

Drumline



Berne Union

Methods, Techniques, and Audition Materials

2020

Drumline Audition Book

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Welcome to the 2020 Berne Union Drumline. This packet is designed to help you become a better musician, and assist you throughout the season. Please read everything in the packet carefully and prepare all of the required material to the absolute best of your ability.

Included in this packet are various exercises and audition materials that will help in the journey of mastering technique. Passages should be performed as close to the written tempo as possible. The staff will be taking each student's ability to play within an ensemble into consideration as well as attitude, attention to detail and mental toughness.

We will not make any cuts within the ensemble. The audition process is purely for placing you in the best possible place to see you succeed as a musician.

If you have any questions while preparing this packet do not hesitate to contact us at:

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Audition Process

The audition process will consist of playing the exercises as an ensemble. We will assess your ability to balance, blend, and adapt. As we work through the technique program as an ensemble, specific explanations of approach will be provided. Your ability to keep an open mind and incorporate new ideas into your playing will be crucial to the success of the group. We may also introduce a short etude during the camp rehearsals.

Audition Suggestions

Preparation

- The success of your performance at the audition will be directly related to the level of preparation of the audition materials.
- Record yourself with some type of electronic device. Listen critically to the recording and work to perfect your performance. You will be uncomfortable with this at first.
- PRACTICE WITH A METRONOME.** Or along with some of your favorite music to make it more fun.
- It isn't necessary to memorize the materials at this time, however, not relying on the music will help you better interact with the ensemble.

Audition

- Keep in mind you are auditioning at all times,. Be professional.
- Be sure to ask questions if you are confused about anything you are being asked to play.

Music is what ultimately brought all of us to this group. While it's true that marching band has started to become an athletic sport, we need to remain true to what brought us here in the first place, music. So not only do we require you to have some playing chops, **we need true musicians, not just technical players.** We spend so much time working on our technique that we forget to stay in touch with the musical aspect of everything. That is why it is important to **listen** all the time. Spend as much time listening as you do playing your instrument. They are mutually beneficial.

Contrary to some schools of thought, technique does not need to be forced. Just as it is possible to overblow on a wind instrument, it is also possible to overplay a percussion instrument, which distorts sound quality. We take a very relaxed real world approach to the instrument. Essentially you should find a groove in everything we play so that the

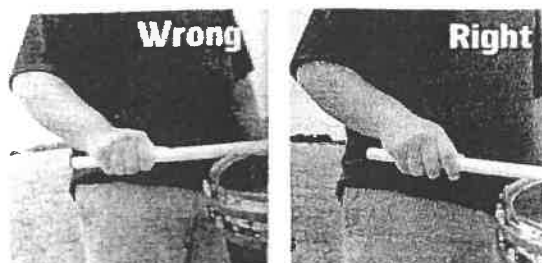
music flows. In everything that we play there should be checkpoints that you can find a groove to and sit inside the pocket of.

Snare Drum Technique

You should strive to be completely relaxed while you play. Not only is tension easy to see in a player, it is also easy to hear. Tension distorts sound quality. Although chops are something we should always strive for, sound quality is the most important aspect of our playing.

Right Hand

- ❑ The grip follows the line of the forearm
- ❑ The hand should be slightly down and to the right in its natural state
- ❑ The butt of the stick should be visible and should not be tucked underneath the forearm
- ❑ The thumb is positioned directly on the side of the stick
- ❑ The forefinger is wrapped along the stick and is even with the thumb
- ❑ The back three fingers should cradle the stick applying pressure while being free of tension, no white knuckles.

