Million Dollar Band 2018
marching percussion packet/basic details
front ensemble

• We will hold our percussion camp on Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28. Participation is required for those seeking membership in the Million Dollar Band For more specific details, please go to: bands.ua.edu/percussion

• If you are an incoming freshmen or transfer student, your participation in the camp will be used as our evaluation of you for a marching band scholarship recommendation. You do not need to prepare any other materials for scholarship consideration other than your instrument packet.

• In order to participate in the camp, you must have been accepted as an incoming freshmen or transfer student to the University of Alabama or be a returning member from the 2017 Million Dollar Band. For more information on membership, please go to:
  
  http://bands.ua.edu/mdbnewauditions/

  for returning members:

  http://bands.ua.edu/mdbreturningmembers/

• Once you register, we will use that info to contact you regarding the percussion camp and anything else related to the percussion section audition process.

***For percussion-related information, please see:
  
  http://bands.ua.edu/milliondollarband/percussion/

This packet AND the information online contain crucial information for the season. Please review both.

BASICS:

• Please prepare all of the materials assigned to your instrument.
• Please prepare the materials at varying tempi. Please use a metronome while practicing. Start SLOW!
• Please observe all other info regarding dynamics, heights, techniques, etc.
• If the packet seems overwhelming at first, don’t worry! Work slowly and notice the patterns/similarities.
VIDEO EVALUATION:
• If you would like to submit a video of your playing prior to our camp for evaluation and comments, please contact Neal Flum at nflum@ua.edu
• All videos must be submitted by no later than April 1.

QUESTIONS:
• Any questions regarding the front ensemble, please contact Gloria Yehilevsky at: gloria.yehilevsky@mail.bcu.ac.uk or post your question(s) in our Facebook Group so everyone can benefit from the response(s).

We will use Remind as our secondary means of communication for our marching percussion camp (April 27 and 28, 2018). If after the camp you earn membership into the marching band, then this Remind will become our means of communication for marching band-related activities.

I’m using Remind to send important updates, assignments, and information for MDB Percussion Section 2018. Please click on the link below to join our class. (For reference, our class code is @mua153m.)

https://www.remind.com/join/mua153m

• We have also set up a Facebook page to assist you with your preparation for the camp:
  https://www.facebook.com/groups/MDBPercussionSection2018/

We wish you the very best as you prepare for our camp. Please don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. Please consider submitting a video prior to the camp so we can offer you feedback. You can visit campus as well if you’d like to perform and receive feedback. If you’d like to arrange an on-campus visit/evaluation, please contact me at:

Office: (205) 348 – 9440
Cell: (205) 239 - 0336
Email: nflum@ua.edu

“Good luck!” with your preparations for camp and we’ll see you at the end of April.

Roll Tide!

Neal Flum

assistant director of athletic bands
director of the marching percussion
Packet Contents

Posture
General Approach
2 Mallet Grip
4 Mallet Grip
Dynamics
Velocity
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Stroke Types
Playing Zones
Ensemble Timing
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Exercise Requirements

All exercises in Packet
Spatial Awareness
Basics (with Battery)
Stick Control (with Battery)
Triplet Sequencing (with Battery)
Triplet Strokes (with Battery)
Posture

Begin by standing up straight about a step away from the instrument with feet shoulder width apart. Allow arms to hang comfortably. Eliminate all tension in back and shoulders.

Next, bend your elbows until forearms are just below parallel with the floor. Wrists should be slightly lower than the elbow and an inch above the instrument.

