or an associated institution that is a member of the IOSFS. It is the

responsibility of a national Orff-Schulwerk association to make its level courses publicly available on the IOSFS website. This contributes to transparency and facilitates regular review by the IOSFS Board.

Course Format

The courses are primarily held in-person, as effective Orff Schulwerk practice requires all participants to be in the same physical environment. Online teaching and meetings can enhance participants' learning outcomes but are only included in exceptional cases. Regardless of the chosen format, the time commitment for a certification program spans several years. IOSFS recommends that participants spend at least six consecutive days in-person on each course. This promotes community building and fostering relationships with both other course participants and instructors.

Course Duration / Course Hours

In accordance with the IOSFS guidelines, OSG Deutschland e.V. guarantees a minimum time commitment of 170-180 classroom hours for completion of the Orff Schulwerk certification program after a total of three levels.

The course program also varies depending on the respective teaching team and, for example, which levels are offered in parallel.

Because Orff Schulwerk places great emphasis on the active participation of participants in a collaborative learning environment, full participation in every phase of the certification program is required.

Even during an in-person course, participants may be expected to complete homework. The time spent on these assignments is not included in the recommended course time.

Number of Participants

To enable work in small and large groups, to play in instrumental ensembles, to sing in multiple voices, to learn folk dances, and to develop movement studies, the OSGD aims for:

a minimum number of 18 participants (up to a maximum of 30) for Level 1,

a minimum number of 15 participants (up to a maximum of 26) for Level 2,

a minimum number of 10 participants (up to a maximum of 17) for Level 3.

Minor deviations from this limit will be decided by the respective course director.

Prerequisites for Participation

The OSGD recommends that participants have prior experience with the Orff Schulwerk through workshops and/or other offerings before registering for a Level 1 course. Introductory courses not only provide insight into this artistic-pedagogical approach but also give participants a sense of the physical, social, and integrative nature of the courses. Exceptions are made for those interested who, for various reasons, e.g.,

- due to distance from their place of residence,
- time or financial constraints, or
- responsibilities for caring for children or elderly family members, not always able to attend workshops.

Instead of excluding participants from participating in level courses, it is important to encourage their willingness to learn. The course leaders and teaching staff strive to accommodate the diverse experiences of each participant.

Participating in level courses in different countries around the world can be a very valuable and enriching experience. To better understand the Orff Schulwerk in one's own cultural environment, we also recommend participating in local courses.

Each level is completed in the prescribed order, regardless of musical ability and teaching experience. All participants begin at Level 1.

Based on the 2025 guidelines recommended by the IOSFS in Salzburg, the OSGD sets the following requirements for admission to its level courses:

Level 1	- without prerequisites, but with recommendations (see beginning of chapter)
Level 2	- Successful completion of Level 1

	- Proof of musical or music education training (alternatively: passing an artistic-practical and music theory entrance exam) *
Level 3	- Successful participation in Levels 1 and 2 - Completion of a questionnaire (with registration) - Each application for Level 3 will be reviewed by the course instructor/examination committee, and admission will be decided individually. **

*The transition examination to Level 2 for applicants without proof of musical or music education training will be conducted online (in good time before the registration deadline) and includes tasks from the following areas:

- Musical imitation (rhythmic and melodic: with the voice or, if applicable, on an instrument)
- Musical completion (rhythmic and melodic: musically completing or completing a given rhythm/melodic phrase in a meaningful way)
- Simple coordination tasks (e.g., singing plus accompaniment with body instruments)
- Basic knowledge of music theory: listening to and identifying intervals (1-8); singing intervals; Simple sight-reading exercise (melodic and rhythmic)
- The examination committee will decide on an individual basis whether physical disposition, including body tension, flexibility, motor memory, and expressiveness, will also be observed and assessed through small exercises.
- The exam does not test readable knowledge or "rehearsed" and prepared rhythms/melodies/movement sequences, but rather consciously observes the candidates as they complete spontaneous tasks, as is often the case in everyday classroom situations.