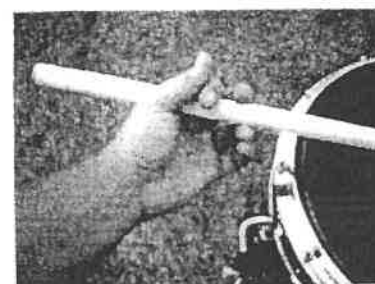


Left Hand

- ❑ Your hand position in a playing position should be exactly the same as if it was hanging at your side. Avoid straight fingers or condensed hands.
- ❑ The thumb connects to the first knuckle of the first finger, the thumb rests on top with no tension
- ❑ The stick rest on the cuticle of the third finger
- ❑ The middle finger rest on top of the stick, relaxed and **never straight. DO NOT INSULT THE AUDIENCE.**
- ❑ The ring and pinky fingers should work together to support the stick. They should always be relaxed. Think of them as the Oprah and Dr. Phil of your grip.
- ❑ The fulcrum is created by the thumb and first finger.
- ❑ The rotation of your left arm when you play should be like turning a door knob.



Stroke



- ❑ Strokes are primarily made from the wrist, but are not isolated to just the wrist. Focus on a good balance between finger, wrist and forearm.
- ❑ Allow the stick to vibrate in your hand. This is essential to good sound quality.
- ❑ Make the sticks feel heavy in your hands
- ❑ Allow the stick to rebound to its original height.
- ❑ Focus on creating a constant motion with the sticks, think more legato and less staccato. This excludes when you need to stop the stick (ie. during accent/tap patterns)

Tenor Drum Technique

You should strive to be completely relaxed while you play. Not only is tension easy to see in a player, it is also easy to hear. Tension distorts sound quality. Although chops are something we should always strive for, sound quality is the most important aspect of our playing.

Grip

- ❑ The grip follows the line of the forearm. The top of the hand is sloped slightly outward. This is known as “French Grip”
- ❑ The butt end of the stick can be seen and is not hidden under the forearm.
- ❑ The fulcrum is created by placing the thumb directly along the side of the stick. The forefinger wraps around the stick and is even with the thumb.
- ❑ The stick is cradled by the middle, ring, and pinky fingers. All fingers are in contact with the mallet/stick and should remain free of tension.

Playing Position

- ❑ The head of the stick/mallet should rest as close to the head as possible without touching it.
- ❑ Arms should rest comfortably and naturally at the sides so that the shoulders are relaxed. Elbows should not be pushed away from the body, nor should they be unusually tight against the body.
- ❑ Sticks/mallets should be slightly below parallel to the floor.