The face needs to be visible to the audience. Maintain upright posture throughout the spine while playing. Look down your nose to see the instrument.
General Approach
On all instruments: our primary playing zone is in the center of the bar. When we have fast/challenging passages, we can play on the very edges of the accidentals (more details following).
The basic stroke begins up, falls, and returns to the up position. Remember this while playing with any and every technique.
4 - Mallet Grip

Marimbas - Stevens-Musser Grip
Please watch this video describing how to hold and use Stevens grip correctly... then feel free to browse and enjoy Liquidrum’s other videos for hours on end...
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yq-WKA6o-E

While developing this grip, focus on rotation and independence!
When playing 2-mallet passages while holding 4-mallets, use the inner two mallets (numbers 2 & 3) - mallets are numbered, left to right: 1, 2, 3, 4

Further/suggested reading:
Method of Movement for Marimba - Leigh Howard Stevens

Vibraphones - Burton Grip
Please watch this video of Gary Burton discussing his own grip.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfHoqV1ng5M

Mallets are numbered left to right: 1, 2, 3, 4.
Focus on rotation and independence!
When playing 2-mallet passages, use mallet 2 (inner) in the left hand, and mallet 4 (outside) in the right hand, with the interval open to AT LEAST 90 degrees (right angle).

Pedaling: observe the lengths of notes that are written in the music/exercises.
- After pedaling: depressing the pedal immediately AFTER striking a note or chord.
  Practice this slowly with any exercise/scale (7/8 vibe part is great practice for this).
  Experiment and see how long you can delay the pedal (it's longer than you think!). This is our DEFAULT approach to pedaling, so that every new sustained note/chord is CLEAR.
- Half pedaling: depressing the pedal slightly so that the dampening bar begins to come off the bars, but is still in contact - this will make the instrument resonate slightly longer than with the pedal all the way up.

Further/suggested reading:
Up Front - Jim Casella & Jim Ancona
https://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/up-front-casella-ancona/marching-percussion-books
Vibraphone Technique: Dampening and Pedaling - David Friedman
DYNAMICS

Dynamics are indications of volume, but we may also use heights to give us a visual representation. This can help when learning the music and looking like a unified ensemble. Wrists should be very close to the keyboard - almost in danger of hitting the shaft of the mallet on the edge of the bar (which will also help with a full rotation).

\[
\begin{align*}
pp & \rightarrow 1" \text{ (slightly off center)} \\
p & \rightarrow 1" \\
mp & \rightarrow 3" \\
mf & \rightarrow 6" \\
f & \rightarrow 9" \\
ff & \rightarrow 12"
\end{align*}
\]

VELOCITY

Velocity is the term used to describe our approach to volume and touch on the instrument through technique. Velocity is determined by speed and direction

- Speed is determined by distance and time
  - Distance (from the mallet head to the bar) is defined by the dynamic or height.
  - Time should always be as fast as possible, regardless of height.
- Direction should always be straight down, while the up direction (rebound) will vary depending on the following note.

SHIFTING

With either four-mallet grip, imagine the mallets create the shape of a fan at all times. When we move to chords which make this seem impossible, a step in one direction or the other to turn the body will help maintain mallet position - keeping the forearms in line with the wrists. Intervals which are very far apart and can't be reached from a neutral standing position will require us to squat/bend down at the knees - you'll find that your arms can reach much farther along the instrument.

When playing independent strokes across both registers of the keyboard (naturals and accidentals, example: variations of 7/8 block chord exercise), we will use the push-pull approach: rather than holding the mallets above the notes, use your arms to shift forward and back to each note while keeping the mallets parallel to the instrument.

A good example of this is at the 2:05 minute mark in this video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMHiYRIUjwA
REBOUND/ARTICULATION

The two basic articulations we will use are staccato and legato strokes. For both articulations, the mallets maintain the same downward velocity. For a staccato stroke, the mallets will rebound to the same starting height with the same velocity as it did moving downward. However, the legato stroke’s rebound will fill the space from note to note (slower when coming up than down). While these are the two most extremes, the default stroke type will be a hybrid – the mallets should work with gravity to accelerate towards the keys and rebound naturally.

STROKE TYPES

Every stroke should start from the height marked by the dynamic, travel to the bar, then rebound to the height of the next note. The four basic stroke types are:

- “Full” – starts up/ends up
- “Down” – starts up/ends down
- “Tap” – starts down/ends down
- “Up” – starts down/ends up

Full and Tap strokes are similar in that they begin and end at the same height. Down and Up strokes rebound to a different height, defined by the dynamic of the next note. The most important thing is to consider the sound that will be created when deciding on stroke types to use in a passage/exercise.

