

MARCHING
THUNDER
HERD BEATS

Marshall University

Cymbal Notation and Technique Packet

2020

Presence

At all times we will maintain a confident and determined approach. This approach is fundamental to continual growth.

We will maintain an upright and full posture during set position. We will remain austere but prepared to perform at a moment's notice. We should have a focused expression and attentive, focused body language.

Although we will have an austere, confident playing style, it is adamantly important that we continue to breathe through playing and performing to maintain a sense of relaxation. We should be alert but relaxed.

All "performers" will create an atmosphere around themselves. This atmosphere is a direct projection of who we are as musical, percussive performers. As performers, our body language, focus, and performance energy will create a viewing energy for the audience that is both tangible and perceptible. We should seek to deliver the best of ourselves in performance settings through this confidence and musicianship.

Quality of Sound

We shall always strive to maintain a "fullness" of sound in everything that we play. Regardless of dynamic levels or techniques used, we will maximize the amount of sound and the timbre or tone intended. This is maximized through physical relaxation.

To accomplish physical relaxation, we must ensure that we have control of the implements that we use while negating muscular tension. There is a difference between muscular engagement and muscular tension. As cymbal players, we will have a considerable engagement of the muscles of the upper arms, shoulders, and neck, but we need to focus on not "squeezing" those muscles or carrying ourselves in a manner that will overexert the muscles through bad posture.

The body will work as one system to create every sound through motion while retaining a relaxed playing approach.

Consistent set position, playing positions, playing motions, and angles will reinforce consistent quality of sound and tone.

Positions

Resting Position

Our Resting Position, otherwise known as Parade Rest or Homeplate is what we will enter at the end of series of reps or at the end of an exercise before “tap out” by the center cymbal player. To enter this position, players will stand with their feet shoulder width apart with their arms relaxed at full extension. The cymbals will rest in front of the body with the “blade” of the right cymbal tucked between the pad and plate of the left cymbal.

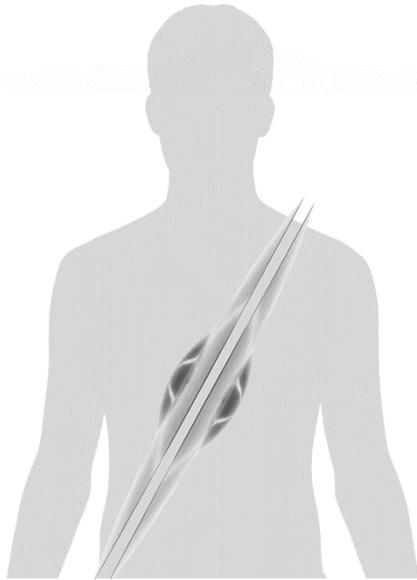


Set Position

Set position is the ready and attentive position that we will be in prior to any exercise or performance. We will have a full and forward presence with open shoulders, a full chest, and upward angle of the head. With your feet together, the cymbals will rest at your side with your elbows slightly engaged and pulling back toward the rear of your body. The cymbals will rest against the sides of the body while maintaining as perpendicular an angle to the floor as possible. There should not be any tension in the neck or shoulders. This position should be relaxed but intimidating.

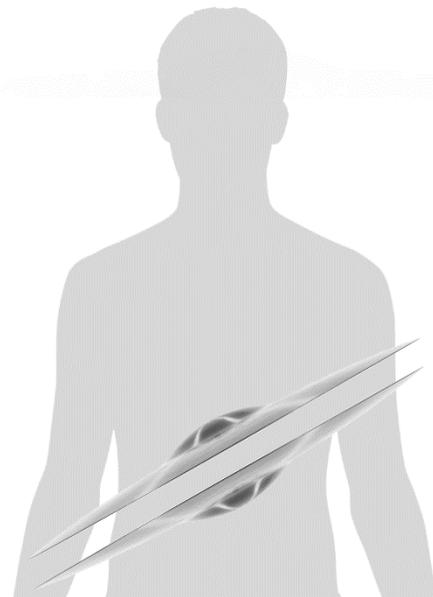
Flat Position

Flat Position is the first and most common of the playing positions. To enter this playing position, extend the arms straight out from the body. Drop your left hand under your right and angle the plates toward your left shoulder at a 30° angle keeping 2" between the plates. Lower the plates slightly so that the knots on the inside of the cymbals are centered with your sternum. Now, bend your elbows and pull the cymbals back toward your body so that there is 1 ½ to 2" of space from the blade and your chest. In this position the arms should be relaxed, the wrists near straight in line with the forearms, and the fingers spread and relaxed upon the cymbal.



