

2017-2018 Marching Band Information Sheet

Dear Yorktown Students & Families,

This document is meant to help you understand what to expect between now and the start of the marching band season. We're excited that you'll be a member of the Yorktown Music Department! We take great pride in the talent and dedication of our accomplished students and their family members who assume such an active role in guiding Yorktown's music program to success.

How to Join the Marching Band

1. Sign up for *29254 Marching Band* on your course request form. This course can be signed up for in addition to your primary band class – students can take 7 courses plus the evening ½ credit of marching band.
2. Fill out this form by March 1: <https://goo.gl/forms/Twxca9eedX0IAPQm1>
3. Put these Spring dates in your calendar:
 - 8th Grade Orientation – Monday May 15, 7:00 – 8:00 pm (for parents)
 - Marching Band Rehearsal [for all rising 9th-12th graders (wind players, brass & woodwind) joining the marching band], May 31 & June 14, 3:30 – 5:30 pm
 - Marching Band Drumline & Front Ensemble Auditions, May 30, June 1, & June 5, 6 – 8 pm
 - Marching Band Color Guard: May 16 & May 18, Interest meeting at 3:15 – 4 pm
 - Marching Band Color Guard Open House Practice: May 23, 3:15 – 4:30 & May 25, 6 – 8 pm
4. Put these Summer dates on your calendar. Our pre-Mercersburg rehearsals are essential in teaching movement fundamentals, meeting peers to sign up for rooms while we are away, and making sure all students have the necessary equipment & resources for camp.
 - August 5: Summer rehearsals begin. Student leadership 8:30am–9:30am;
 - i. Full Band 9:30am–12:30am
 - ii. Lunch Break, Lunch provided by Boosters 12:30 – 1:30 pm
 - iii. Full Band 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm
 - August 7: Full Band Rehearsal 4:30 – 7:00 pm.
 - August 7: Welcome Back Barbecue 7:00 – 8:30 pm.
 - August 8 – 13: Mercersburg Academy Band Camp (PA). Transportation is provided.
 - Post-Camp: Rehearsals continue in the evenings Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursdays until school begins.
 - August 31: First Football Game & Halftime Performance
5. Pay for Marching Band Camp: Payment Due May 31. Covers the cost of 6 days of band camp, including transportation, food, lodging, rental truck, staff, and other operating costs.
 - Regular Cost: \$500
 - Reduced Lunch \$200
 - Free Lunch \$100

Checks are made payable to:

Yorktown Band Boosters
PO Box 7041
Arlington, VA 22207

Please refer to the Financial Document on the website for a list of costs and deadlines.

<http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/band-business/financial-obligations>

Cost should never prohibit student participation. Contact Mr. Bersh for more information.

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Important Dates

Exact times for rehearsals in the summer and the fall will be posted as field schedules become available in the Spring. However, there are already some dates that you can mark into your calendars.

- Rehearsals during school year will be Tuesdays & Thursdays unless field schedule determines otherwise.
- September 9: Marching Band Mini Camp @ YHS 9 – 1 pm
- September 9: 9-11 Memorial 5k @ Pentagon 4:00 pm – 7:30 pm
- September 15: Football Game
- September 16: Band Day 8 am – 2 pm
- September 22: Football Game – Middle School Band Night & Spin w/ the Patriots
- September 28 (Thurs): Football Game
- October 20: Homecoming Football Game
- October 27: Football Game – Senior Night
- November 3: Football Game @ W-L (last game of regular season)
- Competition Schedule TBA

Marching Band Information & FAQs

1. *What is the time commitment for Marching Band?*

The marching band season is from mid August to mid November, roughly equivalent to the 1st marking period. The band's first performance is the first football game of the year, which often occurs before the first day of school. In order to be prepared for these early season performances, the marching band, like other Yorktown athletic groups, holds summer practices and a weeklong band camp. During the school year, evening rehearsals are limited to two nights/week, generally Tues/Thurs nights – exact times will depend on field availability. The band performs at home football games, and about 4-5 band competitions/showcases during the fall.

2. *What is Band Camp?*

For one week in August the entire band, including staff and chaperones, travel to Mercersburg Academy (1.5 hours north) to learn our fall show. During this time period, we take advantage of the excellent resources at Mercersburg, an optimal staff to student ratio, and the enhanced focus of the students to learn the bulk of our fall show. In addition to being an ideal venue for enhancing the collective musicianship and ability level of our group, it is a great setting for strengthening social bonds and welcoming new members to the Yorktown Band family. Each year, students have the advantage of making new friends across grade levels before the first day of school begins.

