



Thornton High School Marching Band

Marching Fundamentals



Excellence in field show and parade marching is dependent upon precise execution of a set of basic marching fundamentals. These terms must be understood and the fundamentals mastered before we put them together with music and drill.

Demonstrations of the fundamentals will take place during band camp, and we will practice them as a group, but please be aware that practicing the fundamentals during camp alone will not be sufficient. You must be able to execute the fundamentals automatically and with ease so that you will be able to devote your attention to the music and drill.

Good people of the marching band! Be not ashamed! Mark time whenever you hear a tune! Proudly roll step your way through the summer making your left foot hit the ground on 1 & 3 so that it forever more feels wrong to do otherwise! Drive your friends crazy by staying in step with them as you stroll!

Section leaders, drum majors and staff will be checking fundamentals at the beginning of the season. Take responsibility and be prepared. We're all in this together. Do your part in our pursuit of excellence. We'll be in great shape if we can all start off on the right...er...left foot!

Sixteen Essential Marching Fundamentals

1. Attention	5. Instrument Carriage	9. Roll step	13. Slide
2. Parade Rest	6. Mark time	10. Forward march	14. Eight to five step
3. At Ease	7. Drag turn	11. Backward march	15. Adjusted step
4. Facings	8. Prep-kick	12. Flank	16. Halt

1. Attention

("Set" position) – Attention is a stationary position in which the body stands erect and poised though never tense or rigid. Attention is the position from which all other commands are given. The following points must be observed:

- Heels together, toes slightly apart
- Balls of feet on the line
- Weight evenly distributed on both feet
- Knees should be straight, relaxed not locked
- Hips should be centered over the ankles
- Shoulders should be centered over the hips and relaxed
- Hands and Arms
 - with instrument – 2 hand carry position
 - without instrument – arms relaxed, palms in, fingers curved slightly, thumbs aligned with seams of pants
- Head up, chin up, eyes forward to a point on the horizon
- Absolutely no moving or talking
- Check your posture by rising up on the toes and stretching the body as high as possible.
- Project energy! Exude Pride!

Command:

Counts	1	2	3	4
Command	"Band" (Clap)	(Rest) (Clap)	"Ten" (Clap)	"Hut" (Clap)

Response: Snap to attention on the next count and shout "Go!"

2. Parade Rest

A less formal position of attention - pride and intensity must be maintained!

- right foot stays planted
- left foot moves out until feet are shoulder width
- weight centered
- Instruments in a comfortable, modified “down” position to be determined within sections (sections should strive for uniformity)

Command:	Counts	1	2	3	4
	Command	“Band” (Clap)	(Rest) “Pa..” (Clap)	“rade” (Clap)	“Rest” (Clap)

Response: Snap to position on the next count. (Without instruments - place hands behind body, right hand in left, palms away from body, and snap left foot straight out to position)

3. At Ease

A position in which the body is relaxed with minimal motion permitted.

- The right foot must remain in place
- Talking quietly is allowed unless instructed otherwise
- One must be ready to assume the position of attention

Command: The “At Ease” command is not given in cadence

Response: Immediately following the “At Ease” command, the individual may assume a relaxed position; however, the right foot must remain in position.

4. Facings

Changing the direction the ensemble is facing. This maneuver is executed from the position of attention and may go to the left or to the right.

Command:	Counts	1	2	3	4
	Command	“Band” (Clap)	(Rest) (Clap)	“Left/right” (Clap)	“Face” (Clap)

Response: Left face...

- begins with a short step out onto the ball of the right foot
- (Note: it is the only maneuver that starts on the right foot)
- spin on the ball of the right foot and the heel of the left
- bring the right foot to close next to the left
- Shout “T, H, S” with the maneuver

Right face...

- Begins with a short step out onto the ball of the left foot
- Spin on the ball of the left foot and the heel of the right
- Bring the left foot to close next to the right
- Shout “T, H, S” with the maneuver

5. Instrument Carriage

- “**Playing Position**” is the “up” position. Instrument is in normal playing position. Flutes are parallel to the ground. Clarinet angle is uniform within the section. Main body of saxophone is parallel to body. Brass bells are aimed slightly above the horizon.
- “**Attention position**” is the “down” position. Both hands remain on the instrument. Strive for uniformity within sections.

Command:	Counts	1	2	3	4
	Command	“Band” (Clap)	(Rest) (Clap)	“Horns” (Clap)	“Up/down” (Clap)

Response: Snap horn to position on the next count.

6. Mark Time

A continuous movement from the position of attention or forward march designed to give the unit motion while remaining in position. The following points must be observed to insure uniformity of style:

- Mark time always begins with the left foot
- Heels are raised slightly while balls of the feet remain on the ground.
- The pulse is in the heel; it hits the ground on every beat and is at the highest point on the "and" of the beat.
- The knee bends only slightly
- The body does not rock from side to side; there should be no movement above the waist
- This is a continuous movement with the foot traveling at a constant rate of speed relative to the tempo of the music

Command:	Counts	1	2	3	4
	Command	“Mark” (Clap)	“Time” (Clap)	“Mark” (Clap)	(Rest) (Clap)

Response: On the 4th beat of the command, the left heel raises then returns to the ground on beat 1. As left heel goes down, right heel comes off the ground, and motions are repeated.

7. Drag Turn

A turn in place using Mark Time step to rotate the body 45 degrees, 90 degrees, 135 degrees, 180 degrees, or whatever degree required in any given number of counts.

- The turn may be executed to the left or right.
- Drag Turns are executed in the same manner as the Mark Time Step with regard to style.
- All turns distances (angles) are subdivided evenly by the number of counts given to the maneuver.
- All turns begin on count one and are completed on the last count of the given turn maneuver.