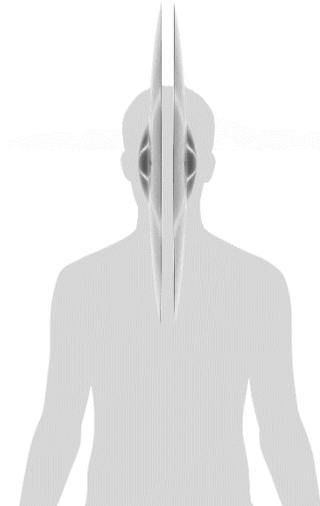
Orchestral Position

A variation of the Flat Position, Orchestral is achieved by taking the flat position and turning the angle of the hands more horizontal while also dropping the hands closer to the waist of the body. The Orchestral Position will be used for Orchestral Crashes, Flat Prep Crashes, and Guillotines.



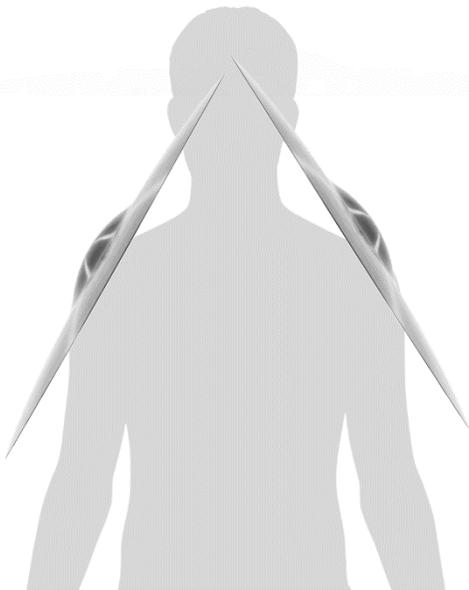
Vert Position

The second most common playing position, Vert is a position used for more flowing crashes and gentler sounds. To assume Vert Position, point your hands out in front of your face so that the knots of the cymbals are in line with the tip of your nose. Pull the cymbals back slightly so that the blades rest in front of your face with a 2” space between the cymbals. Your upper arms should be slightly under parallel with the ground.



Ding Position

Like Vert, Ding position is an open or A version of Vert that allows for the right or attacking cymbal to sit above the left so that Dings can be played. To accomplish this, open the cymbals up in a capital A shape pointing toward the top of your head and slightly lower the cymbals so that the tops of the blades are slightly above eye level.



Bring Ups / Drop Downs

Bring ups and Drop Downs are movements that transition the Cymbal Player from Set Position to either Flat or Vert Position. In both instances, a Bring Up or a Drop will be a 3-count move.

Bring Ups

Count 1—The arms will lock to full extension and push slightly away from the body, creating a forward angle.

Count 2—From the locking position, the arms will continue a flowing, upward motion. The hands will either turn slightly to match the 30° angle needed for Flat Position, or will raise up until the knots are in line with the nose for Vert. The motion from Count 1 will be continuous, and the hands will freeze on the beat of Count 2, giving a moment of distinct separation between Count 2 and 3.

Count 3—With deliberate force, the player will “lock” the arms back into place to provide the appropriate angles or the playing position.

Drop Downs

Count 1—Mirroring the motions of Count 1 for Bring Ups, the arms will lock at full extension and begin their downward motion toward the sides of the body.

Count 2—The arms will rest in line with the body, there will not be any movement between Count 2 and 3.

Count 3—The arms will quickly lock upward, pulling the elbows back so that the cymbals will lock into Set Position.

