



Erie All-City Marching Band Percussion



Pit Ensemble: Synths

In this packet you will find the exercises and techniques used in our pit ensemble.

This packet belongs to:

Erie All-City Marching Band

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Music

Music is what ultimately gave us our beginning, our passion, our drive to bring us to this activity. The styles of music we play here at Erie All-City Marching Band is what defines us. Just as it is important to practice our music and learn to play in these styles, it is also good to be a **good music listener**. Broadening your musical library to include many genres will in turn help you play in a those styles and maybe even relate your parts better with others. So whether you have played a percussion instrument your whole life or if this is your first time ever holding a stick, we hope to teach you to be a better percussionist but first and foremost, a better musician.

Dynamics

Each dynamic in the music will have a corresponding height to go with it. These heights are how we will define each volume and will be exact for most of the program. It is important that we all play the same exact heights in order to play together **consistently**. Unfortunately, these heights cannot be used while playing piano. It is still very important to know what they are to relate your volume to the rest of the ensemble. Remember to always be flexible with volume as things may need to change.

Ex. Definition of Stick Heights & Dynamics would be:

The diagram shows a single staff of music in 2/4 time, representing a drum line. It consists of five measures, each containing a quarter-note rhythm. Above each measure is a stick height label: 3 inches, 6 inches, 9 inches, 12 inches, and 15 inches. Below each measure is a dynamic marking: *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff*. The notes are represented by vertical stems with flags, indicating a consistent rhythmic pattern across all measures.

Timing

This is a percussion program and timing is a very important part of what we do. Our role in the whole musical ensemble and the integrity of our rhythms rely very much on timing. Learning your rhythms and learning them **CORRECTLY** is very important. Slower is always better than faster when it comes to practicing. Never move onto a faster tempo until you can play everything with the proper relaxed technique at slower tempos. Practice with a metronome to focus on your timing and the accuracy of your rhythms. With correct rhythms in place, we can then worry about right notes.

Also, another option would be to play exercises along with your favorite songs. It's like playing with a metronome but a little more comfortable and appealing than listening to a constant beep. It even creates a musical context for you to relate your parts to. This is exactly what we do when we play together as ensemble. Don't be afraid to **groove** and have **fun** with the music. Then, you can apply that to your music. You should find a groove to your music even when the music is abstract. All music has checkpoints you can use to find a 'pocket' for you to play in.



Rehearsal Guidelines

In Marching Band, rehearsal time is VERY limited. It is imperative that we maximize this time as much as possible by being prepared for rehearsal 100% of the time. We will work hard but we will also work smart in order to put out the most consistently excellent product that we possibly can every performance.

*The first part of being prepared for rehearsal is personal preparation at home. You WILL be expected to show up every rehearsal prepared with what is asked of you.

*The second part of being prepared for rehearsals is coming with a good attitude and ready to drum from the first minute of rehearsal to the last. Part of this is arriving to all rehearsals ON TIME.

*Lastly, make sure you have everything you need for rehearsals with you at all times. Some of the items necessary for all music rehearsals are:

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------|--|
| -Pencil | -Highlighter | -3-ring binder w/all music and exercises |
| -Sneakers | -Water bottle | -Sticks and/or mallets |

There are three positions where the mallets shall be during a rehearsal setting described below. We do not have our own parade rest, attention, etc., so these positions will serve in place for uniformity and etiquette.

Rest Position

Hands are resting comfortably down at your side. This is like our parade rest position.

Set Position

Synthesizers should have their hands on the keyboard ready to play.

Up Position

Mallets are at the designated height ready to play. This position will happen at the end of the prep motion. Sometimes, you will be asked to start in this position. Synths do not need to change anything from set position but must be aware of this position for rehearsal purposes.

Cell Phones*

I understand that just about everyone has a cell phone. I do not mind if you have your cell phone out to keep track of time, **BUT** it must be kept on silent and you should **NOT be TEXTING!** If having your cell phone becomes a distraction, we will all (including myself) be putting our phones in a box during rehearsal time for the remainder of the season.



Keyboard Technique Guidelines

Posture

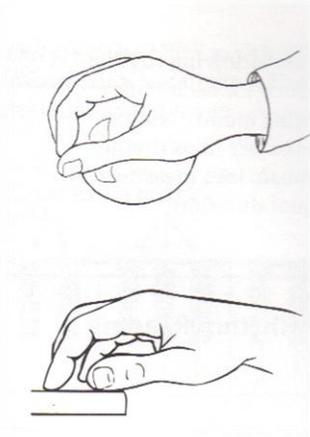
The way we stand behind our instruments not only sets us up to be successful players, but it also creates an atmosphere of professionalism to the viewer/listener. Remember, before you play your first note, you are judged on the way you look behind the instrument.

