

MARCHING
THUNDER
HERD BEATS

Marshall University Tenor Technique Packet

2020

Presence

- Confidence and determination are key to everything we do. This approach fosters continuous, positive growth
- We maintain an upright posture during set position. Core muscles need to be engaged with a relaxed chest and arms. While playing it is essential that we continue breathing in order to maintain relaxation.
- The “performer” creates the atmosphere around them. We are not simply drummers, but percussive musical performers. Your presence and engagement will draw in the audience around you. The energy you put into the performance will create energy from the audience. (This is not an excuse to over-hype.)
- Energy and engagement are crucial at all times when in a performance setting. You will be the first and last thing the audience hears on game day.

Quality of Sound

- The first enemy of proper sound quality is tension in any area of the body. Learn the difference between muscle tension and muscle engagement.
- The body, working as one relaxed system, will allow the performer to maximize both control of the instrument and resonance.
- Allow both resonance of the head and the implement by maintaining a relaxed approach to playing.
- Commit to a consistent set position with beads securely in the correct playing zone, as defined for your individual instrument. Bead placement is an integral ingredient to sound production

Definitions

Stroke Types

1) Legato/Up Stroke

- A relaxed stroke with a smooth up motion to maximize rebound.
- The fingers are relaxed, but remain on the stick. Do not allow excess space in the back fingers.
- The wrist initiates stroke, not the fingers.
- The stick rebounds fluidly with the grip serving as a guide, avoid the use of excess or artificial motion.

2) Staccato/Down Stroke

- A strong, aggressive motion. Do not mistake aggression for tension.
- The bead will be stopped at the drum head with wrist, not tension in the front fulcrum.
- Play into the drum head with resonating the drum being the objective. This is still achieved with a relaxed hand.

3) Marcato/Controlled Stroke

- A combination of Legato and Staccato stroke
- The bead is not completed as a 'down stroke' but is approached in a similar manner while still rebounding.
- In the Marcato stroke, the arm will follow the wrist up naturally as an extension of the stroke. Do not "create" motion that doesn't naturally exist.
- The grip remains relaxed.

Dynamic Definitions

- PP - 1.5"
- P - 3"
- MP- 6"
- MF- 9"
- F- 12"
- FF- 15"

Tenor Technique

Approach

- It is imperative when playing tenors to maintain an engaged core while allowing for free side to side motion of the arms.
- Each arm should be able to operate independently of the other, as well as the core.
- Maintaining an upright, engaged posture is necessary not only for proper playing and presence, but also for lower back health and over-all posture.

General

- We use a firm but relaxed grip. All fingers should be in contact with the stick. The main contact point of the index finger will be between the knuckle and joint, the fingertip will not completely wrap around the stick nor will it be pointed, let it naturally relax.

- The beads will be between the front two lugs of the 1 and 2 drum with a slight downward angle at the drum, attempting to maintain a straight-line from the elbow to the tip of the stick.
- Sticks will always be set over drum 1 or 2 while not playing, unless specified otherwise.
- When Playing on outside drums, we will move in the most direct line over the shortest distance. Do not pull back in order to play on the outside drums.
- While playing, our sticks will move in “straight lines” from point A to B, there will be little to no arc in our travels from zone to zone. This will allow us to move efficiently and produce the same quality of sound while playing around the drums.
- We utilize an X and Y axis when playing Tenors. Do not allow motion between two drums to change the way the wrist turns, side to side motion does not impact vertical motion.



