

# **L.C. ANDERSON HIGH SCHOOL**

**Austin Independent School District**

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# **TROJAN BAND SECTION LEADER HANDBOOK**

**2008-2009**

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# **ANDERSON TROJAN MARCHING BAND**

## **SECTION LEADER HANDBOOK**

### **2008-2009**

Great leaders lead by example. They are committed to excellence, and are willing to do whatever it takes to accomplish their goals. Your challenge as a Section Leader will be to contribute your time, talents and energy into making your section and your band second to none! High marching standards are achieved through uniformity of style. Please familiarize yourself with all aspects of the marching styles described herein, and be prepared to demonstrate and teach all Anderson Band fundamentals.

**COMMITMENT** serves as the bonding material upon which all great organizations are built.

*COMMITMENT is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions, and the actions which speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none. Coming through time after time, year after year: Commitment is the stuff of which character is made; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism. Those who are truly committed to anything will someday experience greatness.*

#### **GUIDE FOR TEACHING MARCHING FUNDAMENTALS**

1. **Conceptualization**: One must have a clear concept of each fundamental, down to the minutest detail.
2. **Demonstration**: The Section Leader should set the definitive example.
3. **Explanation**: Include reasons/functions. Teach one step at a time. Use specific details. Include analogies. Teacher must be prepared, concise, and articulate.
4. **Motivation**: Is essential to learning. Your section must be inspired to achieve high performance standards. Be enthusiastic—it's contagious!

## GUIDE FOR TEACHING

### A. Points to Watch

Each fundamental will include a section outlining “Points to Watch.” These points are usually the most commonly observed errors and/or bad habits. Section Leaders should be on the lookout for these points, and work to make the section aware for the need to eliminate the same.

### B. Effective Teaching Procedures

- It is essential that the Section Leader clearly establish the positions of “attention” and “at ease” when drilling a section. **TRAIN YOUR SECTION TO REMAIN AT ATTENTION UNTIL YOU PLACE THEM AT EASE.**
- Avoid demonstrating or giving lengthy explanations while your section is at attention.
- Stand tall; exude confidence via your posture.
- Project your voice. Speak clearly, confidently and with sufficient volume to be understood. Be careful to use your voice correctly or you will lose the ability to speak at all!
- Always have a rehearsal plan in mind. Avoid excessive use of non-essential verbiage such as “uh” and “o.k.”
- Break each maneuver into the smallest possible muscular movements, and then teach one step at a time.
- Always begin rehearsing a new or difficult maneuver at a slow tempo. Subdivision of the beat is essential.
- Multiple ways to say the same thing will reach the same, desired result.

## PRESCRIBED METHOD FOR TEACHING

- A. Establish proper learning environment. Use teaching aids. (Ropes, tapes, interval poles, etc.)
- B. Name the maneuver and what it accomplishes.
- C. Demonstrate the maneuver.
- D. Allow a few seconds for the students to try the maneuver on their own.
- E. Teach one step at a time.

## POINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL TEACHING

- A. Be organized; plan for daily sequential learning.
- B. Be concise.
- C. Be convincing.
- D. Be enthusiastic.
- E. Use positive reinforcement.
- F. Teach one step at a time.
- G. Have a clearly established system for implementing the position of attention.  
Avoid illustrating or explaining while the section is at attention.
- H. Allow students to practice on their own prior to initial execution.
- I. Constantly stress the need for perfection.
- J. Use of analogies is most helpful.
- K. Always break each fundamental down into its smallest muscular component.
- L. Be analytical: How is the weight distributed? Where is the center of balance?  
Which muscles need to be contracted?
- M. Be specific! Avoid vague descriptors like “about”, “approximately”, “whatever feels natural”, etc.
- N. Teach “points to look for”:
  - Instrument carriage
  - Posture
  - Stride
  - Knees bent/straight
  - Upper body smooth?
  - Anticipation
  - Foot placement
  - Head angle
  - Intervals
  - Subdivision on turn
- O. Divide and Conquer  
Too often, valuable teaching time is wasted when one Section Leader attempts to instruct a large section. Always divide the section so that all Section Leaders are actively engaged. Separating teaching fundamentals by ability level is often quite constructive. The “Divide and Conquer” approach is a must for playing sectionals.

This is especially important when checking off marching stations. Long lines are frustrating and counter productive. Set up individual stations: Divide and Conquer!

**Attention to detail is the key to  
successful teaching.**

# ANDERSON TROJAN BAND MARCHING FUNDAMENTALS

## A. THE POSITION OF ATTENTION

The position of attention is the fundamental position from which all marching maneuvers are performed. This position defines the “look” of the Trojan Band, and must be absolutely uniform. Once called to attention, the marcher must remain absolutely motionless and silent.