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Your legs and shoulders should be relaxed and your torso should be upright, not hunched over the instrument. The space between your torso and the instrument will be determined by the exercise you're playing. Generally, though, you want to stand where both manuals are easily reachable. Many people will stand where their arms are totally relaxed while playing the naturals but then have to lunge or hyperextend their arms to reach the accidentals. In actuality, neither manual will be at the perfect distance; it is a compromise. You shift your body weight forward or backward depending on which manual you are using (or which one you're using most). Note: While standing with your feet shoulder width apart, place one foot slightly more forward than the other. This will give you greater balance as you lean or shift your weight forward and back.

Hand Position

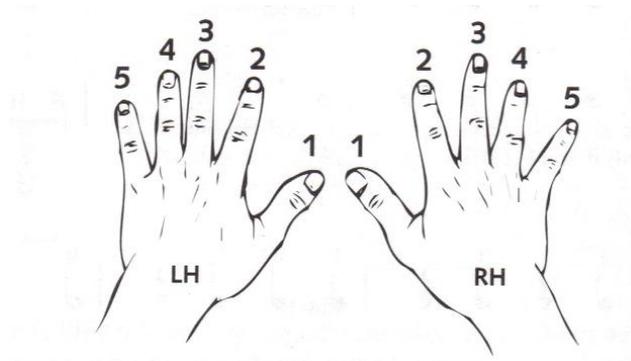
Curve your fingers while you play as if you had a bubble or small ball in your hand.

Curved fingers bring the thumb into proper playing position. This creates an arch that lets your thumb pass under the fingers or vice versa. Play on the outside of the thumb and the fingertip pads of the fingers just as if you were typing.



Finger Numbers

The fingers of the left hand (LH) and the right hand (RH) are numbered as shown. The thumb is the first finger of each hand.





Instrument Height and Arm Placement

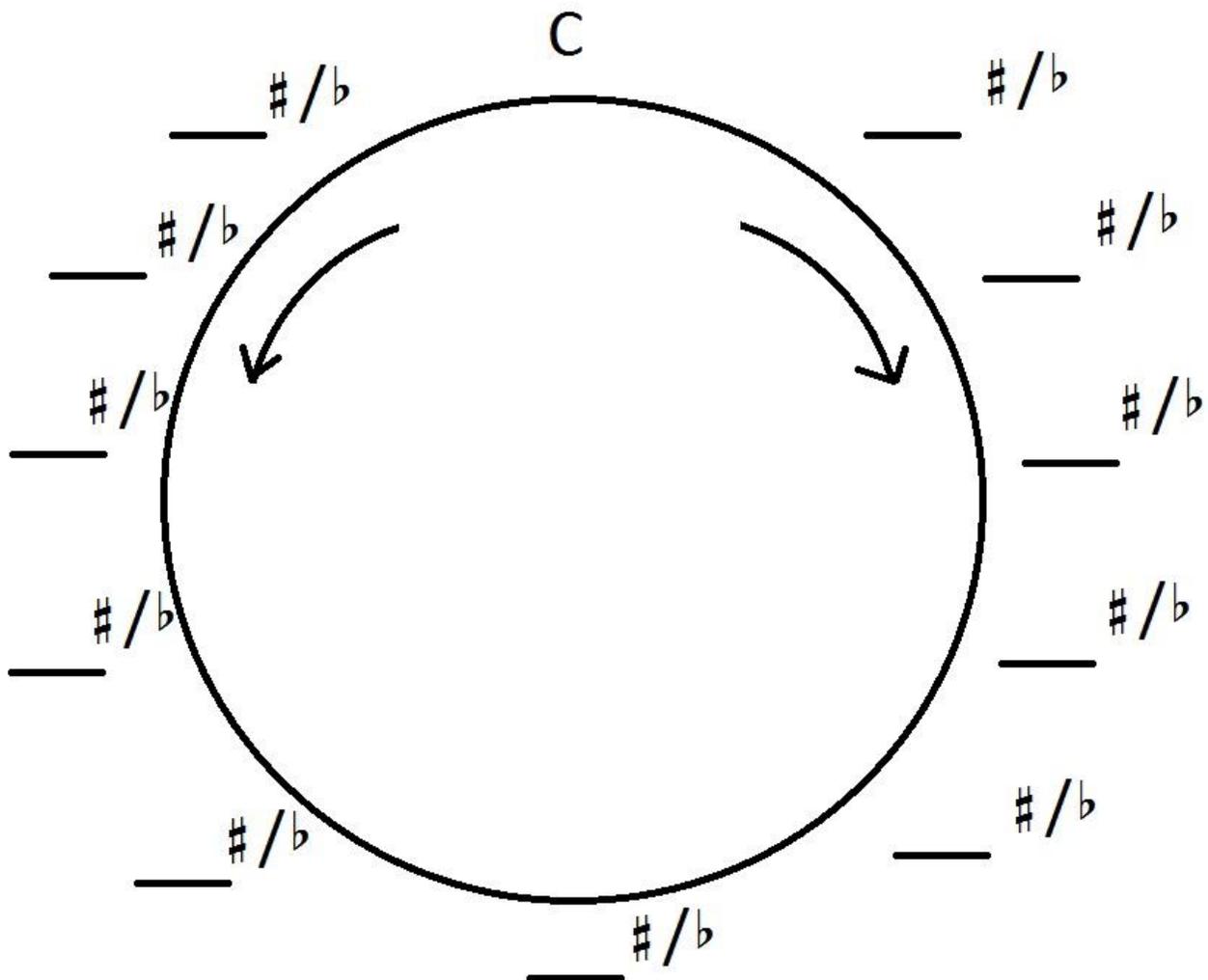
In a perfect world, we would want your forearms to be parallel with the ground. Unfortunately, the carts we use don't allow us to adjust the height of the boards. The biggest thing to remember is to keep your wrist above the keys of the board. NEVER let your wrists sag below the keys!

