

Second Edition

Fighting Indians Band



Marching Technique Guide 2011

James M. Sammons, Band Director

Colbert Page Howell, Associate Band Director

Preface

A band performing with marching precision is not only a thrilling experience for the audience at halftime it is also one of the most rewarding experiences from the standpoint of the individual band member as well. Marching precision requires a flawless execution of the fundamentals of footwork, body posture, and a complete understanding of one's role in the drill sets which make up the show.

Many hours of dedicated effort must be patiently put forth in order to achieve perfection in individual and group technique. Personalities and physical characteristics of each individual must be shaped into complete conformity with the group. This means that the individual marcher must perfect the group technique with no room for individual differences.

Determination, patience, and self-discipline are the only means of achieving marching precision. The fundamental marching techniques will be attained through constant attention to and repetition of the smallest of details until there is a conditioned (muscle memory) response from each member of the team.

This marching technique guide has been developed with the goal of attaining and maintaining a high level of excellence in marching execution throughout the band. We have compiled as completely and concisely as possible in this guide, the step by step fundamentals that are necessary for the VBHS Band to perform the football show at the highest levels of excellence possible. It is not possible to include in this booklet every minute detail and this first edition is intended as a work in progress that will continue to be edited and improved upon as the 2010 season progress and in future years to come.

This marching guide was compiled by Mr. Ashby Goldstein and the 2010-2011 Executive Leadership Team in the Summer of 2010.

2010-2011 Executive Leadership:

Gardner Reid – Band Captain
Katherine Crawford – Head Drum Major
Gwendi Lamothe – 1st Lieutenant
Marissa Zimmerman – Drum Major
Jennifer Wolfe – Drum Major
Sean McKnight – 2nd Lieutenant

Fundamental Principles For Successful Marching Rehearsals

1. For **ALL** practical purposes, **RHEARSALS, MUST OF NECESSITY, BE SILENT**;
 Exceptions:
 - A. Adult Staff
 - B. Questions (Please raise your hand);
 - C. Student Leaders (brief / limited to necessity);
 - D. Band, group, Set the band **IMMEDIATELY** when called or whistled to attention;
 - E. individual responses to commands or questions;
2. Set the band **IMMEDIATELY** (Max of 3 seconds) when called or whistled to attention;
3. The Position of **ATTENTION** is a ready to **PERFORM** position;
4. Hold your position (No Movement) at attention and in silence before and after drill moves or musical performance; Everything **BEGINS** and **ENDS** with the position of **ATTENTION!**
5. Maintain your **PERFORMANCE** attitude at all times when rehearsing;
6. **TEMPO** and **COUNTING** is the responsibility of individual members; County aloud crisply when cleaning drill set to set; **WATCH** your Drum Majors and **LISTEN** back or over to the location of the pulse / time; **KNOW** which voice group has the time and when they have it;
7. Always refer to the **CHECKLIST** before beginning anything;
 - A. Attention;
 - B. Posture;
 - C. Instrument / Equipment Position;
 - D. Dress: Lines, Ranks, Files, Arcs, Forms, Interval;
 - E. Direction of March / Direction Change;
 - F. Counts & Step Size;
 - G. Marching Style;
 - H. Time;
 - I. Whatever is Next; Pro-Active thinking is essential;
8. Parade Rest and Attention or **NON-TALKING / NON-MOVING** positions;
9. At Ease (Formal) is a relaxed **NON-TALKING** position with the **RIGHT FOOT** remaining in your set position; At Ease (In-Formal) is a relaxed position (soft talking allowed) with the **RIGHT FOOT** remaining in your set position;
10. Comments, directions, and suggestions for improvement, and are **RESERVED** for the **ADULT STAFF** and designated **STUDENT LEADERS** as follows:
 - A. Adult Tower Staff (Band Directors or Other)
 - B. Adult Field Staff
 - C. Student Leaders: Drum Majors, Executive Leaders, Section leaders, Marching Techs; Comments must be reserved and concise;