** The committee's individual admission decision considers the following aspects:

- Musical / movement competencies and skills required for comprehensive mastery of the content in Level 2
- Ability to handle creative/improvisational tasks (creative will) in music and movement
- Ability to reflect on artistic-pedagogical processes (pedagogical goals, artistic quality, feedback strategies, etc.)
- Continuous music education work with the opportunity to practice the basic principles of the Orff Schulwerk
- Perceivable development potential for a deeper and more conscious use of Schulwerk principles in an artistic-pedagogical field of practice

- Each level builds on previous experiences and learning.
- To process these experiences and implement ideas and pedagogical strategies, a period of approximately one year between levels is recommended. This ensures that participants can apply their knowledge in their own practice before moving on to the next level.

- To understand the Orff-Schulwerk approach, adapt it if necessary, and develop artistic-pedagogical skills in music and movement/dance education, full participation in all course units throughout each level is required.
- It is recommended that no more than five years pass after reaching a level before attempting the next level. The course instructor may decide on an exception upon request.

Instructor Team

Sometimes it is necessary and desirable to invite international instructors to the teaching team. However, for authentic cultural connections, we also recommend including local instructors. To offer a broad spectrum of teaching personalities, strategies, and perspectives on the Orff Schulwerk, the teaching team consists of several, sometimes diverse, personalities. By engaging with different models, participants can piece together the common threads, simultaneously recognizing the range of possibilities and thereby developing their own individual teaching personality. The course director ensures that at least two instructors teach at each level.

Course Content

Courses of all levels are offered worldwide by associations/affiliated institutions under the umbrella of the IOSFS and cover the following media of expression:

- The Voice – singing, speech, and other vocal sounds
- Instrumental Playing – body percussion, instruments with fixed pitches (e.g., mallet instruments) and indeterminate pitches (small percussion instruments), as well as sounds from other sources (e.g., homemade instruments and/or everyday materials)
- Movement and Dance – games and activities, fixed dance forms (ethnological, historical, self-invented), creative dance, and movement accompaniment

In addition to the aforementioned expressive media, the following aspects are also included in the level courses:

- The artistic-pedagogical concept of the Orff-Schulwerk
- Principles and fundamental characteristics

- The historical context of the approach and conception
- Analysis of pieces from the "Music for Children" volumes
- Improvising, composing, and choreographing in a basic style across all media
- Personal reflection on learning
- Interpenetration with other art forms, especially visual arts, theater, and literature.

The courses are not limited to the aforementioned aspects, but can also include topics such as digital media, crossover projects, picture book design, specific content related to the respective national culture, or impulses oriented towards current music education discourse for special target groups (e.g., parent-child groups, music pedagogy, or community music offerings). It is recommended to integrate the theoretical and artistic-practical foundations of the Orff Schulwerk as well as references to contemporary pedagogical ideas into lectures, discussions, and conversations. It is useful to bring all course participants present (across all levels) together for joint activities (e.g., singing, ethnological and historical dance forms, or on specific topics in the form of tutti sessions). This strengthens the sense of community and intensifies the musical experience.

Recommended Reading and Ethical Guidelines

The course instructor compiles lists of recommended reading material for each level. Study of texts is primarily intended for the periods between the individual level phases and can serve as a basis for discussions in the subsequent level in selected course units and lectures.

The OSGD expressly points out that its Orff Schulwerk qualification program is based on the ethical guidelines of the IOSFS Guidelines, which can be found in English on the IOSFS website.

Examination and Assessment

IOSFS recommends conducting an examination or assessment at the end of the final phase of the certification program. In the early years of study, little formal assessment may be desired, as participants develop their musical and

movement/dance skills from their own starting points. Suggested assessments may include:

- Peer teaching
- Homework (e.g., creating arrangements and/or choreographic sequences)
- Written observations and/or personal reflections
- Conducting and completing activities and tasks during a few class sessions.

Certification

OSG Deutschland e.V. uses the term "certification program" to refer to the multi-year Orff Schulwerk Level Courses (I - III). Participation in each level course is confirmed with a

- participation certificate – which is issued to participants at the end of Levels I & II, and with a
- completion certificate – which participants receive upon successful completion of Level III.

The participation certificates indicate the number of hours completed at a specific level and the total number of hours within the certification program. The completion certificate also indicates the total number of hours completed in the program and is awarded to participants after the final level course (usually after Level 3) has been successfully completed. The Orff Schulwerk Society is an institution registered with the IOSFS, so all certificates also include its logo and the addition "Member of the IOSFS." The IOSFS provides its recommended guidelines but does not accredit individual national societies' level courses. OSG Germany e.V. is solely responsible for the content and implementation of the program.