

THE SUMB MARCHING TECHNIQUE GUIDE

Posture & Balance are just as important as a performer's sound quality on their instrument. A simple way of achieving good **posture** is – ears over shoulders, shoulders over hips, hips over knees, and knees over ankles. A simple way of achieving a strong sense of **balance** is to have acute awareness of upper body (above the hips) control while maintaining relaxed, but in control lower body (below the hips) awareness.

To the ready position (stand by): This position allows the members to stand where they are relaxed and ready to hear instructions. The command “stand by” will come from the drum major, section leaders, staff members, or directors. This position is achieved by:

- **Feet** – Apart at shoulder length, with equal weight distribution through both feet naturally angled out
- **Head & Eyes** – Forward looking straight and slightly upward to drum major
- **Arms/Hands (with instrument)** – Based on individual instrument or equipment

The “full attention” position:

This position prepares members to begin a repetition (rep). The command “set” will come from the drum major, section leaders, staff members, or directors.

Checklist

1. **Feet** – Heels and toes together, with equal weight distribution through both feet.
2. **Knees** – In line with ankles and not bent or locked
3. **Hips** – In line with knees
4. **Shoulders** – The shoulders should be rolled slightly back. In line with hips.
5. **Head** - The head should rest comfortably on top of the body in alignment with the performer's chin. Eyes should be focused forward, 10 degrees above the horizon, toward the drum major. The ears should be in line with the rest of the points of posture.
6. **Arms/Hands**
 - Winds: Triceps parallel to the ground and forearms form the Letter A
7. **Dance** – Hands in a fist on hip
8. **Colorguard** – In set position for the next repetition
9. **Percussion** - Snare and Tenors: Sticks folded in, Bass Drums: Against the rim

Verbal command:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|---------------|
| Band - ten | HUT | (Move) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | 4 |

Bringing horns up and down: This will always be a 1-count motion.

- **Horns Up Position** - The motion itself is a rotation and upward movement in the forearms that has the thumbs and pointer fingers rotate backwards towards the wind player.
 - The count off will be 5-6, 5-6-7-8 and the horns will come up on beat 1 of the second count off
 - Battery up on 2nd 3
- **Horns Down Position** - The motion should take place in the forearms starting where the base of the hand (where meeting the pinkies) is parallel with the ground.
 - Horns will come down on beat 3 after the playing has ended.

Marking Time:

This movement allows members to keep time during musical rehearsals and prepare for combining playing music and marching drill.

- Feet will start together. The count off will be 5-6-, 5-6-7-8.
- Feet will begin marching on the second count off of 5-6-7-8.
- Winds, Colorguard and Emeralds - Toes stay on ground and just lift heel
- Battery Percussion – Feet will come off the ground 1”

Verbal command:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|-------|------|
| | | | (push | one) |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 1 |

The Halt (stop movement): The way a field ensemble starts and stops their motion is one of the most impressive things done in the marching arts. While this is not difficult, it is important to know how to execute this with power and precision:

- Place the platform of the foot on the ground.
- Engage or squeeze your leg muscles to facilitate the halt.
- Think of taking your body weight up instead of backward.

Verbal command:

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| READY | HALT | (Right foot stops) | (Feet together) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | 1 |

Forward March: Similar to walking forward but with a few minor adjustments:

- As you step forward with your left foot first, raise your toes and push off the right foot.
- Downbeats should be felt on the edge of the performer's heels while moving in order to have more consistent uniformity of technique and timing.

Verbal command:

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| FORward | MARCH | (Push) | (Step) |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | | | 1 |

Backward March: Same principles as in the forward march with minor differences:

- Tempo should be felt in the "platform" or toe and ball of the foot in motion while moving in order to have more consistent uniformity of technique and timing.
- Heels should never touch the ground while moving backwards.
- Gradually shift to the platforms in the first 2 steps and completely on the platform by beat 2

Verbal command:

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| BACKward | MARCH | (Push) | (Step) |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | | | 1 |

Direction Changes: In marching band, performers are required to go from one direction to another. The count before a direction change, make sure to place the forward moving foot with the platform down.

Slides: Term describing the position of the upper body while marching. This is used to point the upper body to the audience while doing drill moves.

- Upper body must face forward at **ALL** times
- **Shoulders** should be parallel to the front sideline, and feet are facing the end zone.
- **Instrument and Head** – Should be angled towards the stands behind the Drum Major
- Forward Slide vs. Backward Slide – When approaching the 50-yard lines it will be a forward slide. When marching away from the 50 yard line it will transition to a backwards slide.