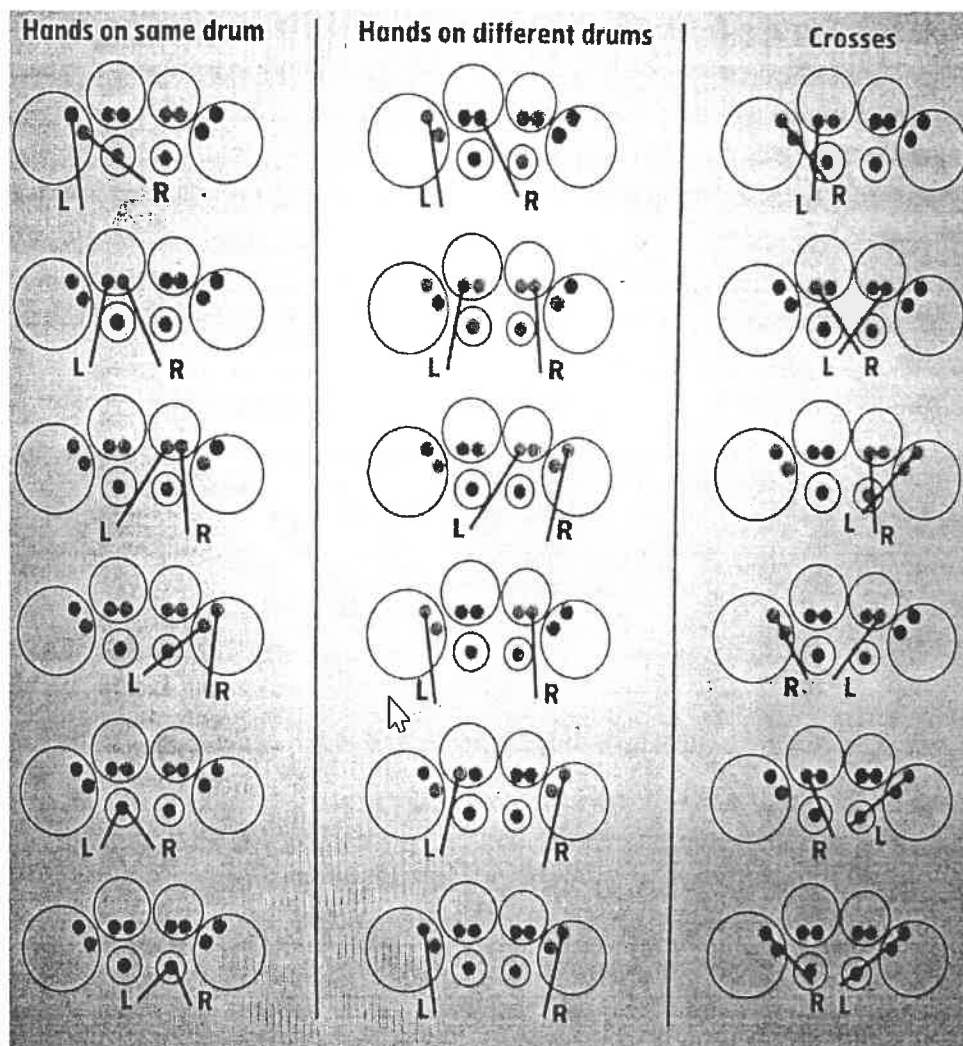
Stroke

- ❑ Strokes are primarily made from the wrist, but are not isolated to just the wrist. Focus on a good balance between finger, wrist and forearm.
- ❑ Allow the stick to vibrate in your hand. This is essential to good sound quality.
- ❑ Make the sticks feel heavy in your hands
- ❑ Allow the stick to rebound to its original height.

- ❑ Focus on creating a constant motion with the sticks, think more legato and less staccato. This excludes when you need to stop the stick (ie. during accent/tap patterns).
- ❑ The stroke should move vertically up and down.

Playing Zones

Playing zones are an important part of creating a good sound on tenors. Each drum has a particular “target for each particular stick to shoot for. This gives each stick the least amount of distance to travel in any given pattern around the drums. Refer to this general zone diagram to view various sticking scenarios. Practice the patterns **SLOWLY**. Strive for accuracy. Down to the nearest speck. If you miss that speck, consider it as if you hit the wrong drum entirely.



Bass Drum Technique

You should strive to be completely relaxed while you play. Not only is tension easy to see in a player, it is also easy to hear. Tension distorts sound quality. Although chops are something we should always strive for, sound quality is the most important aspect of our playing.

Grip

- ❑ The mallet should be held comfortably with the fulcrum placed toward the bottom portion of the fulcrum notch.
- ❑ The thumb should be placed on top and should point towards the mallet head.
- ❑ Begin with both arms hanging down at your side. The mallet should be pointed forward and down at a 35 to 40 degree angle.
- ❑ Bring your arms up at the elbow until the forearms are parallel to the ground. Do not change the position of the hand, wrist or mallet. We will adjust the drum from here so that the mallets are at the center of the drum.
- ❑ Next, bring your forearms towards the drum so that they touch the bass drum rim. Memorize where the rim makes contact with your forearm/fingers so that your mallet is always at the center of the head.



Stroke

- ❑ We use a wrist break motion in our bass drum playing.
- ❑ This is exactly the same as if you were playing on a practice pad, but, obviously, vertical.
- ❑ Almost every stroke we make will be legato, but this is subject to change.
- ❑ Every stroke will be a straight line at the angle of the mallet.