REHEARSAL INFORMATION AND FIELD PRECEDURES

1. Yard lines are eight (8) 22½ inch steps apart.
2. The hash marks are twenty-eight (28) 22½ inches from the side line and the same distance from each other.
3. Marching across the yard line, the arch of your right foot hits the yard line. When marching across the field (i.e. back to front), split the yard line between your feet keeping the center of your body in-line with the field marking. When executing stationary commands, keep the right foot beside or next to the yard line, depending on your orientation.
4. Always maintain the proper interval, dress, distance, and cover. These “ensemble marching skills” will become important as we “clean” the drill for the show.
5. Follow the instructions of your section leader. In general, remain quiet and in position when section leaders are giving instructions. Additionally, there is a mandatory silence policy in effect during the initial teaching stages.
6. On the field, a pencil is a necessary piece of equipment for marking your positions and for mapping individual formation changes. Pencils are also used to mark marching instructions on your music. Keep your pencil with you at all times on the field at rehearsals.
7. BE ON TIME FOR REHEARSALS AND BE PREPARED WITH THE PROPER EQUIPMENT: pencils, music, flip folder, lyre, and instrument.
8. A minimal amount of conversation will result in a better and more efficient rehearsal. This will also enable the Directors, Drum Major, Band Captain, and Section Leaders to be heard and will enable you to concentrate on what you are doing. This will save both our time and yours.
9. The Directors have sorted through hundreds of marching band arrangements to pick only the best for the band. Due to this fact there is no need to ad-lib any music during rehearsals or performances.
10. YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REHEARSALS ARE:
 - a. Know your assignment and do it well.
 - b. Do everything right the first time!
 - c. Attend ALL rehearsals and arrive on time.
 - d. Be attentive to all instruction.
 - e. Teamwork is essential for a successful group performance.

TEACHING PROCEDURE

By following the outlined procedure for each marching fundamental, you will develop a uniform and consistent strategy for teaching. This can also apply to teaching individual music parts to members of your sections.

Talk with your head up and have good eye contact. Use good voice projection and clarity.

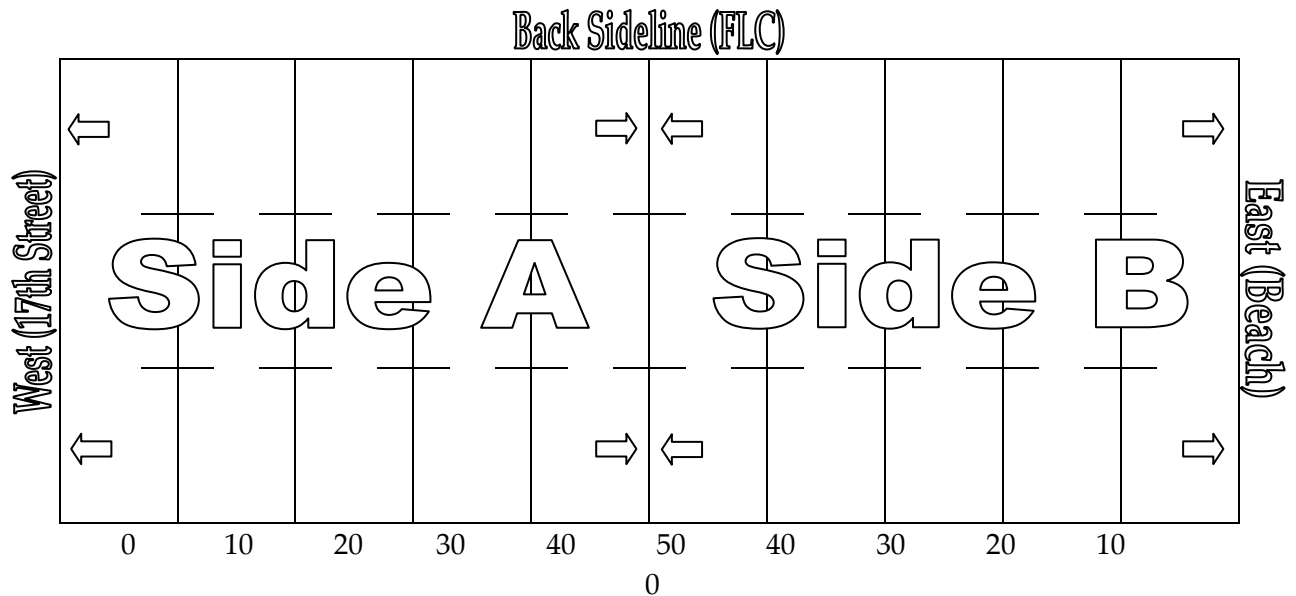
1. Explain the fundamental.
Example: "The next fundamental is...the position of "attention".
2. Break down the fundamental into command and response.
Example: "The command for attention is....Your response is....."
3. Give command to the squad and have them give the response.
(This should be done in tempo)
4. Demonstrate the entire fundamental to the squad in sequence by calling the command and executing the fundamental with the response.
(A picture is worth a thousand words)
5. Demonstrate the fundamental By-The-Numbers, breaking down each movement and explaining proper positioning of hands, feet, legs, head, instrument, etc.
Example: On count one, the left leg snaps to the position, etc.
6. Give squad the command and have them begin trying each movement By-The-Numbers as you demonstrate. Check each position and correct as necessary. (Move quickly while checking positions By-The-Numbers to avoid people standing in an uncomfortable position for long periods of time.)
7. Continue to have the squad execute By-The-Numbers until each position of the fundamental and movement from one position to another is memorized. (Note: It is unrealistic to expect beginners to perfect each fundamental immediately. A great deal of time can be saved if you can determine that the basic objectives have been mastered and then move on. There will be time for review later.
8. Give command and have the squad execute in sequence. Check to see that each point is being executed properly as the entire fundamental is rehearsed. (Note: Speed kills. Keep tempos slow in the beginning).
9. Once the fundamental is being executed with a reasonable amount of proficiency, you may move on the next fundamental and begin the procedure again.
10. Use the "choral response" frequently when giving instructions and /or information to the entire band or small groups.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