PLAYING ZONES

In general we will play just off center – the perfect zone is just above the edge of the resonator. *Though this is not the “center” of the bar, I will refer to this as such.* When chord shapes demand it, we will play on the very edge of accidentals. Marimbas and xylophones may also play on the edge during fast passages.

Avoid stacking mallets – each mallet should strike the bar in the same place. If you end up “tripping” over the other mallet focus on lifting each mallet quicker.
ENSEMBLE TIMING

It is important that every member of the ensemble establishes and maintains his or her own tempo – meaning everyone is always counting, always subdividing. Once tempo is established you are responsible for lining that tempo up with the next player closest to the center of the ensemble. The center player is responsible for keeping the front ensemble in time with the rest of the band. This does not mean rely on the center for everything – you are still responsible for knowing how your part lines up with the battery parts and for maintaining consistent tempo, while always listening and looking in.

Prepping
We will NOT prep to begin reps or sections of music. Entrances will be determined either through listening (aural) or visual cues that we will decide upon based on the circumstance.
If you are in the habit of prepping before every entrance from previous ensemble experience, focus on eliminating this in your individual practice by continuing to think about how the mallets begin in the up position and fall to play each note. When using a metronome - simply listen and play in time!

REHEARSAL GUIDELINES

Please arrive early to every rehearsal to allow for set up time. Take care of the instruments and always fold covers. Awareness and focus are key to helping us play well all the time, and work efficiently. Please keep your phones silent and refrain from checking them... it can wait - I won't be checking my phone during rehearsal either.

Let's be professional, and above all let's have fun!
Warm-up Book
UA Front Ensemble 2018
Gloria Yehilevsky
Aaron Levy

2 MALLET WARM-UPS - also play holding 4

Play in all Major and Minor Keys - Circle of Fourths/Fifths, etc.

Scales & Arpeggios (SCV/Sandi Rennick)
Play in all Major & Minor Keys

My Favorite (SCV/Sandi Rennick) - one octave
My Favorite (SCV/Sandi Rennick) - two octave

Chromatic Up/Scale Down

Play in all major keys. Variations: (1) scale up/chromatic down, (2) chromatic down/scale up, (3) scale down/chromatic up - move to next scale chromatically without pause, practice starting from RH and LH

etc..
Triplet Arpeggio - (SCV/Sandi Rennick)
Play in all major & minor keys in any order (circle of 4ths/5ths/chromatic)

16th Arpeggio - (SCV/Sandi Rennick)
Play in all seventh variations (major 7, dominant 7, minor 7, half-diminished, diminished) - every order

G. H. GREEN scales and variations - 2 mallet (and holding 4)
Original:

Variation 1

Variation 2

ONE-HANDED WARM-UPS - Play LH version first through all keys, then RH
Be ready to play in any order, any key

THIRDS

SPREADING/INTERVALS

FOUR-MALLETS WARM UPS

7/8 (SCV/Sandi Rennick)
Variations will include 41 23 (8ths), 1 4 2 3 1 4 2 3 1 4 2 3 2 3 (16ths), etc.
Come up with your own!
Golden Gate Bridge (SCV/Sandi Rennick)
Learn in all 12 keys, see sticking variations below

Circle of Fourths:
C Major - Block chords
F Major - Out/In (41, 32 - 8th notes)
Bb Major - Left/Right (13, 24 - 8th notes)
Eb Major - 1 3 2 4 (16ths)
Ab Major - 1 4 2 3 (16ths)
Db Major - 2 3 1 4
Gb/F# Major - 2 4 1 3
B Major - 3 1 4 2
E Major - 3 2 4 1
A Major - 4 1 3 2
D Major - 4 2 3 1
G Major - Block chords
C Major - Only downbeat (don't play again)