

## The Marching Spartans Rookie (and others) Survival Guide 2011

Marching Band and the summer pre-season rehearsals are *not* the worst thing in the world. The worst thing in the world is to come unprepared! Hopefully this information will help you arrive prepared, and more importantly, survive.

### Mandatory Items

- Water jug – very important to stay hydrated, there is no drinking fountain in the parking lot! Please mark your name on it. It should be at least a quart to a gallon jug.
- T-shirt (light colored, tank tops and sleeveless shirts are ok, no string bikini tops, an extra t-shirt is good to have in case of rain)
- Shorts (comfy, board shorts ok, NO JEANS or long pants, you will live to regret the rehearsal if you wear jeans)
- Socks and comfortable sneakers (NO SANDALS, FLIP FLOPS, or other shoes inappropriate for marching on the parking lot)
- Sunglasses and Hat – it will keep the sun out of your eyes.
- Sunscreen – lots of sweat proof type even if you usually don't need it.
- Bug spray (optional – but a lifesaver if they are biting)
- Chapstick or DCT (optional)
- Your instrument (yes, students have actually forgotten their instruments)
- Drill Book (music/drill included, 3 ring binder with 40 - 50 clear page protectors)
- Dot Book (a small, note-card sized spiral bound notebook you can carry or wear)
- Small Notebook (there are writing assignments)
- Pencils/ highlighter (sharpened with erasers)

### WATER, WATER, WATER:

You must stay hydrated, you will sweat a lot during marching band, it's hot on the pavement, we are outside, and it is summer time. NO CAFFEINE or carbonated beverages with caffeine. Avoid sugar-loaded drinks (Kool-aid or juice) - it dehydrates you. Water is best; Gatorade or other sports drinks are ok in addition to water! Did we mention... Water?

### Clothing:

Be comfortable, it will be hot, wear shorts and you may want to bring a clean shirt to change into. Sudden thunderstorms are not uncommon. Comfy tennis shoes are a must, **no flip-flops, chucks, or sandals.**

### Sunscreen:

Sunburn is a given during summer and pre-season rehearsals. Even if you never wear sunscreen, you will need it during Summer Marching Band.

### Sunglasses & hat:

It will keep the sun out of your eyes, and the hat helps you avoid "raccoon eyes" from the sunglasses.

### Chapstick or DCT:

Only if you think you need it – may be helpful for brass and woodwind players.

### Drill Book/ Dot Book:

Your drill book is used to hold all of your warm-ups, music and drill. Your dot book is a small spiral bound pad that contains all of your drill dots available for easy access on the field. Tie a string thru the corner, or use a lanyard and wear it on your body or horn. Don't forget it ever!

**Food:**

Please eat a healthy meal before you come to marching band, contrary to what you may think, food on your stomach will not sit like a lump while you are marching. Your body needs fuel to perform at the level necessary for marching band. Avoid all caffeine, greasy foods, carbonated drinks with caffeine, excessive candy or sweets, and dairy foods. Pack some quick snacks like a piece of fruit, or an energy bar (not chocolate). The Band Boosters provide lunch each day during the second week of pre-season rehearsals. You may not leave campus for lunch. Eat a banana every day as a good source of potassium. Make sure you eat breakfast EVERY MORNING. Your body needs this fuel for the day.

**Tips for Success:**

- **Expect to work and work really hard.** Expect a suntan or sunburn, with tan lines from your shirt and socks. Expect to get bossed around by others. Expect to be sore and tired. Expect to learn more in the two weeks of pre-season rehearsals than you have in the last two years of middle school. Expect the unexpected, just ask some of the returning band members to tell their “band camp” stories. There is nothing to fear about the marching band experience, after it is over, you will look forward to returning next year. The staff and leadership team work hard to provide a nurturing environment for the first time members of the marching band. We look forward to a good season, and a lot of fun.
- **Show up.** Pre-season rehearsals are mandatory, you will need to arrange family vacations, doctor’s visits, jobs, family time at a time other than during marching band pre-season. You must attend ALL rehearsals with no interruptions. The three weeks of pre-season is like 12 weeks of regular rehearsals. We will learn our music and get our drill on the field. If one person is missing, the entire band needs to review what was missed when you come back; it slows everyone down.
- **Be on Time.** If you are early, you are on time, if you are on time you are LATE. If you are LATE, it is unacceptable. You are responsible for being on time, not because of traffic, your parents oversleeping, or car trouble. You take full responsibility. The exception is if you call the band room WELL BEFORE you are supposed to arrive and explain the trouble. Band Office Phone number 703-913-3931.
- **Behave.** You are a young adult. Just get in line, stay in step or do whatever is asked of you. The staff and leadership are there for your benefit. If you work really hard they will take note – as well as the other members around you. Behaving also tends to get things done a lot more quickly. Nothing is worse than re-doing things and over and over again because the band is not listening or following directions.
- **Keep cool.** Physically and mentally, first make sure you are not overheating (water, water, water) but also keep a calm mind. So you can’t hit the line the first time you try it? Keep trying and listen graciously to advice and you WILL eventually get it. We are here to help.
- **Respect.** Respect the directors, staff, leadership, upperclassmen and parents that are helping. If you give respect, you will receive it in return.

Marching band training is really hard work, but you will find that working hard and then seeing the results of that hard work is something to be really proud of. Remember, excellence is not just for sometimes, excellence is for all the times. Everything you do affects everything else you do. Learn to do it right, then do it right every time! If it was easy, everyone would do it. It’s supposed to be hard, the hard is what makes it great!