

Character Breakdown

Harold Hill

Harold Hill is a great role for a young person to play. Select a boy with charisma and charm, who is comfortable on stage. He should be a great actor, an average singer, and an average mover. You'll also want to cast a boy with a changed voice. For your sanity, make sure you cast someone who memorizes lines easily and has a good sense of musical rhythm. Your Harold should look good with your Marian and the two together should exude a spark of excitement.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Marian Paroo

The role of Marian is a different twist on the traditional leading lady. The character progresses greatly during the show, starting as an uptight librarian and transforming into a beautiful and trusting young woman. Your Marian must have an amazing voice, be an excellent actor, and be able to move well. She must also have an air of confidence that draws Harold and your audience to her. She will also need to be comfortable kissing two boys-Harold and Charlie Cowell, which requires a certain amount of emotional maturity. Finally, take some time during auditions to try different pairs of Harolds and Marians until you reach the perfect match.

Vocal range top: G5

Vocal range bottom: G3

Charlie Cowell

Charlie Cowell is one of the premium acting-only roles. Consider having the actor playing Charlie perform in the ensemble or as a teen dancer or townspeople-just make sure it's clear he's NOT playing Charlie Cowell in those scenes. Cast a strong actor with a good loud voice who is a bit of a ham and likes being on the stage. He has to be comfortable kissing Marian, and should have a good sense of comic timing. Charlie is a good choice for an understudy to Harold Hill.

Gender: Male

Mayor Shinn

You may be tempted to cast an "over-the-top" actor as Mayor Shinn, but resist and heed the warning of Meredith Willson. The actor playing Mayor Shinn certainly needs a good sense of comic timing, but should be able to perform the role very seriously. This is elemental in creating the humor of *The Music Man JR.*, which is based in reality. Mayor Shinn does not have to sing or dance, but he is responsible for a great deal of the pacing and line pick up in the show. Make sure your actor can memorize long monologues.

Gender: Male

Eulalie Mackecknie Shinn

Everybody wants to play Eulalie. It's a great role for a great comic actress. Again heed Mr. Willson's warning and avoid casting an actress who is over the top. If Eulalie takes herself seriously your audience will find her hysterical. Eulalie does have some singing and some dancing, or at least posing. Make sure your Eulalie works with your Mayor Shinn.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Marcellus Washburn

This classic sidekick to Harold has been immortalized by comedic greats like Buddy Hackett. Marcellus' big number is "Shipooopi" so the character has to act well, sing reasonably well (although a character voice is best) and be able to dance. Cast the kid who is just funny all the time and you'll have a great Marcellus.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: D#5

Vocal range bottom: E4

Ethel Toffelmier

Ethel is Marcellus's girlfriend. She's described by Marcellus as "a nice comfortable girl and the bosses' niece." Ethel has some acting, some singing, and some dancing. Ethel is also one of the solo Pick-a-Little ladies. Make sure she and Marcellus look good together, think Ethel and Fred from I Love Lucy!

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Mrs. Paroo

Mrs. Paroo is the conscience of River City. She is a great mother, stands up for what she believes in, and gently pushes Marian to think of her future. The role requires an actress who can do a good Irish Brogue, and who can sing and act. She should also look right with Marian and Winthrop.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: Eb5

Vocal range bottom: -1

Winthrop Paroo

Winthrop should appear to be young, his voice must be unchanged and he should be a good actor. Winthrop also needs to be able to affect a believable lisp. Winthrop has to transform from a shy child to an outspoken child who not only sings but dances!

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: Eb5

Vocal range bottom: C4

Amaryllis

Amaryllis is the slightly bratty girl who studies piano with Marian. Amaryllis should be a good actor, and roughly the same size as Winthrop and Gracie. Just who are Amaryllis' parents is one of the great mysteries of The Music Man JR. and something for you to decide.

