

Marching Dictionary

The definitions below are only the specialized terms for the marching activity.

Accent: The special emphasis or stress applied to a note or beat in the music.

Alignment: Straight lines in ranks, files and diagonals.

As You Were: Oral command that tells the group: Cancel the last command.

At Ease: Oral command that tells the group: Keep the right foot in place and remain silent. Other movement is allowed.

At Rest: Oral command that tells the group: They may move about and talk, but must remain in the area. (Same as Stand Easy)

Attention: The motionless, silent, waiting for the next command while standing with heels together, back straight, correct instrument carriage.

Backwards...March: Oral command that tells the group: Begin marching in the direction of your back.

Band Block: The formation of a marching band, usually used while parade marching. The files and ranks are evenly spaced setting the band up in a large rectangle formation.

Battery: Drum section that marches on the field as a group. The Battery usually consists of snare drums, bass drums, tenor drums, and cymbals.

Box (The Box): A slang term for the judge's box at the top of the football stadium.

Cadence: The tempo, or number of beats per minute. Also a drum beat used while marching.

Carriage: How a person carries their body.

Cleaning: Slang term that means to make each movement well defined and precise. Each has a definite point where the movement starts, changes and stops.

Color Guard: Originally the armed guards who protected the U.S. Flag (the Colors). Since drum and bugle corps evolved from the military, they also carried colors and had a guard. As drum corps got more elaborate, the color guard began to include teams of rifle spinners, tall flag performers and dance teams. The name is still used for these teams by drum corps and corps styled bands, even though the national flag is rarely used in performance.

Company Front: A formation where the entire band or corps is in one large line, marching side by side.

Contraction: Movement which produces smaller intervals between members.

Counter March: A precise drill that has the band turn, rank by rank, and march the other direction.

Cover: Straight line in a column or file, aligned on the front person.

Cover Down: Oral command that tells the group: Straighten the column or file.

Diagonals: The 45 degree lines established by the band block.

Dismissed: Oral command that tells the group: They are released from the rehearsal or drill.

Distance: Spacing between individuals front to back.

Double Time: A step where the band members moves at twice the speed of the music or cadence. It is also is a command that tells the group to move at twice their current tempo.

Down Beat: A musical term used in conducting to identify the first beat of a measure of music.

Marching Dictionary

Dress: Straight line in a rank, aligned on either the left, center or right person.

"Dress Left/Center/Right...Dress":

Oral command that tells the group: Straighten the rank to the center person. Usually the instruments are raised to the playing position, and each person's head snaps towards the alignment point. This may be done in either one or two counts. Members then dress the rank. The command is called, "Dress - Center - Dress." To return to their original position, "Ready - Front" is called.

Drum Line: The field drums collected together in a single marching unit. This unit often includes; snare drums, tenors, bass drums, cymbals and/or timpani. The drum line is most often used by drum and bugle corps and corps-styled marching bands.

Drum Major: A person who leads a marching band or drum & bugle corps.

Eight and Eights: A training drill that is used to develop a smooth marching stride. The student marks time for eight counts and then forward marches for eight counts. This is done while holding a glass of water filled almost to the brim. To pass, the student must complete ten sets of "eight and eights" in a row without spilling any water.

Eight to Five: Marching at a stride of eight steps to five yards (22.5" stride).

Execution: How well or precisely something is done. This is often a key part of a judge's evaluation for the performance.

Execution Command: The last part of a command that tells the band to do the movement. It follows a preparation command.

Expansion: Movement which produces larger intervals between members.

Face:

Fall In: Oral command that tells the group: to get into a formation. example: "Fall in... at the beginning of the show."

Fall Out: Oral command that tells the group: to leave a formation. example: "Fall out...and go into the band room."

Field Show: A performance done by the marching band on a football field. It may or may not, be done during the half-time of a football game.

File: Two or more people standing behind on another. (Same as Column.)

Follow the Leader: Movement including a lead performer marching a specified pattern with the remaining performers following the same path.

Glide Step: A gliding style of marching where the leg swings forward, (similar to a walking step) the heel contacts first, and the weight is smoothly rolled to the toe.

Guide: Correcting the alignment of the ranks, files or diagonals while moving.

Guiding on the Diagonals: Aligning the position of a band member by matching the 45 degree lines set up by the band block.

Ictus: (In music) the stress or accent marking the rhythm. (In conducting) the movement made by the conductor's hands or baton to show the accent of each beat. (In drum majoring) the movement made by the baton or mace to show the accent of each beat.

In-Place Turns: A marching movement where the person rotates either right or left while marking time. This usually takes four counts to turn 90 degrees for a slow turn and four counts to turn 180 degrees for a fast turn. (Same as Rotations)

Interval: The distance between two people standing side by side.

Leg Lift Step: A high-knee style of marching where the leg lifts with the foot coming to the opposite knee and then comes down to the ground. The toe of the foot contacts first and the weight is then rolled to the entire foot.

Marching Dictionary

Mace: A traditional British/Scottish staff carried by a drum major. A mace is usually about 60 inches long. The shaft is made of Malacca cane, wood or fiberglass, is about one inch thick and tapers down to a metal tip called a ferrule. There is a hollow, decorative metal ball or crown at the top.

Moving Gate: A line or curve which rotates around a moving point at the end of the form.

Oblique Shift: Movement at a specified angle with the upper body remaining to the front. This movement can be done either backward or forward.

Oral Command: A spoken instruction given to the band. It has two parts, the preparation, which tells the band what to do, and the execution, which tells the band to do the command. It is said loudly and clearly so the entire group can understand the command. Palm

Parade Rest: A relaxed position of attention. Usually done with left foot moving about 18 inches to the left. Instrument/hand positions vary between bands.

Pit (The Pit) A slang term for the percussion equipment and players who do not march on the field, but are stationary on the sideline. This also describes the area where those percussion instruments are set.

Preparation Command: The first part of a command that tells the band what they are about to do. It is followed by the execution command.

Preparatory Beat: The rest just before the first note to be played by the band. It allows the band to take a starting breath, and it indicates the tempo and style of the music.

Rank: Two or more people standing side by side.

Ready...Front: Oral command that tells the group: Move from the dress position back to facing front. Example: "Dress Center Dress.....Ready, Front".

Release: A signal that tells the band to stop playing. (Same as Cut Off)

Reset A direction that tells the group to return to an early point and get ready to do the action again. Example: "Reset to the start of the show."

Reshape: Movement during the formation constantly changes. Step size will vary during the movement. All performers will complete the movement at the same time.

Roll Around: A smooth change of direction as opposed to a one count flank.

Roll Off: A drum cadence that tells the band to play.

Rotation: For an individual: Person turns either right or left while marking time. This usually takes four counts to turn 90 degrees for a slow turn and four counts to turn 180 degrees for a fast turn. For marching band movement: A gate or wheel of an entire formation with the shape remaining consistent.

Salute: To show respect or show honor by some formal act. This may be a hand salute as in the military or a salute done with the baton or mace.

Show: Another term for a performance. "The Show" is usually a slang term for a band or drum major's field performance. Example: "What is the theme for the Show this year?"

Showmanship: The overall effect created by the performance, the originality displayed and how well the performers "sell" their performance to the audience. It is also the name of the judging caption that evaluates the band's showmanship.

Slide Marching: A style of marching where the band member marches in one direction and twists the upper body so they can play in another. (Same as Twist or Shift Marching.)

Step Off: The command that tells the band to start marching forward.