

Chippewa Falls Marching Manual



CHIPPEWA FALLS MARCHING CARDINALS

2012 - A Step Forward

1. Attitude

The important thing in life is not what happens to you, but how you deal with it. Approaching every situation with the proper mindset will dramatically affect the outcome. Be positive and open minded in all that you do.

2. Respect

Treat others the way you would like to be treated. You are expected to treat all sections of the band and the staff with respect, as well as other co-curricular and sports teams. We are all Cardinals!! We do not need to compete against each other; we are all on the same side. Also, treat our facility, instruments, and equipment with the respect that they deserve.

3. Commitment

The ability to begin a task or assignment and follow through until it is completed. This may mean working through frustration, difficult situations, and momentary distractions to reach our goals in this organization.

4. Integrity

Always do the right thing in every situation-even if it is not the easiest way out, or the way everyone else is doing it. Always act and make decisions as if someone was watching you.

5. Communicate

Miscommunication is often the root of most problems within a team. If you ever have a question/comment/concern please be sure to communicate it effectively to the appropriate people. Always communicate calmly and clearly with others.

6. Prepare

You must always be prepared for rehearsals and performances. Be on top of your game and ask for help when needed.

The Thank You Policy

The Thank You Policy was put into effect to insure that a message was received from staff to the students. After a critique, correction or compliment has been given the staff member will end their statement with “thank you.” The students will then reply with “thank you.” This insures the staff that the students have heard their critiques and that they were listening. The Thank You Policy is also to remind staff and students alike that even in stressful times when vocal comment may seem harsh or patience are thin for all of us, that we are all here for a common goal. The key component is mutual respect for both staff and students. The policy is about building relationships, respect, reciprocity and responsibility for one another. Our goal is to be the best possible band that we can be. We want to exceed our potential in making sure that we have a band that sounds and moves to the best of its ability.

Field & Rehearsal Etiquette

In order to make the most of the limited amount of rehearsal time that we get each season I thought it would be very beneficial for us to set some guidelines for the staff and members to follow. This way we will all be on the same page and will know the proper etiquette to follow whenever we rehearse. This mainly holds true for full ensemble rehearsals however there are some guidelines that will help the flow of all rehearsals. This set of steps are the norm for marching band all across the country and are by no means my creative genius, we simply believe that by following these steps we will be able to be much more productive and in turn have more educational success.

1. One person will always coordinate ensemble Rehearsals.
2. This person will state the segments to be run before every rep as well as be the first to give box comments. They should have an idea in mind before rehearsal starts as to what segments we will want to work on.
3. All segments will be based on rehearsal letters.
For instance: “Segment is C to E.” Members will stop **AT** letter E or whatever the end of the segment is. This will limit the amount of confusion and will let us see where the sets hit.
4. Once the end of a segment is reached the DM will leave his/her hands up and the students will stay at “plus-one.”

5. DM then states “dress-center” where students only use their eyes to check the form and their dots
6. DM then states “adjust” where students are able to move and dress the form.
7. When form is set the box begins to talk.
8. Once all captions in the box are done one person in the box states “field” and field instructors can now talk.
9. Once the box feels enough field time has been given box says “wrap it up” and that will be the last rep for the field.
10. For efficiency's sake and to allow for all instructions to be heard, we ask that members do not talk during rehearsal unless given time to do so.

Ensemble Music Rehearsal:

Horn Arc:

- Horn Arc will be set as one continuous arc.
- Horn arc is set up by section as desired by Mr. Renneke.
- This presents a much more professional appearance and allows for directions to be given more clearly.
- The horns will be called to attention in either a ripple or command and stay at attention until called down.
- Ensure that the spacing is even between the people on either side of you.

CFHS Section Manager

What you do?:

- Section leaders will be assigned to take care of ensuring that the members of their section are prepared for rehearsals and performances.
- Be responsible for regular attendance, instrument maintenance, preparation for class, and loading of the semi-trailer.
- Section leaders are also responsible for communicating with the directors any areas of success and/or concern.
- Section leaders are responsible for running sectionals if needed throughout the entire school year and ensuring that section members know and are able to perform their music. To allow focus to be directed entirely to the rehearsal itself, section leaders are highly encouraged to learn their own music well in advance (if possible) so they may be of better service to their section.

- Section leaders are expected to be models for all members of this ensemble in regards to appropriate conduct, demeanor, and work ethic. You must exemplify what this ensemble stands for.
- Section leaders are expected to lead as a servant leader and to be the first to volunteer to help any element of the marching band portion of the program.
- Help keep the peace within your section, if you sense members are bitter or tense towards one another, be proactive in helping them talk it through calmly and respectfully to resolve issues. Hear both sides and consult a staff member if needed.