Foundations of this program

Music over matter

Music is probably what gave most of us our start and ultimately brought us to the Cavaliers. While it's true that drum corps has become something of a serious athletic sport, music is what drives the philosophy of the Cavaliers percussion program. So while we do require players with a lot of chops, **they need to be true musicians, not just technical players.**

Sometimes our musical education focuses on academia and the technical chores of becoming proficient on our instrument. These are important aspects to development, but we have to remember to stay in touch with why we're doing it all in the first place. This is why listening is so important. **Listen, listen, listen.** The more diverse your musical palette, the more intuitive you will be when playing music with the ensemble. **Spend as much time listening to music as you do practicing your instrument.** They are mutually beneficial.

Defining things as dictated by the music

As marching percussionists, we often have an overly analytical side to how we define the things we do. These details are part of the gig. However, don't let definitions such as stick heights or stick angles drive everything you do. They're merely reference points and need to be flexible in order to adapt to the needs of the music.

For example, a basic reference for stick heights would be:



Music is flexible and, as musicians, we need to be flexible with it. For example, sometimes we may ask for mezzo piano to sound a little softer than what a 6-inch height would dictate. Using definitions is fine for reference, but a musical ear will dictate how each phrase should be approached.

Timing

This is a percussion program - timing is a very important aspect of what we do. Timing is important for our role within the musical ensemble and for maintaining the integrity of the rhythms we play. Remember: **Rudiments are rhythms!** Know your rudiments and know them well, but be sure you are playing them **CORRECTLY** - meaning pay attention to how certain sticking patterns affect your rhythmic tendencies. Don't practice certain things at tempos that are faster than your hands can play, or you'll end up practicing bad habits.

Practice with a metronome to focus on good timing and rhythmic accuracy. To make it more enjoyable and realistic, play your various exercises along with music you like to listen to. It's generally the same thing as using a metronome, but it gives you a musical context on which to base your playing. This is the foundation of ensemble playing. Groove along with it and enjoy it!

Triplet Roll Exercise

Four 1 and 1's



Two 2 and 2's



One 4 and 4



Points to focus on...

- Very similar exercise to *Sixteenth-note Roll* except in a triplet feel. Same rules apply for hand rhythm, except now you are playing a hand rhythm of eighth-notes in $12/8$.
- The slashes are an exact doubling of the eighth-note. If we were to musically notate this, we would write 2 sixteenth-notes in its place. Be sure to practice with this in mind.
- Practicing this exercise at a slow tempo is great to focus on rhythmic timing and technique, and definitely do this using a high stick height. Decrease stick height as tempo increases. All notes performed at the same stick height. No accents!!

Triplet Diddle



Accent/Tap-tap

Repeat 4x's

R R R R R R R R L L L L L L L L L L R

Points to focus on...

- The accented notes are obviously played as a down stroke, but the following two notes afterwards are performed at a low stick height. Do this by capturing the natural tendency of the stick to rebound off the head with your fingers, carefully placing these notes in their proper rhythmic place.
- Pay careful attention to the first note in measure #2, it is a non-accented note....don't play this with an accent!

5-7-10

R 1st x
L 2nd x

R 1st x
L 2nd x

R 1st x
L 2nd x

R

Points to focus on...

- All accents are down-strokes starting with a high stick height.
- All non-accented notes found in a grouping of 2 eighth-notes are up-strokes.
- All non-accented notes found in a grouping of 3 eighth-notes consist of a tap and an up-stroke respectively. The exception is when performing a grouping of three eighth-notes before a hand change. In this case, both non-accented notes are taps.

5-7-10 Split: snares 7-10-5
tenors 10-5-7
basses 5-7-10

Mojo

Doubles to Triples

Snareline

Tenorline

Bass Drums

r r r r l l r r l l r r l l l l r r l l r r l l

3 3 3 3

3 3 3 3

3 3

4

S. Dr.

T. Dr.

B. Dr.

3 3

3 3

3 3

7

S. Dr.

T. Dr.

B. Dr.

3 3 3 3

3 3

3 3



10

S. Dr. 
T. Dr. 
B. Dr. 

13

S. Dr. 
T. Dr. 
B. Dr. 

16

S. Dr. 
T. Dr. 
B. Dr. 