



Cymbal Line 2010

Audition Packet

Preparation:

You must be physically and musically prepared for your audition. Make sure your arm and abdominal muscles are in peak condition.

Physical Conditioning:

- pushups
- arm circles
- crunches/sit-ups
- running/jogging
- HOLD CYMBALS UP

Playing cymbals is one of the most physically demanding assignments in the marching percussion ensemble. In order to perform comfortably it is important to develop strength and flexibility in those muscles that are most frequently used. Help prevent muscle cramps, wrist sprains, tendonitis and other injuries by stretching and applying strength training to your preparations for auditions. Remember, while push-ups are an excellent way to develop cymbal strength, no exercise compares to actually holding and playing the cymbals for extended periods of time. If you are not currently a part of a music program, see if your school or band director will allow you to borrow cymbals and practice.

As for music preparation, rhythmic and timing examples will be provided. Prior drum knowledge is an added bonus, though if you do not have any, check with a friend on developing timing. Drum along to your favorite song or check out some drum exercises on the DOJO Percussion website and learn them. Most importantly, work with a metronome!

Technique

We will incorporate the Garfield grip technique (*see 'Garfield Grip' page below*) with a Butterfly style crash. If this technique is unfamiliar, listed below are some key concepts you may want to get yourself acquainted with before camp begins.

Posture:

A crucial aspect to help execute cymbal technique is posture. For the cymbal line, it is VERY important to pay close attention to the posture tips provided by the visual staff. In order to execute any and all demands – musical or visual, one must be in TOTAL control of his/her body.

It is important to remain relaxed and completely focused!

Sound Production:

Another crucial aspect of cymbal playing is sound production. The visual effect the cymbal creates, while extremely important, is secondary. At the point of attack using a standard crash, the cymbals should NOT meet exactly together “edge to edge.” This will result in what is called an “air-pocket” which is a momentary vacuum that locks the cymbals together and kills most of the sound. To

create a full crash sound, apply a 'flam' concept. At the instant of attack, the bottom edges of the cymbals meet first, followed by the top edges. Unlike an actual flam, there should be no audible "grace note." Using this sound quality technique, the cymbals should resonate to their fullest quality.

Approach

Set Position:

The set position is to be the beginning position. Start by letting your arms hang down at your sides. Slightly bend your elbows and set your palms so that they are facing your thigh. In this position, the cymbals must remain flat at all times. Look in a mirror to make sure you only see the edges of the cymbals facing forward. Keep the cymbals parallel to each other and approximately 2 inches from your sides. It is important to NEVER allow the cymbals to rest on your body.

Playing Position:

To begin, your arms from the shoulder to the elbow should be level to the ground. From the wrist to the elbow should be approximately at a 45-degree angle towards each other (*see photo to the right*). The cymbals should be 2-3 inches apart with the knots of the cymbals in line with your eyes. To force the cymbals to be parallel you must be able to see the inside far edge of the cymbal.



Crash:

To prepare for the crash, open the cymbals up to an "A." To do this, simply break at the wrist slightly so that the finger tips form a house top, or "A" with the top edge of the cymbals. Then, break the wrist back so the cymbals form a "V" with the bottom part of the palm. From here, you will return to the "A" position. This is also where the first crash or "grace note" happens at the bottom of the cymbals. The crash hits bottom then pushes through to the top and opens back up to the original "A" position. To finish, open back up to the "V" and then snap back to set. The snap to set should occur two counts after the crash (i.e. crash on 1, snap back on 3).

Other Cymbal Sounds:

There are many sounds and functions available on cymbals. These sounds will be discussed and taught in detail during camps. Here is the terminology you will need to know;

- Crash chokes
- Slide chokes
- scrapes/zings
- sizzles
- open/closed taps
- bell-taps
- high-hats/hinge chokes,
- cymbal rolls.

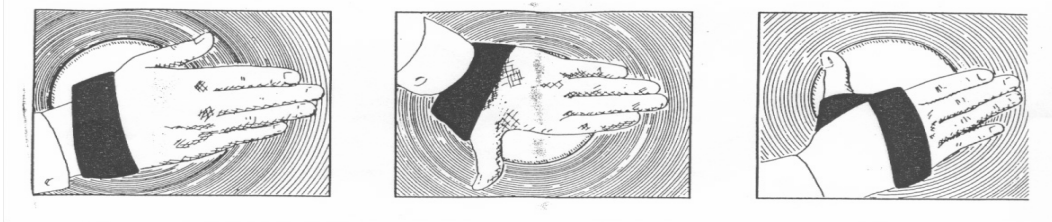
Visual Applications:

The cymbal player is a big contributor to the overall visual program. Good posture is a necessity for playing and executing visuals well.

For cymbal players, the most basic visual element is the cymbal flip. To complete a "flip-up" you must start with your cymbals at *set position*. Initiate the flip up with a jolting outward twist of the wrist while simultaneously bringing your arms forward and up. Allow your arms to take a straight pathway up. Upon completion of the flip, you will be in *playing position*. A "flip down" is the exact reverse of the flip up. Pay careful attention to locking the cymbals in the attention position when flipping down. Practice these two elements slowly and work your way faster.

The Garfield Grip

1. Hold the cymbal in a vertical position and put your hand through the strap up to the wrist.
2. Turn the hand so the palm is facing away from the pad of the cymbal.
3. Rotate the entire hand downward and turn the palm toward the cymbal until it touches the pad. The strap should rest at the base of the thumb and forefinger.



From
"Marching
Concepts"
by Thom
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Thank you for your interest in DOJO Percussion. Please feel free to contact me or visit the website (www.dmdojo.com) with any questions you might have regarding auditions or the material in this packet.

**To begin building strength, please see the exercise attached below.*

The Hindu: (*reference to photo below*)

This is an exercise to help build strength and technique. Each arrow represents your arm positioning with cymbals on. To successfully execute this exercise, remember three things; **1.** Your arms will always be straight (no bent elbows). **2.** Keep your arms in front of your body. **3.** Cymbals must remain flat (palms face forward).

To begin, first raise your right arm as though you need to ask a question. Now, raise your left hand the exact same way. This will represent the **Up** position (*represented by the two arrows at the top*).

Next, slide your arms so that they are parallel to the floor and straight across from one another. This will represent the **180** position (*represented by the arrows that go straight across the body*).

Now, drop your hands by your sides with palms facing out and then move them away from your body, enough so that the cymbals are not resting on your hips or legs. This will represent the **Down** position (*represented by the arrows that are at the very bottom*).

The arrows in between the **Up -180- Down** positions represent **Up 45** or **Down 45**. To successfully execute this exercise, you must go through the entire range and positions. Notice that by fully extending your arms and going through each position in sequence, you will create an outlined *circle* in front of your body. Start at *set position*, then on count 1 go to the *Down* position, next to *down 45, 180, Up 45*, then *Up*. You will then go through the same sequence but heading down. You may go to each position every 2 counts, or 4 counts if you desire. We will go over this exercise during camps.

This is an exercise that does several things for a cymbal player. You can build strength by going through all of these positions consecutively for several minutes with the proper application of technique. You also will get the full understanding of your range with the cymbals in order to construct a sense of your 'visual plane'. This also is a great exercise to try alone in front of a mirror, or with a group.