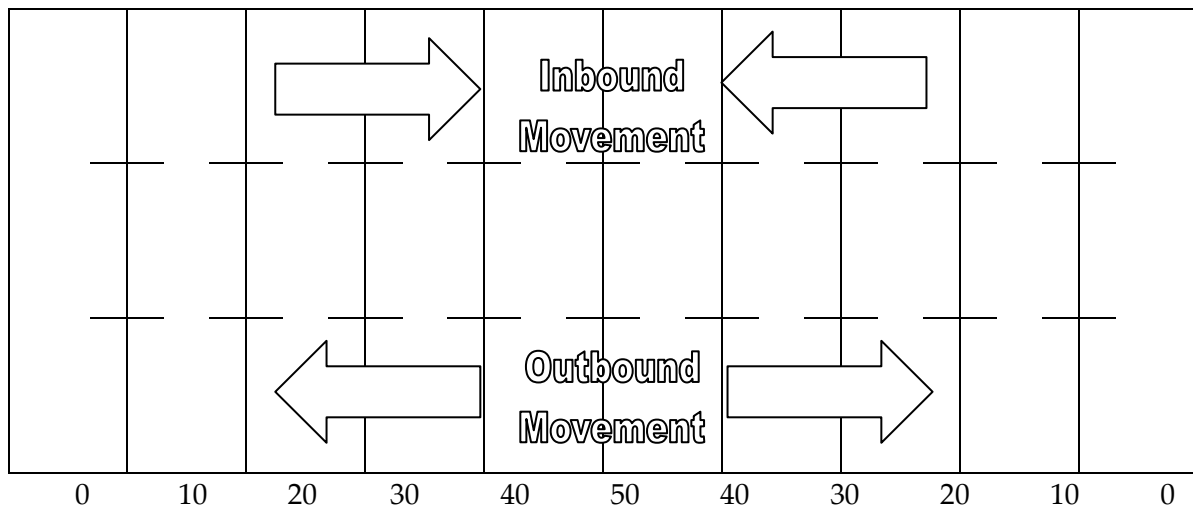
1. Always fall in at attention.
2. All commands and responses should be executed with volume, intensity, and precision.
3. After completing a maneuver, FREEZE until told to relax.

FIELD TOPOGRAPHY

Orientation on the field is referred to by these designations:



Front Sideline (Director Tower)



Posture

Posture is consistent throughout all fundamentals. The body is straight at all times.

Position of Attention

1. Feet = Together (Heels & Toes)
2. Knees = Unlocked (but straight)
3. Hips = Slightly forward (not to stick posterior out)
4. Stomach = Slightly In
5. Chest = Slightly Out
6. Shoulders = rolled back and down
7. Hands = clap with thumbs crossed
8. Elbows = Locked
9. Chin & Eyes = Slightly above parallel

Remember: Make your torso (waist through shoulders) as long as possible (by lifting your chest and shoulders as far out of your hips as possible). And remember to lift your head as far off your shoulders as possible.

You will be at this attention position for over 80% of rehearsals and still be comfortable and relaxed.