Gender: Female

Ewart Dunlop

Ewart is one of the four quartet members with the second highest voice or tenor. He is married to Maud Dunlop. Cast singers who can hold their own vocal parts strongly and worry about the acting later.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: F#5

Vocal range bottom: E4

Oliver Hix

Oliver is one of the four quartet members with the second lowest voice or baritone. He is married to Alma Hix. Cast singers who can hold their own vocal parts strongly and worry about the acting later.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: F#5

Vocal range bottom: E4

Jacey Squires

Jacey is one of the four quartet members with the highest voice or tenor. He is married to Mrs. Squires. Cast singers who can hold their own vocal parts strongly and worry about the acting later.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: A5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Olin Britt

Olin is one of the four quartet members with the lowest voice or bass. Cast singers who can hold their own vocal parts strongly and worry about the acting later.

Gender: Male

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: A3

Tommy Djilas

Tommy is the teen heartthrob in the show. Cast the best looking kid you have; with any luck he'll also be able to act and dance. Tommy's love interest is Zaneeta so make sure the two characters have chemistry between them.

Gender: Male

Zaneeta Shinn

Zaneeta should be your best female dancer. The role is often given dance features in both "76 trombones" and "Shipooopi". Zaneeta also should look like she belongs in the Shinn Family, although this is not necessary. Zaneeta gets to deliver the classic "Ye gads" line!
Gender: Female

Gracie Shinn

Gracie is Zaneeta's little sister. This role has one or two lines of dialogue and traditionally is the first soloist in "Wells Fargo Wagon." Gracie can also understudy Amaryllis in case of an emergency.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: Eb5

Vocal range bottom: B3

Alma Hix

One of the core members of the Pick-a-little ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy. Alma is married to Oliver. You can also add additional Pick-a-little ladies.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Maud Dunlop

One of the core members of the Pick-a-little ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy. Maud is married to Ewart. You can also add additional Pick-a-little ladies.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Mrs. Squires

One of the core members of the Pick-a-little ladies, requiring girls with strong voices and a good sense of comedy. Mrs. Squires is married to Jacey. You can also add additional Pick-a-little ladies.

Gender: Female

Vocal range top: D5

Vocal range bottom: D4

Conductor

The conductor has the first line in the show, so cast an actor that is loud and energetic!

Gender: Male

Constable Locke

The Constable is a quietly wise man who sees through Harold, but doesn't seem to mind. It's a nice feature for any young character actor.

Gender: Male

Ensemble

The Ensemble is comprised of Adult-types, teens and kids to play townspeople, traveling salesmen, teen dancers, Wa Tan Ye girls and the boys' band. Can accommodate additional Pick-a-little ladies

Gender: Any

Adults

For some reason, some kids just read on stage as adults. You'll recognize this quality by comparing kids. Since THE MUSIC MAN JR. is about a town, you'll want to assign your cast into family units. Try to create a realistic town with married folks, single folks, etc. If you have an abundance of girls, cast a few as widows. Ask each family to create a family history, including details of their lives. By doing this you will create an ensemble that is engaged and energized and this will greatly add to the quality of your production! The adults have a few lines (which you can distribute while blocking the scenes.) They also have some solo vocal lines. You'll also want to select the Farmer and His Wife from this group.

Gender: Any

Traveling Salesmen

You'll want to cast several good actors to play traveling salesmen, especially salesmen number five, number three, and number one. If you find it necessary to cast girls as traveling salesmen make sure they play the roles as men.

Gender: Any

Teen Dancers

Create a group of teen dancers by selecting your best dancers. The Teen Dancers will be responsible for "Shipooopi," and have features in "76 Trombones." Make sure each Teen Dancer is assigned to a family to create the illusion of a real town.

Gender: Any

Wa Tan Ye Girls

All of your little girls can play Wa Tan Ye Girls. They are featured during Eulalie's "Spectacle" just prior to "76 Trombones." Again assign them to families.

Gender: Female

Boys' Band

All of your little boys can be in the Boys' Band provided you have enough uniforms. The Boys' Band has two main features: "76 Trombones" and the finale of the show. Make sure the boys are a part of a family.

Gender: Any