



RACINE SCOUTS

DRUM & BUGLE CORPS

BRASS HANDBOOK

2017

The ideal drum corps hornline should sound like the brass section of a professional wind ensemble, jazz ensemble, or orchestra on the move. A beautiful, rich, pure, and in-tune concept of sound is the goal whether standing still or on the move. This concept of musicality and sound is one side of The Racine Scouts Hornline. The other side is training brass members to become self-sufficient musicians – able to read and understand music and apply fundamentals and universal concepts in their own lives as brass players. It is the philosophy of this group to supplement the music reading and comprehension skills and fundamentals set down in our members' music programs. We hope those members will spread this learning and have a positive effect on their programs upon their return at the end of the summer.

Qualifications

TALENT: Your abilities on your instrument and your marching ability are very important in the success of not only the hornline, but the entire Corps. It is equally important to see your development and improvement from camp to camp. This criteria is set and judged by the instructional staff.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is required at all rehearsals and performances. Occasionally, school and family conflicts may arise. In order for an absence to be “excused” it must be communicated at least one week in advance. “NO CALL – NO SHOW” members will be at risk of being removed from the brass ensemble roster. Refer to the Membership Handbook for more details on the Attendance Policy.

ATTITUDE: As with any team sport, chemistry is very important towards success: the same is true for The Racine Scouts Hornline. Our hornline will be full of members who will do **WHATEVER IT TAKES** to make the brass section great. It will be incredibly fun to be a part of this hornline as long as 100% of the members work as hard as they possibly can, are extremely positive, and support both the staff, and more importantly, each other.

HEALTH: Being healthy is very important in drum corps. You must be physically capable of withstanding the requirements of rehearsals and performances. If you have any questions about the physical requirements of the program, please contact us.

FEES: Your account status will have a direct impact on your membership in the corps. Without fees, we would not be able to operate as a drum corps. In reality, fees make up just a small portion of the total funds needed to run an organization of this size.

- It is ESSENTIAL that you keep your finances up to date if you expect to march! –

Always be mindful of your account, and never be afraid to contact the Membership Director if you have questions. Always get problems out in the open early rather than deal with them later. To do so will allow you more time to assess the situation and figure out a solution.

IMPORTANT REHEARSAL MATERIALS

Hornline members are responsible for having the following material at ALL rehearsals:

THREE RING BINDER: This contains all music handouts in organized clear sheet protectors. Any information you could possibly need should be in this binder.

PENCIL: Every hornline member must have a pencil at all times. Notes should be taken at every rehearsal. Write EVERYTHING down!

VALVE OIL, SLIDE GREASE: Please bring your own brass supplies. We can't guarantee that we'll have supplies on hand.

HAT: Hat with a brim will be worn when rehearsing outdoors. Hats are required to shade your face, your eyes, and your chops when rehearsing indoors. **Hats are not optional.**

SHOES: Movement will occur at all rehearsals and therefore athletic shoes are required at all times. Sandals, flip-flops, etc. are never acceptable.

CLOTHING: You must wear clothing that will allow you to perform excessive movement such as sweats, shorts, t-shirts, etc. **NO JEANS!!!** Again, movement will occur at all camps and rehearsals.

WATER BOTTLES: Each hornline member is required to have a water jug (no smaller than 1 gallon) beginning in June. These jugs must be present at all rehearsals.

EQUIPMENT

The Racine Scouts goal is to accept 24 brass players: 8 Trumpets, 4 Mellophones, 8 Baritones (which includes Euphoniums), and 4 Tubas. These numbers are subject to change.

Corps instruments will be available to you to use at every camp. Instruments will be available for check out after you have signed the instrument release form and paid a required portion of your tuition. Please note that instruments will have mouthpieces, but you are responsible for bringing a mouthpiece that you are comfortable playing on to all camps and rehearsals.

PHYSICAL/VISUAL RESPONSIBILITY

POSTURE

Posture is a very strong component for Marching and Playing. The key concept is to insure that your weight is evenly distributed between both feet. Your back should have a natural curve and your shoulder should be relaxed when assuming the position of attention. Your feet should be placed in a “V” shape with your heels touching and the toes positioned at 11 and 1 O’clock. The ankles, hips, shoulders and ears should all be in alignment with one another. Tension is a Tone Killer. If you are tense in your upper body, that tension will carry into your sound production and breathing. Work towards holding the horn with the correct body posture to strive for a completely relaxed, yet strong, upper body carriage. Resist the temptation to want to push the pelvis (hips) forward and lean back while playing or standing. This adds a great deal of tension on the lower back and can provide you with a false sense of support in the abdominal region. Your instrument bell angle is 10 degrees above parallel. The basic rules that apply to all hand positions is that the hands are relaxed, finger tips are on the valves, valve casings are perpendicular to the ground (except for the tubas), and your wrists are straight.