3. *Can I do theater and band?*

Yes. There are minimal conflicts, especially as an underclassman.

4. *Can I do athletics and band?*

Yes. Communication is key. Look at schedules well in advance, and let your coaches/directors know of conflicts ahead of time so that proper arrangements can be made.

5. *Why should I do Marching Band?*

High School Marching Band is a unique experience unlike anything you have done. In addition to having the opportunity to perform at a very high level, the camaraderie and friendship you will gain as you work hard toward shared goals with your peers will have an enduring impact on your high school experience. The chance to perform music with friends in competitions and football games is something highly unique to high school, and you will take great pride as you see how much you grow as a musician from being a part of this ensemble.

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6. *What do I do if my instrument isn't used in the marching band?*

Many students choose to play different instruments in marching band than what they perform on in concert band settings. Often, double reed players and wind players join the color guard, front ensemble or battery (drumline). Tubas play a different type of tuba called a contra and french horn players play the mellophone. Clarinet players often decide to play saxophone so that they can be heard more clearly from the field, and flutes can audition for piccolo. Trombones play baritone. There are many switches that are made, and the change isn't as hard as you might think. Your musicianship will transfer to whichever instrument you play, and learning new instruments is a fun way to enhance your understanding of the full ensemble.

Things I Wish I Knew As A "First-Year" Band Parent.

- 1. Where Do I Look For Marching Band Rehearsal Information?** Click the Calendar tab on the website, www.yorktownband.org, or use this direct link <http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/calendar>. You will find a Google Calendar that lists rehearsal times and locations.
- 2. How Early Do Students Need To Report To Rehearsal?** If rehearsal is listed for 5:30 pm, your student should be in place and ready to rehearse at 5:30 pm. Students should plan accordingly for how much time it takes to get their instrument from the band room & help with equipment before going to the field.
- 3. What is Equipment Duty?** Students are assigned equipment responsibilities at the beginning of the year. That may mean helping to move the front ensemble equipment, move props, set up podiums and yard markers, or sound equipment. Fulfilling their equipment responsibilities counts as a homework grade. These are large tasks that take the help of everyone. Students should arrive early to fulfill their equipment duties before rehearsal begins, because rehearsal cannot begin for the ensemble until equipment has been set up. (Plan on 15 minutes early).
- 4. I Am Not Getting E-mails. How Do I Make Sure I Am On The List-Serv?** Charms is a web-based suite created exclusively for band programs. Charms is the first place that the director will look when trying to find contact information for parents and students. Consequently, it is very important that we have your updated information on file. Directions on how to update your information can be found at: <http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/band-business/charms>.
- 5. What Time Should I Pick My Student Up From Rehearsals?** If Rehearsal ends at 8:00 pm, that is when we will finish instruction on the field. Depending on their instrument and/or equipment duties, it generally takes students 10-20 minutes to make it back to the band room and properly clean and put away their instruments and/or equipment. For a rehearsal that ends at 8:00 pm, students should be ready to leave school by 8:10 – 8:20 pm. Please plan in advance for alternate transportation on days when you are unable to provide transportation for your student. The band director will supervise until the last student is picked up.
- 6. What Do The Payments Cover?** In order to provide the highest quality experience for band members, students require instructional staff, music, copyright permissions to perform the music, drill to march on the field, uniforms, and equipment. We also need to cover the costs of participation in regional festivals and purchase and maintain marching instruments that are often different than the instruments students perform indoors. Participation in a music ensemble is an extremely rewarding experience. It promotes self-discipline, responsibility, respect, and above all – It is fun! I consider it a privilege to have this opportunity to develop a rapport with such fine students during the course of their high school participation, and it is a pleasure to be involved in the development of their social and organizational skills, emotional development, leadership training, and aesthetic training.