8. Prep Kick

- The first step of a maneuver, the prep-kick begins on beat 4 and is executed on the left foot.
- On beat 1, weight is transferred to the left heel.

9. Roll Step (Glide Step)

The Roll Step is a forward motion step which uses a smooth, rolling step with minimal knee bend and foot lift.

- It is accomplished by rolling from the heel to the toe creating a smooth "gliding" action.
- There should be no bodily motions above the waist during this step.
- The pulse is in the heel.
- The body weight is moved forward so that the foot rolls from heel to toe along the outside edge of each foot.
- Roll Step always begins with the left foot.

10. Forward March

- 8 steps for every 5 yards (8/5), each step = 22.5 inches
- Step off starts with left foot prep-kick
- Use roll step
- Maintain upper body alignment and glide
- Command can be vocal following "Mark Time" command
- Command can be by whistle: "Twee-ee-eet, tweet, tweet, tweet, (prep-kick)"
- Command can be by roll off from drum line

11. Backward March

Marching backward so that the instrument may face the sideline.

- After the last forward step of the right foot, remain in place and rise up to the balls of the feet on beat 1
- The left foot is already in place for beat 1. Next step is backward with the right foot on beat 2
- The heel stays off of the ground, and body posture remains the same. The weight stays in the balls of the feet and does not transfer to the heels
- The pulse is in the ball of the foot

12. Flank (Turn)

A maneuver that changes direction of march, 90 degrees to the left or right. Flanks are achieved by "spinning" on the ball of the foot toward the direction of the flank. This should be a sharp and snappy maneuver. The instrument faces the direction of travel.

- Left Flank: As the right foot hits the ground in the last forward step of the previous direction, the body weight is shifted directly over this foot. On the "and" of the beat, the body pivots 90 degrees to the left on the ball of the right foot. On the next downbeat the left foot hits the ground heel first 22 ½ inches in front of the right foot, in the new direction of march.
- Right Flank: As the right foot hits the ground in the last forward step of the previous direction, the body weight is shifted directly over this foot. On the "and" of the beat, the body pivots 90 degrees to the right on the ball of the right foot. The left foot is swung in a smooth even arc around the right foot in the new direction of march, striking the ground heel first, 22 ½ inches in front of the right foot on the next downbeat.

13. Slide

Upper body and instrument face the sideline while the lower body faces the direction of travel.

- The shoulders should be almost parallel to the sidelines.
- Slides are executed in the same manner and style as flanks with regard to footwork and timing.

14. Eight to Five Step (8/5)

This is the standard and most common step size.

- There are eight steps to every five yards. (22.5" each).
- When crossing a yard line, the line will pass under the ball of the foot.

15. Adjusted Step

Adjusted step is a step size that varies depending on the distance to be traveled within a specified number of counts.

- Sometimes referred to as a "float"
- The steps will be equal in size between point A and point B
- The first step of an adjusted step maneuver must be in the new step size to maintain uniformity. Carelessness with the first step of an adjusted step maneuver is a common mistake that must be avoided.

16. Halt

A maneuver designed to discontinue mark time or forward motion.

- The last step of mark time or forward march will be with the right foot as it positions itself in the attention position.
- The left foot then closes next to the right foot.
- Command may be given vocally, by whistle, or by drum. Whistle and drum command are 8 count commands. Whistle command is "Twee-eet, twee-eet, tweet, tweet, tweet". Drum command is similar.

Counts	1	2	3	4
Command:	"Band"	(Rest)	"Halt"	(Rest)
	(Clap)	(Clap)	(Clap)	(Clap)

Response: On the 4th beat of the command, the right foot positions itself in the attention position and the left foot closes next to the right foot on the next beat.

Box Drill – A set of maneuvers used in rehearsal to practice fundamentals. Box drills may vary, but the basic form is to make a square eight steps in each direction returning to your point of origin in 32 steps. An 8/5 step is used. (Example 1: Forward march 8, slide right 8, backward march 8, slide left 8. Example 2: Forward march 8, left flank 8, left flank 8, left flank 8).

Name:	Marching Fundamentals Check Sheet	Section:
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Each member of the marching band must master the Sixteen Essential Marching Fundamentals. We will use peer evaluation to encourage high standards and accountability. When you have successfully demonstrated a fundamental to another member of your section, the member will initial next to the fundamental. Section leaders may only initial a fundamental after a section member, drum major after section leader, and staff member after drum major.

	1. Section Member	2. Section Leader	3. Drum Major	4. Staff Member		1. Section Member	2. Section Leader	3. Drum Major	4. Staff Member
1. Attention					9. Roll step				
2. Parade Rest					10. Forward march				
3. At Ease					11. Backward march				
4. Facings (L & R)					12. Flank (L & R)				
5. Inst. Carriage					13. Slide (L & R)				
6. Mark time					14. Eight to five step				
7. Drag turn (90 & 180 degrees)					15. Adjusted step				
8. Prep-kick					16. Halt				

Section leaders will need drum major and staff member initials. Drum majors will need section leader and staff initials.

Use response to commands and box drills as the context for evaluations. No more than two fundamentals may be evaluated at one time and the individuals must agree which fundamental(s) are being evaluated ahead of time. Provide constructive, supportive feedback when fundamentals need more work. Only initial a fundamental when it meets your standard of excellence.

This form will be used for grading purposes in band and will be used to determine eligibility to participate as a marching member of the band. This form must be completely initialed and given to Mr. G. by the end of rehearsal on the first day of classes (Wednesday, August 20th).