MARKING TIME

The method of mark time utilized in the horn arc will be the same as the drumline. The feet will remain at a “V” shape and the entire foot will lift 1-2 inches for the ground. When practicing your exercises, it is important to use an audible metronome at all times. Work to minimize the amount of sway or bounce you might have in the body carriage during your mark time.

STEP-OUTS

In any marching activity, you will find that nearly all timing & technique problems related to the music or drill occur within the first two counts of a phrase or drill move. As an effort to tackle this problem, step-outs were created. You simply take 2 steps in any direction (left foot, then right foot) at the beginning of a musical phrase or during what would have been a drill move. You will take one step with the left foot, and then bring your right foot to the left on the second count. On the next two counts, you will go back to your original placement. You should vary the direction and step size taken so that you may work on various areas of your marching technique while you play.

HEALTH AND FITNESS

The Racine Scouts considers all members to be professional athletes. It has been proven that drum corps members actually perform with a physical effort equal to a professional sports athlete. Every successful professional athlete has a very strict off-season fitness plan; you must think of yourself in the same way. It is imperative that all of our brass members be in excellent physical health. All members of the hornline must be capable of sustaining a high level of cardiovascular activity for extended periods of time.

BRASS TECHNIQUE PROGRAM

STRETCH

A state of relaxation is a very important aspect of great brass ensemble playing. Members enter a rehearsal in various states-of-mind. It is imperative that we formulate a common physical and emotional point of reference when we begin a rehearsal. Physical stretches are very important in the process of relaxing the body and calming the mind.

1. Tension Release – Tense every muscle in your body as high as you can by taking slight air in and holding it. Release the tension by relaxing the muscles and exploding the bad air out of your body.
2. Shoulder Rolls – Roll your shoulders back as big and round as you can. Reverse the direction and roll forward as well.
3. Half Neck Rolls – Look down at the ground and slowly roll your neck in a half circle left to right. Repeat this process backwards so that you are looking at the sky.
4. Trunk Twist – Hold you arms 90 degrees at your sides. Rotate your entire upper body left to right from the waist. Strive for a greater extension with each twist. Slowly raise your arms up as you continue to twist back and forth.
5. Two Way Stretch – Place your palms together over you head and fully extend your arms upward. Push your palms up towards the sky and dig you heels into the ground. Take a deep breath in and exhale releasing your arms down at your side.

AIR & BREATHING

The key to generating a quality sound on your instrument is using proper air. We utilize exercises based on the methods compiled by “The Breathing Gym” to develop breath capacity and control.

Start by taking 3 Deep Breaths

Take a relaxed deep breath in and exhale. Take in another breath expanding your lungs and body outward then exhale. Take one final breath filling to your maximum capacity and exhale. When breathing, always inhale

Sun Goddess 80bpm

Use your arms as a visual aid to gauge your air capacity. Begin with your arms positioned at rest down at your sides. Gradually raise your arms out and away from your body as you inhale. Arms should be parallel with the ground at the half way point and extend above the head at the point of full capacity. Air should constantly be in motion either in our out. Air flow should never stop nor should tension be created.

- Inhale 8 counts Exhale 8 counts
- Inhale 10 counts Exhale 10 counts
- Inhale 12 counts Exhale 12 counts
- Inhale 14 counts Exhale 14 counts
- Inhale 16 counts Exhale 16 counts
- Inhale 14 counts Exhale 14 counts
- Inhale 12 counts Exhale 12 counts
- Inhale 10 counts Exhale 10 counts
- Inhale 8 counts Hold it. Sip In a little air. Hold it. Sip. Release.

Breathing Sequence 90bpm

When you inhale, place your left hand perpendicular to your lips so that one knuckle of your index finger is in the center of your aperture. The palm should be flat with fingers together. Draw air in from the sides of your index finger. Your lips should make contact with your fingers which represents the upper and lower rims of your mouthpiece. Every exhale should be blown directly into the center of your palm. Flip your hand back to make contact with your index finger to repeat the process of the exercise.

- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 8 counts (2x)
- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 12 counts (2x)
- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 16 counts (2x)
- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 12 counts (2x)
- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 8 counts (2x)
- Inhale 4 counts Exhale 4 counts (4x)
- Inhale 3 counts Exhale 3 counts (4x)
- Inhale 2 counts Exhale 2 counts (4x)
- Inhale 1 counts Exhale 1 counts (8x) release

Tips for Success:

- Push Yourself!
- Every inhale should expand to your maximum capacity without tension
- Every exhale should empty your lungs. Engage the diaphragm towards the end of every exhale to maximize the direction of air.
- Never use Stale air – breathing on top of unused air left in the lungs.
- DO NOT form an embouchure. The point is to strengthen the lungs and work the sensation of air entering and leaving your body.
- When your body receives more oxygen than it is used to, you may feel light headed. If this occurs, bend over at the waist low enough to place your head below your heart. This action will help you regain consciousness more quickly and prevent passing out.
- Breathe bigger today than you did yesterday
- Apply the breathing techniques directly to your instruments

SINGING

Become comfortable with singing! Singing is an extremely valuable instrument and tool that is used to make you a successful in brass playing. Sing full with confidence by projecting from your diaphragm, not your closed throat. Use a quality breathe when preparing to sing. Hear your pitch before you sing it. The better you can sing a pitch, the better you will be able to center pitch through your instrument. Begin with humming the pitch and feeling the vibration of that pitch in your mouth. Vocalize the pitch by opening your mouth from the hum saying “Mah”. When singing, pay attention to your vowel shape and getting to that vowel instantly.

BUZZING

Most professional brass musicians practice with the mouthpiece on a regular basis. The benefits of mouthpiece buzzing include: being able to isolate embouchure and tone production problems; improved aural skills; and less lip fatigue (the exercises are easier to produce without the brass instrument's resistance).

The first notes we will play will usually be on the mouthpiece. There will be much attention placed on how you produce that sound and its overall quality. The mouthpiece, embouchure, and air support combine to create the true instrument; the tubing of the brass instrument merely resonates your buzz. The quality of the sound on the mouthpiece directly correlates to the player's tone quality when the mouthpiece is added to the instrument. Therefore, developing a dark and resonant sound on the mouthpiece should be a priority for all brass players.

There are numerous articles written about embouchure development for each of the instruments. We strongly recommend that you find and research these articles so that you may apply the information to your specific instrument. You should also continue to reinforce the embouchure work that you may have done with your private lesson instructor.

There are some basic embouchure rules that can be applied to all brass players:

- The corners of the mouth need to be firm and strong with a comfortably setup.
- Both lips should have enough flesh on the mouthpiece to allow for a full, robust buzz.
- Always bring the mouthpiece to the same place on your lips.
- The jaw should always be open - especially in the lower register.
- The teeth are apart.

The mouthpiece should be held with your non-dominant hand, palm facing out, with the shank of the mouthpiece in between your middle and ring finger. This method of holding your mouthpiece will force you to use very little pressure against your embouchure. If the lips are buzzing freely, a full mouthpiece-sound will result. Again, be certain that the corners are locked and there is always excellent breath support. When buzzing, there should always be a dark, open "Oh" sound. If the sound is bright and tinny, open your jaw more, and firm up the corners. Be sure to check that the mouthpiece is not forced against your lips.

In addition to warm-up exercises, mouthpiece playing will help improve accuracy discrepancies in the show music. Every player in the ensemble should be able to play any part of the show music on his or her mouthpiece.

BRASS DAILY ROUTINE

LONG TONES

Begin each note with a full 2 count inhalation and “dah” articulation. Emphasize the breath portion of the attack with little tongue. Center the pitch immediately and maintain a steady relaxed tone with an “ah” vowel sound. Air must always be in motion with direction and intensity to the release. With each descending note, maintain the same tonal color as the first open pitch by gradually allowing the embouchure to relax.

As the intervals become larger, place a greater focus on airflow to the bottom note. Subdivide each valve change with rapid motion. Never move valves slowly. Note changes should be mouth and seamless. Set the airspeed, use light mouthpiece pressure and stay relaxed.

Continue each exercise chromatically down to the 1-2-3 valve combination.

F Drones

♩ = 100

Trumpet in B \flat
Mellophone
Baritone (B.C.)
Tuba

mf

This musical score is for the 'F Drones' exercise. It is written for four brass instruments: Trumpet in B \flat , Mellophone, Baritone (B.C.), and Tuba. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 100. Each instrument part starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The exercise consists of a series of whole notes, each held for a full measure. The notes are: F \sharp 2 (first measure), F \sharp 3 (second measure), F \sharp 4 (third measure), F \sharp 5 (fourth measure), F \sharp 6 (fifth measure), F \sharp 7 (sixth measure), F \sharp 8 (seventh measure), and F \sharp 9 (eighth measure). Each note is followed by a quarter rest in the final eighth of the measure. The notes are connected by a slur across the first seven measures, and a final slur covers the eighth measure and its rest.