These expectations are exactly the same as we expect from our section leaders in the concert band setting. Due to the large nature of the marching ensemble, we expect section managers to be willing to serve other sections as needed.

Positions and Commands

Marching fundamentals and a proper knowledge of marching technique are perhaps the most crucial part of a marching band. Below are the basic fundamentals that the Marching Cardinals use. A member of the Marching Cardinals must be knowledgeable and proficient in all of these. Most of these fundamentals will be covered in basics block at the beginning of every rehearsal.

Posture

Correct posture is essential for proper marching and playing. There must be a uniform look throughout the band at all times. Keeping the instrument in the proper playing or resting position is necessary to build strength and endurance in the upper body, especially when learning or marching fundamentals. Building this will help with stamina during performances.

A good posture consists of the following:

- An elevated chin
- Standing as tall as possible
- Legs straight-Do not lock knees. This can cause one to pass out.
- Chest slightly out
- Shoulders relaxed- Should be pulled down and back
- Eyes straight ahead and focused

Attention

The position of attention is extremely important. This is the position from which everything starts. One should take great pride at the position of attention. This position is highly scrutinized and must be perfect at all times. The attention position is used for conformity and uniformity throughout the band. The position of attention signifies the band is ready to move on the next objective or portion of rehearsal.

The command for attention is a four count command. The command will be “Band – Ten Hut”. After the command is given, the position of attention should be set on the following count after Hut.

Some general characteristics of the attention position:

- Good posture is a must
- The toes are angled at a 45 degree angle in ballet third position
- Instrument is held with both hands in front of marcher with the hands in proper playing position
- Each section must have a uniform instrument height (ex. mouthpiece at eye level)
- The elbows should be a little past a 45 degree angle to create a strong presence and the arms/shoulders should be relaxed.
- One must maintain a stretched upward feeling as if the body is suspended from the air and the feet barely touching the ground.
- Never lock the knees. This can lead to passing out and injuring oneself.
- At the position of attention, there should be no talking or moving. The marcher should be focused to receive the next command or task that will be given.

Parade Rest

The Parade Rest position is essentially a relaxed attention. It is a time to rest the arms, but still focused and ready to perform. Nothing changes in the lower body. The upper body will be slightly different for each section due to the instrument/equipment they are holding, but everyone will hold it at waist level.

Horn Carriage

When the horns are not in the playing position, it is important to hold the instrument the proper way. You need to portray power, strength, and confidence in this position. When at attention, one should always keep the instrument about 10" away from the body and the elbows should be a little past a 90 degree angle. Each section of the band will be different and section leaders should demonstrate proper technique including hand and instrument positions and the height of each instrument.

Horns Up

Once the band is at attention and ready to play, the horns must be brought up to playing position. This should be one quick and solid motion that happens almost instantly. This is often the first impression that audience gets, so it must be perfect every time. The command for horns up is a four count move. "Band horns up" is given and on the fourth count the instrument should snap to the correct position.

Once the horn snaps into position, it should remain motionless at the proper horn angle and position. Proper horn angles for brass instruments are 10 degrees above parallel. This angle should be kept at all times when marching. Once the instrument is up the elbows should remain also at the 90 degree angle as when the horns are down. Each woodwind section has a different version of the playing position, so the section leader will determine this at the beginning of the year. Once the horn snaps up to playing position, you will have the next beat, and only that next beat, to adjust your fingers atop the valves/keys.

Horns Down

After a particular command of marching is complete, the horns will come down. The horns down is a two count move. Count **One**: the hands grab the instrument in preparation for the down while simultaneously pulling it slightly away from the face. Count **Two**: snap down back into attention position. You can also think of it as "grab, down". The horns down should be just as quick as the horns up. Just as the horns up is important, the horns down may be the very last thing the audience see, so it must be perfect every time. Once the horns are down the instrument should return to the horn carriage position that each section leader has deemed correct.

Dress Center

Once the band has finished marching or in a block, the command of dress center will be

given. This command is given to check and adjust the alignment of a particular marching/parade block or marching formation. This command allows problems that may have arisen to quickly and efficiently be fixed. Dress center is an alternate form of attention and should be treated as such. There should be no talking while in dress center as it is a time to adjust/fix any problems and move on with rehearsal.

Dress center is a four count command. "Dress center dress" will be given on the first three counts. On the fourth count, the position of dress center is set.