Attention

Purpose: Starting position for maneuvers; focus attention

Command/**RESPONSE:** Ban - ten - hut - **HUT**
 1 2 3 4

On **HUT:** Snap to position of attention

WTWF:

1. Instrument held centered and straight in front of body
2. Mouthpiece is eye level
3. Heels and Toes together
4. Center of gravity is slightly forward

Roll step breakdown - subdivides each step into sixteenth notes.

Count 1 (Plant the heel). Left heel on the ground, toe up. (*Weight 1/2 way between feet*),
Right toe on ground, heel slightly up.

“e” of 1 (Squeeze the toothpaste). Right foot rolls forward, move body weight forward,
right knee slightly behind left knee and straight but not locked.

“and” of 1 (Ankles align on and). Right foot moves forward, ankles align and cross, and
the knee is bent only slightly. Weight is on the left foot, left knee straight with no
leaning.

“a” of 1 (Kick the ball through). Right foot swings forward, heel near to the ground
while right knee straightens.

Count 2 (Plant the heel) Right heel touches the ground in front of left foot
with the toe up. Left heel comes off the ground.

8 to 5 step size

This is our most typical size of step. As stated above, it equals 22.5 inches. A football field is divided into increments of five yards. For each of those 5 yards we will take an even 8 steps, thus 8 (steps) to 5 (yards). Walk from yard line to yard line to feel the step size. Find the halfway point visually. (1 squeeze and kick 2...8, squeeze and kick stop)

Forward March (Roll Step)

Purpose: Normal marching step used to move band

Command/**RESPONSE**: Fo - Ward - March - **CHECK - AND - ONE - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8**
1 2 3 4 and 1

1. On **CHECK**: Left toe pushes into the ground; no visible movement
2. On **AND**: Left heel zips out 22 ½ inches in front of body, slightly off ground, toe is in air (THINK: Kick the ball).
3. On **ONE**: Left heel touches the ground and proceeds to roll through the arch of the foot. On the “and” of ONE the right foot should be passing directly beside the left, slightly off the ground
4. On **2**: The right heel should be touching the ground in front of the body with the toes in the air. One the “and” of TWO the left foot should be passing directly beside the right, slightly off the ground
5. Continue alternating on beats **3,4,5,6,7**
6. On **8**: Arch of the right foot should be on the new yard line

WTWF:

1. Think (Kick the ball, PLANT the heel, SQUEEZE the toothpaste, Ankles cross on AND, KICK through)
2. UPPER BODY REMAINS ENGAGED and DOES NOT MOVE!!

Halt from Forward March

Purpose: To stop after forward march

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ready - Halt - **POINT - SLIDE**

5 6 7 8 1

On **POINT**: (count 8) Arch of the right foot should be on the new yard line

On **SLIDE**: (count 1) Arch of the left foot should be on the yard line; heels and toes are together (assume attention position)

Mark Time 8 to Forward March 8

Command/**RESPONSE**: Mark - Time - Mark - **CHECK - AND - ONE - 2-3-4-5-6**

LOCK - LOCK - AND - ONE - 2-3-4-5-6-7-8

7 8 and 1

On the 1st **LOCK**: Lock your left knee in place

On the 2nd **LOCK**: Lock your right knee in place

On **AND**: Kick the ball. Left heel zips out 22 ½ inches in front of body, slightly off ground, toe is in air
Continue using forward march technique

-----CHECK OFF #1-----

Parade Rest

(From Attention to Parade Rest)

Purpose: A more comfortable form of attention; used when waiting longer periods of time

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban – P'rade – Hest - **HUT**

1 2 3 4

1. Move left foot 22 ½" to the left of the right foot
2. Arch of right foot on yard line, or right foot on the yard line when facing across the field
3. Without instruments arms move straight down – left over right at belt line
4. Instruments move as directed by section leader
5. Chin down

WTWF

1. Arch of right foot is on yard line; right foot is on yard line when facing across field
2. Check all angles, feet position, instrument/body carriage, etc.