### 1. The Position Of Attention

- Weight is distributed between the heels and balls of the feet. 60% of the weight is over balls of feet
- Feet are at a 45 degree angle and the heels are together
- Knees are straight, but not locked
- Quadriceps, abdominals and buttocks are contracted
- Stomach is flat and firm
- Torso is maximized, rib cage is expanded
- Shoulders are pulled back
- Tops of shoulders are level with a horizontal plane
- Chin is elevated 15 degrees above parallel
- Eyes focus straight ahead and 15 degrees above the horizon
- Arms are at sides
  - Elbows are slightly bent (hanging naturally)
  - Wrists are straight
  - Fingers are gently curved (as if holding a row of dimes)
  - Thumb is straight and rests against the forefinger in between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> knuckle.
  - Area between thumb and forefinger aligns with pants seams.

### Points to watch for

- Backs of heels should be even with each other
- Balls of the feet are centered on yard line or dot
- Never lock the knees; knees should be relaxed
- Elbow should not be angled away from the body
- Head/chin angle prescribes “the look” of the Trojan Band
- Marchers should be absolutely motionless while assuming the position of attention. Insist that your section follow this standard without exception.
- The torso should remain maximized; weight is distributed 60% over balls of the feet, 40% over heels

## **2. The Call to Attention**

### **a. Parade Rest**

The position of Parade Rest is utilized exclusively as a preparatory position for the position of attention. This position is assumed whenever the marcher hears the preparatory command..."BAND"

Count 1: Drum Major gives command..."BAND" ("BOON")  
Count 2: Silence  
Count 3: Band responds..."WHAT?" ("WHUT") and assumes the position of Parade Rest

### **Points to watch for**

- The left foot moves to 10" from heel to heel. The right foot stays in place.
- Upper torso remains maximized as per the position of attention.
- Weight is evenly distributed between both feet with 60% of weight over balls of feet and 40% over heels.

### **b. The Call to Attention**

**The call to attention requires 9 counts to execute:**

Count 1: Drum Major gives command..."BAND" ("BOON")  
Count 2: Silence  
Count 3: Band responds..."WHAT?" ("WHUT") and assumes the position of Parade Rest (see a.)  
Count 4: Silence  
Count 5,6,7 Drum Major blows whistle:  
Count 8: Band responds "TRO" (there is no movement on this count)  
Count 9: Band responds... "JENS" left foot and head snap in one quick motion to the position of attention

Vocal responses should be crisply articulated with high energy, a low vocal pitch and with great intercostals support. This vocal response serves both to alert both band and audience. Proper execution of attention sets the standard for the level of excellence of all marching maneuvers.

### **c. At Ease**

The position of At Ease may be defined as the midway point between standing at attention and standing at rest. The marcher is allowed to relax, while keeping the right foot in place to aid in cleaning form, or the keep the band in a ready position for the "Call To" command. The director may prescribe varying levels of "At Ease", "At Ease with Head", "At Ease, put down your instrument" etc.

#### **Points to watch for**

- Body is relaxed.
- Right foot remains in place.
- There should be NO TALKING.

### **B. 8 TO 5 GLIDE STRIDE**

The 8 to 5 stride utilizes a smooth heel-to-toe motion and is executed from the position of attention. COMMAND for the execution is 4 short whistles.

- On the AND of the 4<sup>th</sup> whistle, the marcher should take a relaxed step with the left foot.
- The LEG IS STRAIGHT when the heel makes contact with the ground.
- Left calf should be contracted and toe pointed as high as possible.
- Each step measures 22.5" as measured from the middle of the yardline to the ball of the foot.
- Initial contact should involve 1/3 of the heel.
- Forward motion should roll from heel to toe.
- Successive foot motion should place the ankle of one foot in a direct line with the outside of the toe of the opposite foot.
- The upper torso remains maximized as per the position of attention.
- The weight of the body remains forward, 60% over balls of feet.
- For control, a conscious contraction of the gluteus maximus and core muscles are necessary.

#### **Points to watch for**

- The proper execution of the glide step should produce a smooth motion; no jarring or excessive shock should be delivered to the embouchure.
- Always split the yardline when marching crossfield. Exception: when the ball of the right foot hits the yardline for turns or pivots.
- Heel should stay low to the ground
- Ankles cross on the "&" of the beat.

### **C. BACKWARDS MARCH**

The Backwards March is a smooth, flowing stride utilized to reverse the marcher's direction without changing instrument direction.

