

TEXAS DRUMS

The University of Texas
Longhorn Band
Drumline

2011-2012
Marching Percussion
Handbook

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS
AT AUSTIN

On behalf of the directors, section leaders, and staff of the Longhorn Band, I would like to welcome and thank you for expressing interest in the Texas Drumline. Please carefully read the following material as this handbook will provide all necessary information for the summer clinics, audition procedures, band week, and the upcoming football season. To help prepare prospective members for auditions and the marching season, we will host three clinics that will take place on the following dates:

July 2 *All clinics are held in the Longhorn Band Hall (MBE 2.114).
July 16 Check-in will begin at 9:00 a.m. and each clinic will run until 5:00 p.m.
July 30

Attending these clinics is the first step towards auditioning for the drumline. The sessions will address techniques that are fundamental to all areas of marching percussion as well as materials found throughout this handbook. Please feel free to contact either the section leaders or me if you have any questions. We are all eager and excited about this upcoming season and we look forward to your participation in the Texas Drumline.

Sincerely,

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2011-2012 Texas Drums Section Leaders

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Preface

The exercises, etudes, and warm-ups found in this handbook have been compiled in an effort to maintain a standard of performance and technique as it applies to the percussion section of the Longhorn Band. It is highly recommended that all prospective LHB percussionists read the following set of technical guidelines and rehearsal procedures so that all expectations will be clearly understood prior to arriving on campus.

Philosophy Statement

The marching percussion program at The University of Texas at Austin is designed to create a learning environment that is conducive to a high level of musical performance, while upholding the tradition of the Longhorn Band and The University in the most dignified manner.

Playing Style

The best word to describe the general image or “look” of the Texas Drumline, in performance or at rest, would be **stoic**. This term implies a type of relaxed focus that is not easily shaken by outside distractions. For us, this translates to a generally neutral facial expression and strong but **relaxed** shoulders and upper body. You should look as if you have everything under control, regardless of performance demands.

Snares, tenors, and bass drums all play at the flattest angle possible. This is the first step to achieving our sound. It ensures maximum rebound from the drumhead, and a dark, fundamental based tone. The second part of this equation is the use of a heavy, legato stroke. When playing a drum, you should feel as though the sticks or mallets are sinking into the head, **not** crushing it. This analogy should help in avoiding a high velocity, pounding stroke. Let the weight of your hands and sticks do most of the work, and avoid a tense, tight grip on the sticks.

Rehearsal Expectations

Given the heavy time constraints of a normal LHB performance season, every effort must be made to maximize the amount of quality, on-task rehearsal time within each session. As a result, the rehearsal environment **must** be completely free of extraneous noise, talking, or disruptive behavior. Our work ethic is absolutely vital to our success, and any negativity brought by one member will disrupt the flow of the whole line.

A key component to successful rehearsing in the Texas Drumline is the use of a metronome. In order for the group to develop a consistent sense of time and rhythmic interpretation, every member of the ensemble **must** own a metronome and be intimately familiar with this device. On a more specific

level, tempo, rhythmic interpretation, style and dynamics are all generated from the center of each section. These listening points are keenly in touch with the pulse of the metronome at all times during individual practice and rehearsal. Tempo is then transferred to the surrounding players through the vocalization of “duts.” Furthermore, each player is responsible for listening carefully to the player inside of them for all of the elements of performance listed above. This process is known as listening in and, when properly executed, serves as the backbone of a precise, clearly articulated section player.

Knowing the music is **vital** for our rehearsals to be effective. Every effort will be made to get music to you in a fair amount of time before it will be rehearsed. **It is expected that you will look at your part before the first rehearsal of a new show happens, especially when you’ve had sufficient time to look at it.** Coming to rehearsals not knowing your part not only makes it harder to rehearse, but is disrespectful to your peers who took the time to prepare their parts. Additionally, memorization deadlines will be set for shows, and these **must** be met to ensure that each member will have the music known well in advance of a performance.

Frequently throughout the year, there will be times when we will have a short amount of time to put together music for a performance. Every effort will be made to look at music well enough in advance before it will begin to be rehearsed in a full band situation, but there will be numerous times when we will have to sight-read parts, and clean them to performance level in a reduced amount of time. It is expected that in these situations that members will put forth the necessary extra effort to ensure the success of themselves, the section, and the band.

Weekly Rehearsal Schedule

Weekly rehearsals are one of the most important tasks that we do as a group. It is **imperative** that each member of the drumline creates a weekly schedule that caters to the routine of the Longhorn Band. Our weekly rehearsal schedule is as follows:

Mondays: 5:30 p.m. – Drumline sectional in the LBJ parking lot
6:30 p.m. – Set-up in fundamentals block in the bubble

Tuesdays: 6:15 p.m. – Meet to warm-up in the bubble
6:30 p.m. – Set-up in fundamentals block

Thursday: 5:30 p.m. – Drumline sectional in the LBJ parking lot
6:30 p.m. – Set-up in fundamentals block in the bubble

As a general rule, drumline members are expected to arrive to rehearsals and performances ten minutes in advance of the official call time. This enables time for a brief warm-up before playing with the entire band. It is also recommended that individuals arrive to the Band Hall thirty minutes prior to rehearsal call times in order to allow comfortable time to travel to the practice location.