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- 7. Why Do We Practice So Much?** The marching curriculum is taught as an evening course. Students receive an additional ½ academic credit for their participation in this course. Marching Band is not taught during the school day. The evening time slot enables students from the symphonic and concert bands and color guard to participate as a single cohesive unit on the field. Putting together a full program of music and marching with so many students takes a great deal of time to perform at a high level. As our program evolves throughout the season, students take on great visual and musical challenges. Listening to our adjudicators' tapes, which are shared with the students online after each competition, is a great way to gain a better understanding of the marching arts and the performance skills required of a marching band.
- 8. Competition Days.** Marching Band Competitions can take an entire day depending on the location and our performance time. We will get a schedule out as soon as possible, but generally the show site does not confirm a schedule until within two weeks of the competition date. Please avoid scheduling other events on competition days so that we can prevent conflicts. A student absence negatively impacts our sound and visual forms, which can impact how we are adjudicated. Also, remember to pack a lunch/snack, water, a change of clothes, cash if you would like to purchase items from concessions stands, and sunblock when necessary.
- 9. Why Do We Need To Fundraise?** We have a very active Booster organization that works to provide support for instructional staff and items such as uniforms, instruments, music, equipment, instrument repair, replacement, and maintenance as appropriate, transportation, special instruction, financial aid, and assistance and encouragement of the parents or guardians of our students. We work to provide students with a unique educational experience that will benefit each member of our ensemble.
- 10. The Importance of Physical Conditioning & Nutrition.** Marching Band requires a great deal of musical skill and physical endurance. Students must be able to march at fast speeds while controlling their body, instrument, and breathing. It is an athletic activity that requires our students to be well nourished, hydrated, flexible, and fit. We will stretch and incorporate strength and conditioning into our rehearsals, but for students to truly reach their potential on the field, they should be exercising consistently through the summer and fall. Students should bring water/sports drink and a snack for each rehearsal to stay hydrated and maintain energy levels. Encourage your students to make smart decisions in their eating habits before we perform (Avoid Fast Food & Soda).
- 11. The Importance of Volunteering.** Simply put, we can't do this without you – we are only able to pursue our shared ambitions and vision for the program with the support of the parents. Thank you for all that you do! Volunteering opens the unique opportunity to interact with the students in our program, contribute to the program's overall success, and witness the musical and personal growth of our students. You can find out how to help by attending Booster Meetings and communicating with our Volunteer Chair. Visit <http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/band-boosters> for more information.
- 12. Who is on the staff?** One of the great opportunities that our students have throughout the marching season is to work with a dedicated team of musicians & educators who care deeply for both the students and the music program at YHS. You can find bios of our staff members on the band website. <http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/ensembles/staff/staff>
- 13. When is the Show Finished?** The Marching Band Field Show is an evolving process. It is not done when we begin to compete (and that's okay) and it will continue to develop over time. The show you see in November is a vastly different product than what is performed in September.

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14. Teamwork. In order to practice effectively, we need every member present for each rehearsal (Every student is a “starter,” there are no subs and there is no bench!). Each student plays a very important role in the program and is missed when he/she is not at a rehearsal or performance. Our goal is to practice the way we will perform, and that means being able to consistently practice our intonation, balance, and blend as an ensemble. Adding and subtracting musicians has a large impact on these musical elements. Additionally, each member plays an integral role in the visual development of the show. Not only will a student’s absence impact the listening environment for all those around them, it will also make it harder to march the drill, where students serve as dress points for each other on the field. Successful performance is achieved through the contributions of each member of the ensemble as we work together toward our performance goals.

15. Band Jargon

- **Shako:** This is the hat students wear while marching.
- **Plume:** The feather that goes in the hat.
- **Gauntlets:** The accessory that wraps around students’ wrists.
- **8 to 5’s:** When students march with a step size of 8 steps per 5 yards on the field.
- **Roll Step:** A technique for marching forward in which the heel rolls forward all the way through to the toe.
- **Sliding:** The technique wind players use to march with their instruments facing the audience as they march from side to side.
- **Dot:** Term referring to the coordinates that a student stands in for a particular drill set. Student’s Drill Sheets and Dot Books give them the information they need to know for where they should be standing on the field at given points in the music, and how they should move from one dot to the next.

Materials Necessary for Marching Band

- **Fanny Pack** Every member will wear one. You will have pencils/highlighter in it at all times. A Cheat Sheet for your drill will be attached by a carabiner. You may choose to keep Chap Stick and/or sunscreen in here as well.
- **Earplugs** Protect your ears.
- **Pencils** With you at all times – **Highlighters** For marking drill charts – **Sharpie** For marking drill.
- **1 inch three ring binder** To organize drill pages/drill manual/schedule/visual technique handbook.
- **Plastic Sheets** To protect drill sheets & music.
- **Carabiner** To attach cheat sheet to your body/fanny pack.
- **Packing/Scotch Tape** To waterproof materials (cheat sheet).
- **Black Towel** (tubas!) To place instruments on during 3rd qtr. of football game (protect from concrete)
- **White T-Shirts:** For rehearsals.
- **Running Shoes:** Students cannot march in sandals – shoes must have closed toes and ankle support.
- **WATER WATER WATER**