Prep Stroke

This is how we "tap ourselves off" One person will give 2 preps on beats one and two (or the and counts of those beats) then the rest of the ensemble will prep beats 3 and 4 (or the and counts of those beats). Slower tempos will be prepped with "and" counts while faster tempos will be prepped on the strong beats.

Circle of _____ 4ths and 5ths

For the following exercises, we will need to learn all 12 major scales. We will be learning them using the circle diagram below. Please fill in the blanks as we learn the scales and use this as a reference.





Use this space below for extra notes:

Lockjaw



Guidelines

1. Lockjaw is designed to develop shifting awareness for mallet players. You will use this exercise to learn the correct fingerings for all your major scales.
2. Start with your first few fingers in place.
3. The stroke heights that will be played are full, 12", 9", 6", and 3". You must match your volume with the ensemble.
4. If playing the scales with your right hand has become comfortable, learn the fingerings for you left hand.

59





59 continued...

Guidelines

1. This exercise is designed to develop your ability to play through various scale patterns. Throughout the show you may see many different “runs” and patterns that are based off of scales. Mallets should be resting over the tonic note that we start
2. For the Right hand, make sure to have your hand set to play the first five notes or the penta-scale.
3. For the Left hand, have your hand set as if it were going to play the second group of five notes.
4. As your left hand is playing quarter notes, you must keep the sixteenth notes in the right hand in time.
5. You will notice that the notes played in the left hand will match the note of the first sixteenth note on each beat for the right hand.

The 4-Chord-Song

Songs these days are based off a list of chords that happen normally within a scale. Below are the _____ of the chords. Write the notes above them to complete the chord. Then below, write the Roman numeral that shows the chords’ correct qualities (Major, Minor, Diminished).

C **D** **E** **F** **G** **A** **B**
____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

In the 4-Chord-Song Warm up, we are going to use these chords: _____, _____, _____, & _____. These 4 chords are used in a variety of popular songs. We will use these chords in different keys to enhance your ability to recognize chords and the inversions they may come in. A variety of time signatures and musical feels will be used to give a chance to learn the varieties of inversion combinations as some of the ones listed below.



4-Chord-Song Continued...

Inversion Combos:

G

E

C

Root

G

D

B

1st

A

E

C

1st

A

F

C

2nd

C			
G			
E			
1 st			

E			
C			
G			
2 nd			



General Information

Name _____

School/Grade _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Mother's Name _____

Father's Name _____

Personal Email _____

Family Email _____

Landmark that describes where you live (not address):