Definitions

Parts of the Cymbal

The following picture includes the parts of the cymbal that we will reference for playing and grip.

Pad: The pad or cup is a small piece of fabric or leather that rests between your hand and the cymbal. The pad allows for better resonance of the cymbal by limiting the amount of contact made with the cymbal.

Strap: The strap will be made of leather or vinyl and will be tied inside of the cymbal.

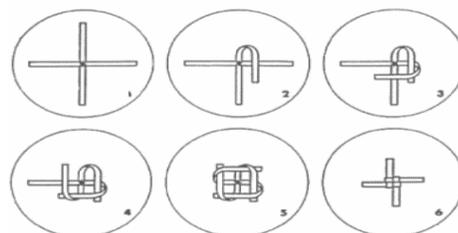
Bell: The bell of the cymbal is the small cup like raised section near the center of the cymbal. The pad will rest upon the bell.

Blade: The blade of the cymbal is the very outer edge of the cymbal.



Tying Straps

If using leather straps (Sabian or Zildjian), a square knot will be used. To tie the knot for cymbal straps, spread out the four tongues of the strap. Then, taking the first strap, cross over the strap next to it. Take the strap that was crossed and go over the first while resting the tip between the remaining two straps. Take the third strap and cross the second and fourth and take the fourth strap and cross the third while tucking the tip of the strap under the first. Pull the ends of the straps to tighten the knot equally until the desired tension is reached.



The Garfield Grip



The grip that will be used is called the Garfield Grip. To use this grip, hold the strap vertically and feed your hand inside of the strap so that it goes passed your wrist. Turn your hand around so that your palm faces away from the cymbal. Twist your hand so that the webbing between your thumb and first finger goes toward the strap until it rests against the webbing. Relax your fingers onto the cymbal and keep them spread open.

Crash Strokes

1. Full Crash

- a. Full prep motion where the upper arm forms a parallel line with the shoulders.
- b. Fast forward motion of attacking cymbal into the resting cymbal.
- c. Complete follow through or full extension.
- d. Cymbals will lock back into playing position 2 beats after the crash.

2. Dead Crash

- a. Varying degrees of preparatory motion depending upon dynamic level.
- b. Varying speed of forward motion in attacking cymbal in accordance to dynamic.
- c. Attacking cymbal will end near the resting cymbal in as close to the playing position as can be achieved.

3. Crash Choke

- a. Full preparatory motion.
- b. Fast forward motion of the attacking cymbal into resting cymbal.
- c. Attacking cymbal stops at a Dead Crash position before both cymbals are pulled into the body.
- d. Cymbals should be pulled down into the torso and the inside of the forearms and ribs/stomach/torso will fully dampen the cymbals.
- e. Cymbals will quickly push out into playing position 2 beats after full dampening of the crash unless multiple crashes will be performed.

Ancillary Sounds

Hi-hat / Crunch

A Hi-hat is achieved by pressing the right cymbal down into the left while squeezing the fingers into the plates so that there is no residual ringing or rattling. The sound should be like the closing of a set of Hi-hats. This can be performed at Flat or Vert Position.

Ding

A ding is a light texture created by pushing the inside of the right cymbal down onto the blade of the left cymbal creating a sound like the chiming of a triangle. There should be no preparatory motion for a Ding, only the bending of the wrist down to actuate the note.

Sizz

A Sizz or Sizzle is an interesting way to create a wash of white noise underneath the ensemble. Though not easily performed well, appropriate technique will grant you a wonderfully bright and long sound. A Sizz can be performed in Flat or Vert by offsetting the right, attacking cymbal. In Flat, this is achieved by pulling the cymbal 1 ½” under the blade of the left and pushing it slightly forward. In Vert this is achieved by pulling the attacking cymbal 1 ½” under the right. The attacking hand will push the cymbal into the resting cymbal while maintaining a miniscule distance between the plates so that the cymbals can rattle against one another. The Sizz can be stopped by pressing the hands against one another.