- Prep for the Backwards March is a smooth step, and occurs on the “&” of the beat.
- The foot strikes on the pads of the toes
- Weight is forward at all times
- Legs are STRAIGHT
- Marcher remains up on the platform at all times
- The feet skim the ground closely and cross on the “&” of the beat
- Backwards March may utilize an adjusted stride.

#### **Points to watch for**

- Marcher should push off backwards with the ball of the foot
- Weight should remain forward over balls of feet
- Upper body remains maximized
- The proper execution of the backwards march should produce a smooth motion; no jarring or excessive shock should be delivered to the embouchure.

### **D. SLIDE / TRAVERSE**

This maneuver allows the marcher's lower torso to march in one direction (usually downfield) while the upper torso is turned so that his/her instrument faces 90 degrees to the pressbox or sideline.

- Feet face directional at 0 degree angle
- Hips face at 45 degree angle
- Chest/shoulders/instrument/head at 90 degree angle
- Upper body remains maximized as per position of attention

#### **Points to watch for**

- Knees should remain slightly bent
- Knees/Hips/Shoulders should remain in a straight line, avoid arching the back
- Upper body should be relaxed

## **E. MARK TIME**

The Mark Time is utilized to maintain motion and tempo while allowing the marcher to remain in a fixed position.

### **1. Mark Time Prep**

The Mark Time Prep initiates the soft mark time, and is executed from the position of attention.

COMMAND for execution is 4 short whistles.

- On the “&” of the 4<sup>th</sup> whistle, the left leg bends from the knee forward with the ball and toes of the left foot remaining stationary
- The left heel is 2” off of the ground
- The right leg remains straight at the position of attention
- The upper torso remains maximized

### **2. Soft Mark Time**

Count 1:      Right heel is lifted 2” from the turf  
                    Right knee moves out over right toes  
                    Ball of foot remains in contact with turf

Count 2:      Right heel returns to position of attention  
                    Left heel is lifted 2” from the turf  
                    Left knee moves out over left toes  
                    Ball of foot remains in contact with turf

### **Points to watch for**

- The Soft Mark Time can involve rapid movement of legs from one position to the next. Proper execution will display smooth execution without any freeze motion of the legs.
- For proper effect, the heel must lift no more than 2” from the turf
- Upper torso remains maximized and motionless
- Active contraction of calf, thigh, and buttocks muscles is a must for proper execution of this distinctive maneuver
- Both legs move at the same time. As one heel moves up, the other moves down
- Avoid shifting in the hips
- Knees move out over the ball of the foot

## **F. FLANKS/TRAVERSES**

The purpose of a flank/traverse is to turn the marcher into the new direction.

### 1. Flank/Traverse

- Marcher arrives at flanking point and shifts all weight to the ball of the right foot
- The ball of the right foot should touch first on any flanking movement. This is a plant step.
- The right foot should be prepped at the angle of direction on any flanking movement
- Simultaneously, the marcher will pivot using the ball of the right foot
- The left leg muscles contract and move the left foot in a very narrow arc until the foot is aimed in the new direction
- The left heel will touch first in the new direction of march
- Maneuver occurs on the “&” of the beat

### **Points to watch for**

- All weight must be balanced over the ball of the right foot
- The step preceding the turn is a plant, not a normal glide step
- Avoid bending the knees
- Avoid shifting your body weight early in the direction of the new move.

## **G. HORNS UP/ HORNS DOWN**

Instrument will snap up in one count. Unless otherwise designated by a director, this should be a sharp, crisp move. In softer sections, the instruments will move in 2-4 counts. Three counts is optimum to allow players time to set their embouchures.

Carriage will be defined for each instrumental section.

### **Horns Up Position**

- Arms at 45 degrees to the body and 90 degrees to each other
- The left hand is a formed fist, while the right hand covers it in a contour. (Think paper, rock, scissors)
- The right thumb rests between the right thumb and forefinger
- Both wrists are straight
- Right forefinger first knuckle is elevated to the nose level of the marcher

### **Horns Down Position**

- The right hand and left fist are in the same position, just turned upwards. The left thumb will be facing straight up
- The upper torso remains in the position of attention.

Horns Up may be signaled by:

#### **a. Vocal Command – Four count command and response**

Count One: Director gives the verbal command of “BAND”

Count Two: Director gives the verbal command of “HORNS”

Count Three: Director gives the verbal command of “UP”

Count Four: Students give the verbal response of “UP” as the instrument is popped in a sharp, crisp motion to the playing (up) position.