B \flat Drones

♩ = 100

Trumpet in B \flat
Mellophone
Baritone (B.C.)
Tuba

mf

This musical score is for the 'B \flat Drones' exercise. It is written for the same four brass instruments: Trumpet in B \flat , Mellophone, Baritone (B.C.), and Tuba. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 100. Each instrument part starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The exercise consists of a series of whole notes, each held for a full measure. The notes are: B \flat 2 (first measure), B \flat 3 (second measure), B \flat 4 (third measure), B \flat 5 (fourth measure), B \flat 6 (fifth measure), B \flat 7 (sixth measure), B \flat 8 (seventh measure), and B \flat 9 (eighth measure). Each note is followed by a quarter rest in the final eighth of the measure. The notes are connected by a slur across the first seven measures, and a final slur covers the eighth measure and its rest.

LIP SLURS

Lip Slurs develop range, flexibility, and endurance. Only articulate the first downbeat. Do not use the tongue to aid in note changes. The breath on count 8 should be a quick draw, full quarter note value, exhaling the air at speed. Accelerate the air immediately after the exhale to reach the upper note and maintain color. Be sure to relax the embouchure on the downward slur into the lowest pitch. The bottom pitch should have a round “oh” vowel sound.

Don't treat upper notes as higher, but instead push your further away and downward. Reach the note with your air, do not climb up to it with your lips. Keep your embouchure firm with light mouthpiece pressure.

Continue each exercise down to the 2-3 valve combination before moving back up chromatically to the open valve combination.

2 note

♩ = 100-140

3 note

♩ = 100-140

Adagio for Strings

27

ARTICULATION

Articulation exercises are an integral part of developing the relationship between the tongue and the air stream. It is important to understand that the tongue cannot articulate properly if there is not enough air support. These exercises are intended to develop a consistent and clear approach to the motion and speed of the tongue and air. It is also important to know that the clarity of the articulation should not be affected by tempo, technique, note length, volume, or range. The only time an articulation will change is when the style being played changes.

Play exercises Ascending diatonically to the 5th and down, AND/OR descending chromatically to the 2-3 valve combination and up.

♩ = 100-180

Technique Development

These exercises will develop your finger dexterity in combination with different articulation styles. Make sure you keep the tops of your finger tips in contact with the valve cap at all times. When the third valve is employed, think of a very quick and smooth wrist twist forward to facilitate the technique.

Two and Two

Clarke Study

Articulation Variations

STYLE DEFINITION

Make each style clear from the previous. For tenuto, a “dOH” tongue is used with faster air to maintain time and connection. Staccatos use the same “d” tongue, but half value “da” for a slight separation between notes. Accents are achieved by using more air at the front of the note with a slight decay. Do not tongue harder for accents.



STYLE/NOTE LENGTH GLOSSARY

Style/Length

Symbol

Visualization

Connected



def. – There is no decay and the notes touch.

Long Lifted



def. – There is a slight decay and the notes touch.

Lifted



def. – There is a slight decay and a small space.

Detached



def. – There is no decay and the length is half of the note it is attached to.

Accented



def. – The beginning of the note is slightly louder, there is a slight decay and the notes touch.

Lifted Accent



def. – The beginning of the note is slightly louder, there is a slight decay and a small space.

Roof-Top Accent



def. – The beginning of the note is slightly louder, there is no decay and the length is half of the note it is attached to.

TUNING

Tuning Sequence

Musical score for Tuning Sequence, 4/4 time signature. The score is for five instruments: Trumpet in Bb, Mellophone, Baritone (B.C.), Baritone (T.C.), and Tuba. The music consists of a series of notes and rests, with some notes beamed together and some held across measures.

Bb9 Chord Progression

Musical score for Bb9 Chord Progression, 4/4 time signature. The score is for five instruments: Trumpet in Bb, Mellophone, Baritone (B.C.), Baritone (T.C.), and Tuba. The music features a series of chords and notes, with dynamics markings such as *mp* and *ff*. The score includes a sequence of notes numbered 1 through 6 at the bottom.

WARM-DOWN

Warming down is just as important as warming up. It helps to stimulate blood flow to the lips while relaxing the Muscles that have been engaged during performance. The warm down process is to be done soft and slow in a relaxed posture. Do not be too concerned with metered tempo. Change notes when it feels and sounds good. Strive for consistent open and relaxed tones. Continue to flap out (“Mr. Ed”) the lips between each exercise. Relax the lower jaw downward whenever you access the pedal register.

Chromatic Descent

Musical score for Chromatic Descent, 4/4 time signature. The score is for Tuba 8vb. The music consists of a series of notes, with some notes beamed together and some held across measures.

Triplets

Musical score for Triplets, 4/4 time signature. The score is for Tuba 8vb. The music consists of a series of notes, with some notes beamed together and some held across measures.

Pedal Tones

Musical score for Pedal Tones, 4/4 time signature. The score is for Tuba 8vb. The music consists of a series of notes, with some notes beamed together and some held across measures.