Sizz-Suck

Sizz-sucks are mainly performed in Flat position. Once the Sizz is started, the cymbals are pressed together while the attacking cymbal is simultaneously pulled back toward the body. As the right cymbal pulls toward the left, a vacuum will be found where the cymbals “catch” or “suck” together, producing the Sizz-Suck.

Zing

Another interested noise produced by the cymbals, a Zing is created by placing the blade of the attacking cymbal against the inside of the resting cymbal, barely above the inside of the bell. The blade of the attacking cymbal is then pulled away, along the inside of the resting cymbal producing a Zinging sound. This will be performed in the Ding Position.

Whale Call

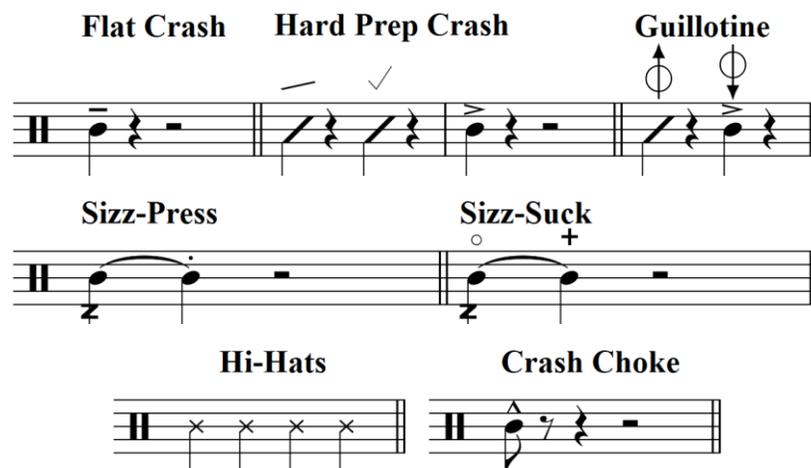
A rare sound, the Whale Call is produced by placing the blade of the attacking cymbal inside the bell of the resting cymbal. Both hands will press the cymbals together with force as both wrists will twist, producing a chilling sound like nails on a chalkboard.

Notation

The following symbols demonstrate which position the performer will begin the excerpt in.



Flat Crashes



Hard-Prep Crash

The Hard-Prep Crash is an aesthetic crash that is performed over two measures. Beat one of the first measure is a hard lock into a descending angle from the right shoulder down to the left hip. The plates of the cymbals will be parallel with one another to form a long, downward slope. On count three, the play will twist their hands in toward their body and lock the cymbals in a wide checkmark with the right cymbal sitting over the left and the left near flat in the Orchestral Position. On count one of the crash measure, the right hand will slam down through the resting cymbal and follow through the crash.

Guillotine

Like the Hard-Prep, the Guillotine has a large prep where the right hand will fully extend upward toward the sky with the blade of the cymbal perpendicular to the shoulders, pointing straight toward the crown. The left hand will rest in the Orchestral Position. The right hand will come down through the left 1 ½" inside the blade of the resting cymbal and following through to perform the crash.

Vert Crashes



A/V Crash

The A/V Crash has several different methods of being played: Full-Lock, Lock & Flow, and Full-Flow.

Full-Lock

For the Full-Lock, every two counts of the crash will be a quick snap into each position. The cymbals will first open into an A as the elbows pull apart. The elbows will then pull together and the wrists break to form a V. The cymbals will then crash together and flow through to another A. The cymbals will then lock into another V before locking back into the Vert Position.

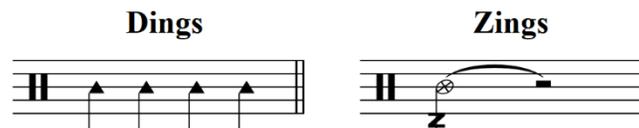
Lock & Flow

The initial A and V will be a hard lock, but the consequential motions after the crash will be a smooth flow or Afterflow leading back into Vert.

Full-Flow

The preparatory motions and Afterflow will all be lucid motions. Full-Flow will be notated for specifically.

Ding Position



Exercises

Ups and Downs

Up Lock Down Set

Up Lock Down Set

Flat Crash Exercise

Flat Crash Exercise

Crash Choke Exercise

Crash Choke Exercise