#### **b. Whistle Command – Four count command and response**

Count One – Count Three:

Count Four: Students give the verbal response of “UP” as the instrument is popped in a sharp, crisp motion to the playing (up) position.

Horns Down is signaled exactly the same as Horns Up:

c. Vocal Command – Four count command and response

Count One: Director gives the verbal command of “BAND”

Count Two: Director gives the verbal command of “HORNS”

Count Three: Director gives the verbal command of “DOWN”

Count Four: Students give the verbal response of “DOWN” as the instrument is popped in a sharp, crisp motion to the down position.

d. Whistle Command – Four count command and response

Count One – Count Three:

Count Four: Students give the verbal response of “DOWN” as the instrument is popped in a sharp, crisp motion to the down position.

## H. MARCHING DRILLS

### 1. DIRECTION CHANGES

These drills will help you work on changes in direction front to back and back to front.

#### a. Stab - Lift - Tap

FM 8, STAB on count 8 with a straight leg

LIFT left toe off ground and TAP back down on count 1

- On count 1, you should be balanced on the balls of both feet.
- Avoid excessive rocking on the direction change

#### b. Lock - Flip

BM 8, freeze on count 8 on toes

On count 1, left toe FLIPS up so that the heel now touches the ground

- Left leg should be straight when the heel makes contact with the ground.

### **c. Plus Drill**

Named because the marcher traces the shape of a plus sign, this drill will help clean direction changes.

FM 8 (Stab-Lift-Tap)

BM 16 (Lock-Flip)

FM 8

Forward Slide Left 8 (Stab-Lift-Tap)

Backward Slide Right 16 (Lock-Flip)

Forward Slide Left 8

Halt

- Upper body should remain square to the sideline at all times
- Feet should end facing forward on the halt.
- Pay close attention to feet on the changes in direction

## **I. ACROSS THE FLOOR DRILLS**

These drills will give you several ways to rehearse fundamentals allowing you to concentrate on a few people at a time while still engaging the rest of your group. Line up your group in a block on the yard line with no more than 4-5 people across the front. Each of the following drills starts with 8 counts to be executed as follows:

Count 1 to 4 - Each line moves up to yard line, centers feet and body and falls into the position of attention with horns down.

Count 5 to 6 - Slowly and smoothly bring horn into playing position

Count 7 - Freeze and mentally prepare to step off

Count 8 - On the "&" of count 8, push off with your right foot and begin the drill

- Unless noted in the drills, a new line will step off every 8 counts.
- As the first line steps off, the next line is moving into position to step off (count 1-8 above)

**1. Gorilla Drill**

During the maneuver, your horn changes direction 90 degrees every 8 counts as you move across the floor.

FM 8

Slide Left 8

Backwards Slide Right 8

BM 8

Backwards Slide Left 8

Slide Right 8

FM 8

Halt

- Horn comes down on the halt
- Hold end position for two counts before moving off yard line. Turn around and prepare to move backwards in opposite direction.

**2. Straight Eights**

FM 32

- Horn comes down on the halt
- Hold end position for two counts before moving off yard line. Turn around and prepare to move backwards in opposite direction.
- Can go backwards and/or with a slide

**3. Eight and Eights**

Builds on Straight Eights. Marchers step off every 16 counts.

FM 8

Hold 8

FM 8

Hold 8

FM 8

Hold 8

FM 8

- Horn comes down on the halt
- Hold end position for two counts before moving off yard line. Turn around and prepare to move backwards in opposite direction.
- Can go backwards and/or with a slide

**4. Front to Back to Front**

This drill works on changes in the foot direction while you march from forward to backward. THIS DRILL STARTS IN THE SLIDE POSITION.

FM 24

- On count 8, stab the right foot to the front and go up onto platform.
- On count 9, turn left leg around into backwards march
- Continuing backwards, on count 16, open the hips into 2nd position relevé while remaining on the platform
- On count 17, turn hips around into forward march to finish the maneuver

**5. Traffic**

STEP OFF EVERY 16 COUNTS

FM 8

Slide Left 8

FM 8

Slide Right 8

FM 8

- Horn comes down on the halt
- Hold end position for two counts before moving off yard line. Turn around and prepare to move backwards in opposite direction retracing your pathway.
- Pay close attention to the stabbing of the foot on the direction change
- Check body alignment on the yard lines, especially on the slides.

**6. 87654's**

This drill focuses on adjusting step sizes.

FM 8 - 8 to 5

FM 8 - 7 to 5

FM 8 - 6 to 5

FM 8 - 5 to 5

FM 16 - 4 to 5