On Field Rehearsal Etiquette

The procedure to follow during drill rehearsals in order to keep rehearsal organized and moving at the correct pace is as followed:

TOWER is the final command. This is when instructions will come from the drum major, Dr. Lortz, or other staff.

Then we repeat!!!

1. Once a repetition (rep) of music and movement has concluded all performers will stop and there will be no talking.
2. The drum major will say, "check." All performers will look side to side and check the forms they should be standing in.
3. The drum major will then say, "adjust." All performers will adjust as needed to their proper coordinates and readjust for clean forms.
4. The drum major will then say, "stand by." There will be instructions coming from the press box to the entire group, and then the director will say "field." All corrections will be made within 10 seconds and the ensemble will reset.
5. The drum major will then say, "stand by." Directions will come from the press box to the entire group.
6. The drum major will then say, "set!" The winds will go to the horns up position, percussion will go to playing position, guard and dance will go to a specified position, then the next rep will begin.

The Wind/Drum Arc and Colorguard & Dance Blocks:

- Dress will always be to the **center**.
- **Wind arc** - Once the center point is identified, the person(s) setting the arc will set the center person, then marking off 2 step intervals outward from the center on right and left with assigned players filling in the 2 step intervals until a shallow or steep curve is created.
- **Drum line arc** - Once the center point is identified, the person(s)—usually center snare(s)— has the drum line arc built around them with snare drum line standing at 2 step intervals with the tenors to the left of the arc standing with 1-step intervals between to the two lowest drums. Bass drums stand to the right or behind the snare drum line, and they too stand at 2.5 step intervals.
- **Color Guard and Dance Block** - Will be a uniform symmetrical block as identified by faculty or student leaders.

Setting Drill

All faculty and student leaders will have drill sheets. All coordinate, drill sheets and drill animation will be digitally available on the SUMB Website (under the Members Section).

Student performers are all expected to have their coordinate with them at **ALL TIMES**.

1. Start without instruments.
2. Find the first set, when instructed mark it. Find the second set, when instructed mark it. When told, reset to first set
3. March from first to second set in the correct number of steps, counting aloud.
4. March from first to second set singing your music.
5. After drill is learned, repeat the process with instruments.
6. Stand in place and play music from set 1 to set 2. March sets 1-2 while playing. Repeat 3 times

Note: Center of body is over dot

When rehearsing set-to-set performers will start in Minus 1 (starting in the last step of the previous set) and ending in Plus 1 (ending in the 1 step of the next set)

Application Of Movement Principles - Technique Block

The winds and field percussion sections will be broken down into instrument specific groups and will work forward marching technique at "eight steps to five yards" increments through the following regimen:

Exercises should be:

Warm-up Exercise - Forward and backwards

Exercises #1 & #2 - Metered forward and backwards exercises with direction change

Exercise #3 - Box Drill

Exercise #1 - Forward March - Either unison or in small lines with staggered entrances

1. Forward march 8 counts (every group after the first line will hold 8 and then move)
2. Left march 8 counts (winds "left slide", field percussion "crab step left") hold 8
3. Forward march 8 counts
4. Right march 8 counts (winds "left slide", field percussion "crab step left") hold 8.

5. Forward march 8 counts

Exercise #2 – Backwards March (Same exercise just moving backwards)

1. Backward march 8 counts
2. Left march 8 counts (winds “left slide”, field percussion “crab step left”) hold 8
3. Backward march 8 counts
4. Right march 8 counts (winds “left slide”, field percussion “crab step left”) hold 8.
5. Backwards march 8 counts.

Exercise #3 - Box Drill

1. Forward march 8 place right foot 45° to left (heels in ski-lines)
2. Left (forward) march 8, place right foot 45° to left (heels in ski-lines)
3. Backwards march 8, place right foot 90° to right (heels in ski-lines)
4. Right (forward) march 8, place right foot 45° to right (heels in ski-lines)
5. Forward march 8, place right foot 45° to left (heels in ski-lines)
6. Right (backward) march 8, place right foot 45° to left (toes in ski-lines)
7. Backwards march 8, place right foot 45° to left (toes in ski-lines)
8. Left (backward) march 8, place right foot 45° to right (toes in ski-lines)
9. Forward march 8, halt