Parade Rest to Attention

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban - ten - hut - **HUT**

1 2 3 4

On **HUT**: Left foot snaps back in (toes & heels together) – assume attention position

Left/Right Face

Purpose: to turn the band 90 degrees to the right

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban – left/right - hacc - **FREEZE - HUT - 2 - 3**

1 2 3 4 1 2 3

Left Face:

On **FREEZE**: Freeze (nothing happens)

On **HUT**: Right foot snaps directly forward, weight ½ way between feet

On **2**: Body snaps 90 degrees, weight on the balls of both feet

On **3**: Right foot snaps to the left foot (heels & toes together). At Attention

Right Face:

On **FREEZE**: Freeze (nothing happens)

On **HUT**: Left foot snaps directly forward, weight ½ way between feet

On **2**: Body snaps 90 degrees, weight on the balls of both feet

On **3**: Left foot snaps to the right foot (heels & toes together). At Attention

WTWF:

1. Upper body posture/instrument carriage remains consistent throughout move!
2. On 2: Left/right toe is 22 ½ inches out
3. Three pictures with no movement between
4. Do not rush tempo

About Face

Purpose: to turn the band 180 degrees

Hint: Similar to Left Face; but pivot 180 degrees instead of 90

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban – bout - hacc - (freeze) - **HUT - 2 - 3**

1 2 3 4 1 2 3

On Freeze: Freeze (nothing happens)

On **HUT**: Right foot snaps out 22 ½” crossing over the left foot slightly. Weight ½ way between feet.

On **2**: Body snaps 180 degrees, weight on the balls of both feet

On **3**: Right foot snaps to the left foot (heels & toes together). At Attention.

Horn Lift

Purpose: Dynamic and visual impact

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ready – Lift – **LIFT**
 1 2 3 4

On **LIFT**: Snap horns and head to a 45 degree angle upwards from normal playing position

To Retrieve

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ready – Down – **DOWN**
 1 2 3 4

On **DOWN**: Snap horn and head down to normal playing position

Left/Right Drag Turn

Teach as a part of Mark Time

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban – (rest) – Drag – (left/right) – **TURN - 2 - 3 - LOCK**
 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Rotate Counter Clockwise 90 degrees in 4 counts

Rotate Clockwise 90 degrees in 4 counts

Bout Drag Turn

Command/**RESPONSE**: Ban – (rest) – Drag – Bout – **TURN-2-3 HALF-5-6-7-LOCK**
 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Rotate Counter Clockwise 180 degrees in 8 counts

Rotate Clockwise 180 degrees in 8 counts

Marching Vocabulary

Form Control - precision and definition of stationary and moving drill patterns.

Accuracy - the exact establishment and maintenance of forms.

Clarity - the clearness and readability of forms.

Spacing - the interval or distance between the individuals and/or elements.

Alignment - the straightness of a line or the roundness of a curve among individuals and/ or elements.

Technique - the method of procedure used in body and equipment movement.

Uniformity of Method - the sameness and consistency of movement within a total unit.

Dress - the action of checking the straightness of a line (left or right) or the roundness of a curve in relationship to *yourself* and among individuals.

Cover - the action of checking the straightness of a line (in front of you) in relationship to *yourself* and among individuals.

Rehearsal Terminology

Markers - for beginning and ending drill set positions. Students should look up while marching. Check the position of the marker only after arrival.

"Plus One" (+1) step in the new direction - to practice changes of direction, always take one step in the new direction at the end of the phrase, freeze for a few seconds, check *both* feet for position, then return feet to position of attention once instructed to do so.

"Minus One" (-1) step - starting on the last count of a drill phrase to check feet position and body alignment (dress and/or cover)

Coordinate Charts

Coordinate charts are used so individual students can find their position for a drill set. The concept allows students to set themselves according to horizontal and vertical coordinates on a graph (in this case – a football field). The student will have a card with a list of coordinates which correspond to each drill set. The number of drill sets in the show will determine the amount of coordinates.

Abbreviations:

I = Inside

O = Outside

F = in Front

B = Behind

BH = Back Hash Mark

FH = Front Hash Mark

FS = Front Sideline

BS = Back Sideline

A = Side A (Left side of the field from the director's viewpoint)

B = Side B (Right side of the field from the director's viewpoint)

Step One: Determine the horizontal reference point using yard lines. First determine whether the position is on "Side A" or "Side B" of the 50 yard line. Then determine which yard line is closest to the coordinate. Start there. The drill chart will be broken into how many 8 to 5 size steps they are from the yard line (usually rounded to the nearest half step) and whether they are inside or outside that yard line. Inside is towards the 50 yard line, outside is toward the end zone or away from the 50 yard line.

Example: 1 A 3I 45 = Set #1, Side A, 3 steps inside the 45 yard line

Step Two: Determine the vertical reference point using the sidelines and hash marks. Determine whether the position is closest to the front sideline, front hash, back hash, or back sideline and if it is in front or behind that reference point.

Example: 1 A 3I 45 5FBH = Set #1, Side A, 3 steps inside the 45 yard line, 5 step in front of the back hash mark