The drumline is unique to the band in the sense that we do not carry or march any ‘alternate’ members. This serves as both a blessing and a curse-it allows for consistency of the line to be playing with the same people week in and week out, but when members are not at rehearsals, it creates balance issues and weakens the line overall. **The only reasons to miss a rehearsal or sectional are due to unavoidable class conflicts, illness, or extreme emergencies. Any other**

reasons, especially the need for a ‘mental health day’ are NOT sufficient reasons, and will have an impact on how you are viewed on the line.

Please note: This schedule may change/be altered slightly if there is an overwhelming conflict due to class schedules. When scheduling classes, please keep in mind this schedule and, if possible, do your best to allow for travel time, as well as making sure you have time to eat and drink something before rehearsal.

Performance

The University of Texas Longhorn Band performs regularly on a national, often televised, stage. As a result, every effort must be taken to ensure that all aspects of the LHB presence exude the highest levels of professionalism, musicianship, and maturity. Any public performance, regardless of length or scope, will be approached in complete and total seriousness. As a member of the Texas Drumline, you will be expected to be alert, focused, on-task at all times during performance, whether that be on the field, in the stands or in parade. Remember, someone is always watching. Assume that every impression is the first.

Above all, it is the sincere hope of the entire Longhorn Band Staff that students have a positive experience, no matter their level of involvement, with The University of Texas Longhorn Band. The percussion program is only one aspect of a much larger entity, one that is deeply rooted in pride, tradition, and heritage. As a member of the organization, you will undoubtedly identify with these values, and will hopefully do your part to help preserve and maintain the spirit of this very storied organization.

Stick Heights

Accurate stick heights promote musical and visual uniformity within the percussion section. Each stick height refers to the distance between the bead and the playing surface:

Sforzando = 15" Stroke, which is initiated by the forearm
12" Stroke
9" Stroke
6" Stroke
3" Stroke
1" Stroke

Stick Height Chart

This chart provides guidelines for relating stick heights to dynamic markings indicated throughout parts. Although the stick height may be changed in various playing situations, this chart provides a constant frame of reference and is considered default.

Dynamic*	Inner Beats	Accents (>)	Full Accents (^)
Pianissimo (pp)	1"	N/A	N/A
Piano (p)	1"	3"	N/A
Mezzo Piano (mp)	1"	3"	6"
Mezzo Forte (mf)	3"	6"	9"
Forte (f)	3"	9"	12"
Fortissimo (ff)	6"	12"	15"

*A dynamic marking such as this: ***f*** – ***mp***, simply means that accents will be played at forte while taps will be at mezzo piano.

Audition Procedures

To be eligible to audition for the Texas Drumline you **must** first submit a Prospective Member Audition Form to the Longhorn Band Office. This form can be found on the following page. General LHB audition information can be found on this website:

<http://lhb.music.utexas.edu/prospectives/auditions.php>

Next, you must attend at least one of the three summer drumline clinics in order to receive an official invitation to Band Week (where the drumline auditions will take place). It is encouraged that you attend all three clinics as these are intended to help prepare prospective members for auditions and the Band Week experience. If you are unable to attend at least one of the clinics, you must submit a performance video on your instrument(s) of interest **prior to August 5**.

During Band Week, auditions for the drumline will begin on the afternoon of Tuesday, August 18 (keep in mind that both prospective and returning members are required to attend both audition days). “Day 1” of the audition process will consist of section playing auditions and a group marching audition. At the end of the first day and after initial assessments have been completed, callbacks will be made for individuals to return to audition during “Day 2”.

“Day 2” of the audition process will consist of a group warm-up, which will work similar to the routine used during the summer clinics (these warm-up procedures are an important part of assessing the “Day 2” audition). Prospective and returning members that have made it to this point will perform an individual audition and then we will hold additional section playing auditions as needed. This day will conclude with a meeting to announce the 2010-2011 Texas Drumline.

Tuesday, August 16 – “Day 1” – 6:00 p.m.-Location TBA

- Section playing auditions
- Group marching auditions
- Call backs for “Day 2”

Wednesday, August 17 – “Day 2” – Time and Location TBA

- Group warm-up
- Individual playing auditions
- Section playing auditions (as needed)
- Drumline set meeting

After the audition process is complete, if you find that you did not end up making the drumline, your Band Week is not necessarily over. There are additional ways to be involved in the Longhorn Band that include the Big Bertha Crew and the Big Flags Brigade.

You will find music in the supplemental file on the website, entitled Cadences and Traditionals. Individual etudes will be made available at the first camp. Additional audition expectations and music excerpts will be discussed in further detail at the summer clinics.