The position of dress center is as follows:

- Horns should snap to the horns up position
- The head snaps to center to check if line or form is straight or correct. Where the head snaps to check the formation will depend on two different things:

1) Straight Line- If the line to be dressed is straight, the head snaps to the center of the line. (note: by "head snaps" we mean turn the neck rather quickly to the middle, but not to the speed in which one might strain/injure themselves; so be quick, but don't whip the neck hard)

2) Diagonal/Curve- If the line to be dressed is not a straight line, the line will dress to the nearest endpoint in the front.

- The horn and head snap should happen simultaneously. Once dress center is called, the formation should be adjusted as quickly as possible. If in a block setting, make sure to check both the line you're in horizontally and vertically as well as diagonally. The person in the center of each line/ formation should keep his or her head forward and make sure that he or she is in the right spot before any corrections from the rest of the line are made.

Ready Front

After the dress center is complete, the ready front command is given. This returns the band back to the attention position. This should be just as quick as the dress center. Once the command is given, the head and horn return to the position of attention. The command for ready front is a four count command. "Ready-Front" will be given on counts one and three. On count four, the position of attention should be reached.



Dress Center Dress *Snap*



Rea-dy Front *Snap*

Marching Techniques

“The fine marcher is both a musician and an athlete. Your lower body moves as a conditioned athlete with high endurance while your upper body performs the expressions of the music.”

Feet

The Marching Cardinals use the glide step as its basic marching basic marching step. The forward marching step is the basic technique of marching band. Needless to say, marching is necessary for marching band. The glide step uses the basic principle that the marching step will go from heel to toe while the marcher’s weight is shifted forward creating a smooth “gliding” step. Proper marching technique is essential for a successful marching band, because without the glide step, the music would contain short unwanted accents on every beat throughout the show. When marching, one must always remember to keep the center of the body firm. The abs and glutes must remain firm while marching to ensure that the body is straight. One must always follow these steps when marching.

Step Size

Before any marching takes place, the step size of the marching will be given. The most common step size is an 8 to 5 step. This means that for every 8 steps, one should travel 5 yards. This is approximately a 22 1/2” step. The step size can be changed to fit whatever is needed (i.e. 6 to 5, 4 to 5, 16 to 5, etc.) or “adjusted step”. One must constantly be aware of the step size he or she is taking.

- When marching, the upper body should remain motionless from the waist up.
- Good posture should always be maintained. Never slouch or lean forward. This looks bad and can be unhealthy.

- Head should remain level and facing straight ahead.

Legs

Forward Marching

While marching forward, the back of the heel should always be the first thing that hits the ground and the foot should roll from the heel to the end of the toes while shifting the weight from one foot to the other. The forward marching technique in the legs will be a combination of the straight leg technique and bicycle (knee bend) technique. One way to think of it is: on every beat both legs are straight, in between beats there is a slight knee bend as the legs pass each other. The technique will be demonstrated by the Visual Staff during camp, but will also be explaining here in writing step by step (pun intended).

- 1)** Start at marching attention, feet at at 45 (third position).
- 2)** Root the right leg into the ground. The first step with the left leg is completely straight. You should land on the heel for beat 1 with toes up. In order to move the leg completely straight, use the muscles on your left side in the hip region and flex the quad to acquire the desired motion.
- 3)** At this point, both legs should be straight. Your right foot should still be where it is, but due to the natural movement of your body, your right quad should be slightly forward thus to compensate for the first step you just took.
- 4)** This next step/beat is the most important because it's technique must be repeated from here on out. As your left foot rolls onto the ground your body should be moving forward as your right foot rolls higher onto the toes and the right knee is starting to bend. (note: at this point your quads and knees should be aligned directly next to each other; the only difference is that the left leg from the knee down is straight down as if standing and the right leg from the knee down is behind you.)
- 5)** From here, lead with the right knee as the right leg passes the left. The platform of the right foot should be just barely above the ground as it passes. Once the right heel has passed the left foot begin straightening the right leg and pointing the right toes high to the sky. On beat 2, your right heel should be landing on the ground as your body moves forward and the left foot platform halts where it is. When frozen on beat 2, it should be challenging to maintain balance because you are balancing on one heel (right) and one platform (left) of opposite feet.
- 6)** Repeat as necessary with the appropriate feet.

Backward March

Backward marching is the basic technique for moving backward. Backward marching is done on the platforms of the feet. The heels of the feet should never touch the ground. Doing this requires more balance, but in return reduces the bouncing and stumbling that would happen if one weren't on the platforms of the feet. This is called "relevé".

Here are the fundamentals and characteristics of a good backward march:

- On the "and" of count four of the mark time, the body will begin the motion of moving backward. One should lead from the center of the body making very sure not to lean. You should feel the push backward to maintain step size.
- Also, on the "and" of four, the left foot moves backward with the heel raised and the toe down. As the left foot is stepping back, the right foot should also begin to rise on the toes.
- On count one; the left ball should be on the down.
- The right foot will continue on count two.
- The balls of the feet should hit the ground on the beat and the heels should never touch the ground.
- The legs should remain straight and not bend throughout.
- The upper body should remain motionless.
- Be sure to keep good posture and not lean forwards or backwards.
- When the feet slide back, they should always lightly touch the ground.
- The back and upper body should always remain erect and straight.

There will be no prep into the backwards march. Between beats 4 and 1 the body will gradually be ascending up an imaginary slope. Be sure to maintain proper upper body posture the entire time.

Slides

Slides are done when the band is not marching straight ahead, but the horns need to face the sidelines. It keeps the full upper body and shoulders with instrument facing forward. The slide is used to change direction 90 degrees in the band while the top half of the body remains fixed in the original direction, and glide stepping in the new direction.

This year we will be doing slides slightly different, we're taking out the hip shift. Instead the technique will be a 45 degree step towards the new direction. For example if you're marching straight forward towards the audience and need to slide to the right, on the last beat, your right foot will plant itself in attention position (being pointed diagonally to the front right). Basically if you're going to go right, your right foot will be pointed 45 right, and the opposite for left.

Characteristics to be seen in a proper slide:

- The shoulders and horn should be facing the sideline regardless of the direction of travel.
- The lower body should stay exactly the same as during forward and backward marching. The only difference is the turn at the hips of the upper body.
- One should never move the shoulders past parallel with the feet. When this is done, just switch the direction of the feet and slide.

Crab Step

The crab step can be used as a substitution for a slide if the drill calls for it or the director so chooses to change a slide to a crab step in certain situations. It is usually used by percussion as a substitute for a slide. Crab stepping is a form of marching sideways that keeps the body oriented to the sideline without performing a slide. The feet will move across one another rather than the traditional one foot behind the other. When one crab steps, one foot will reach out while the other foot is crossed either in front of or behind the other. Because of the feet moving in this form, the step size will always be inconsistent with one step being larger than the other. There are two forms of crab stepping, each of which is described below:

Left to Right Crab

Since we always step off with the left foot, the first step when moving to the left is with the left foot "reaching out". The right foot then crosses in front of the left. The left leg

should move slightly behind the center of the body and the right should move slightly ahead so that the feet may pass without making any contact.

Right to Left Crab

Again, since we always step off with the left foot, the first step when moving to the right is with the left foot this time crossing in front of the right foot. From a starting position, this will always be the smallest step. Make up the distance on the first right step, which reaches out to the right. The next left step will be slightly larger due to the momentum gained from the movement. When crabbing, there is a tendency to gradually move "forward" in the direction of the crossing foot (right foot when moving left, left foot when moving right). This is usually caused by allowing the crossover foot to establish a new forward position and not moving the reach foot slightly backwards from center. Always use the hips as the guide for body position.

Marking Time

Marking time is marching in place with no forward motion. A mark time will always be called before marching takes place; it is never called directly from a halt position. The steps to marching are:

1. Mark time is called
2. Mark time for four counts
3. Take the first step

The mark time command is a four count command. "Mark time mark" will be given on the first three counts and the fourth count is silent but should be subdivided in half (i.e. 4 and).

- On the "and" of count four the left heel should be raised an inch to an inch and a half off the ground.
- The feet will remain in the 45 degree position in ballet third position.
- On count 1 the left heel will be brought back to the ground and the right heel is raised to the same height as the left was and the toes are then brought together by count three.
- The same motion will continue for the duration of the mark time.
- Make sure that the heels are up on the "and's" of the beat.

- Make sure that both of the balls of the feet remain on the ground.
- Allow the knees to move forward in a natural motion that is continuous and smooth.
- This motion will continue for the full duration of the mark time.
- One could think of this as peeling the feet off the ground while the toes never leave the ground.



Conclusion

Each Marching Cardinal member must have a thorough knowledge of the fitness and marching fundamentals described in this manual. Both of these aspects are extremely important to the success and future of the band. If you have any questions regarding anything in this manual, consult a staff member. Good luck!

You STUDENTS might think we teach because, we love music and marching band and we love to win - both true - but we KEEP teaching because of you - musicians. That's why we're more interested in turning out champion young people than a champion Band. We want you to be forever strong on the field so you'll be forever strong off it.

Adapted from a quote for the motion picture *Forever Strong*.